Week 2

M. Imogen Stead: ‘The Magnitude of Male Lament in Aeschylus’.

This lecture seeks to challenge the notion that lament in Greek Tragedy is only a female or ‘feminine’ pursuit. It focuses on two of Aeschylus’ plays featuring extended male laments, *Persians* and *Agamemnon*, and as such will be relevant to both the Texts & Contexts: Greeks and Persians paper at Mods and the Greek Tragedy paper at Greats.

W. Cynthia Liu: ‘An introduction to mystery cults and their literary appearances’

The Mysteries were highly secretive religious cults concerned with experiences beyond the norm of human life. Despite the famous ban on revealing, or “profaning”, their secrets, echoes of their vocabulary and ideas abound in texts from Parmenides through to late antiquity, indicating an enduring cultural awareness of their metaphorical potential. This lecture will provide a brief overview of the Eleusinian, Dionysiac, and Orphic mystic circles. Next, I will look at how some motifs from the rituals, myths, and literature of the mysteries are found in literature in expositions of non-rational experiences such as love and death, memory and knowledge, and notions of inspiration and immortality. My aim is to introduce a relatively unexplored reservoir of imagery and investigate how it informs the literature of Greece and Rome.

This lecture is aimed at a very broad audience, but it will be of special interest for Mods students preparing for Texts and Contexts: Dionysus and Athens.

Week 3

M. Konstantine Panegyres: ‘The Text of Homer at the Library of Alexandria’

Where does our modern text of the Homeric poems come from? This lecture will look at a crucial stage in the history of the text of Homer, when a number of scholars working at the Library of Alexandria studied and edited the Homeric poems in a systematic way. Among them were three especially famous figures, Zenodotus of Ephesus, Aristophanes of Byzantium, and Aristarchus of Samothrace.

This lecture will interest anyone enthused by Homer (especially those reading the *Iliad* paper for Mods and the *Early Greek Hexameter Poetry* paper for Greats) and the study of textual transmission from antiquity.
W. Anna-Sofia Alitalo: ‘Glitz and glam: cultus in Ovidian poetry’

This lecture will explore the changing attitudes of Ovid’s persona towards the phenomenon of self-adornment, cultus. His stance is ambivalent already in the Amores, but a clearer trajectory can be found in the erotodidactic works, the Medicamina faciei femineae, Ars amatoria, and Remedia amoris, where the praeceptor appears to move from a permissive outlook to a more distrustful one on both female and male cultus. Finally in the Tristia a self-proclaimed, even if not believed, lack of cultus is an important characteristic of the exilic book. The lecture will consider various possible explanations for such fluctuation in the treatment of cultus, from focusing in on the addressee of a work to differing rhetorical aims and beyond.

This should be useful especially to those taking the Ovid and the Latin Didactic papers at Greats, and also for the Latin Core.

Week 4

M. Marianna Leszczyk: ‘Reading ancient texts through trauma theory (with focus on Thuc.)’

This lecture will introduce you to reading ancient texts through the lens of trauma studies. Drawing on insights from memory studies and trauma theory, I will outline the complex relationship between trauma and language and the difficulties inherent in the representation of trauma. Using passages from Thucydides, I will demonstrate how you can detect the presence of trauma in an ancient text. I will also give you an overview of work done on trauma in Homer and Greek tragedy to demonstrate the wide applicability of this approach.

This lecture will be of general interest, but particular appeal to Mods candidates taking Homer Iliad, Thucydidies and the West, and Greats candidates taking the Greek Tragedy paper.

W. Vittorio Danovi: ‘Reading Vergil with ancient (and modern) commentaries’

Still resorted to as mines of observations and data which would not be otherwise available, ancient commentaries play a primary role in shaping our understanding of classical authors. The lecture aims at comparing the exegetical approaches of ancient and modern Vergilian commentaries and at offering some insights about what can be learnt from the former as to the geneses and the goals of the Aeneid, the Eclogues, and the Georgics.

The lecture is primarily addressed to Mods students preparing the Aeneid paper and to Greats students preparing the Latin Core and Latin Didactic papers.
Week 5

M. Laura Loporcaro: Looking Backwards: Approaching Cicero through Quintilian

If Cicero’s writings were lost, many fragments could be recovered from Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria*, the fullest extant treatise on ancient rhetoric, written in the 90s CE towards the end of Domitian’s reign. Fortunately, Quintilian has not become our main source for Cicero’s writings. Nevertheless, reading the *Institutio* as a key moment of Cicero’s early reception history can be instructive. Cicero is the author cited most often in the *Institutio*, figuring as an orator and rhetorical theorist, and also, less prominently, as a poet and statesman. This lecture will examine Cicero’s multiple presences in the *Institutio*. It will consider how Quintilian’s engagement with Cicero can help our own understanding of his writings and what it can tell us about a changed political situation, Quintilian’s own agenda, and the image of himself that Cicero left behind for future generations.

This lecture will be of interest to all those fascinated by the Roman Republic, but especially those taking the *Cicero the Orator* and *Cicero: Politics and Thought* papers at Greats.

W. Marcus Bell: ‘Greek Tragedy, Gender, and Sexuality’

We hope to have a summary for this lecture before Week 5.

Week 6

M. Holly Hunt: ‘Misogynistic Disparagement Humour in Aristophanes’

Does Aristophanes ‘unapologetically [posit] woman as humanity’s champion’ in the *Lysistrata*? How serious is the *apologia* for womankind in the *Thesmophoriazusae*? Starting with a discussion of contemporary humour theories, this lecture will use new cognitive approaches to analyse the *parabases* of the two ‘women’ plays of 411 BCE, considering how far the audience of comedy was encouraged to sympathise with women, and what these plays can reveal about the typical Athenian citizen’s attitude towards women.

This lecture will be particularly relevant for those taking Aristophanes’ *Political Comedy* at Mods or the Comedy option at Greats.

W. Samuele Coen: ‘Homer in 5th and 4th century education’

The Homeric poems were the basis of Greek *paideia* and thus it is not surprising that they were the core of Greek education. This lecture will explore how Homer was used at school and in general in the educational landscape, with particular focus on the sources from the 5th and 4th centuries BC, such as Plato and Aristophanes.

This lecture will interest all those – surely everyone – with a love for Homer (especially the *Iliad* at Mods and *Early Greek Hexameter Poetry* at Greats) or the history of Greek education and culture.