

DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

Greek 9902A Greek Narrative Hymns Course Outline

Fall 2023

The *Homeric Hymns* are a collection of thirty-three poems in hexameters that vary significantly in authorship, date, and provenance. Although commonly ascribed to Homer in antiquity, these poems seem to constitute a genre that is distinct from Homeric epic in important ways, focusing on the gods and their cults rather than heroes and the world of mortals. Consequently, in addition to being important works of Greek literature, these poems are key texts in the study of Greek myth and religion. This course will study two of the longer narrative Hymns, to Apollo and to Hermes, from the point of view of language and style, narrative technique, structure, as well as religious and social context. In addition, through a reading of Callimachus' Fifth Hymn, the *Baths of Pallas*, the Alexandrian reception of the early hymnic tradition will be considered.

Course Requirements:

- Mid-term test (Nov. 7) 25 %
- Research Paper:
 - Class Presentation 15 %
 - Essay (due end of term) 30%
- Final exam (during the December exam period) 30%

Prescribed Texts:*

N. J. Richardson, *Three Homeric Hymns: To Apollo, Hermes, and Aphrodite* (Cambridge 2010) ISBN 0521457742

R. Schmiel, *Callimachus' Hymns One, Two, Five, Six* (Bryn Mawr Commentaries 1984) ISBN 0929524055

* There are editions with commentary of the whole corpus of *Homeric Hymns* by Allen, Sikes, and Halliday (Oxford 1936) and in Italian by F. Càssola (Milan 1975). The latter is particularly important as a critical edition. Major editions of the *H.Herm.* have recently been published by A. Vergados (Berlin and Boston 2013), in German by J.-M. Schenk zu Schweinsberg (Heidelberg 2017), and by O. Thomas (Cambridge 2020). Callimachus' *Hymns* have been edited with translation and commentary by S. Stephens (Oxford 2015), and there is a major edition of the *Baths of Pallas* by A. W. Bulloch (Cambridge 1985). As a point of departure for research, there are three very useful collections of essays: A. Faulkner (ed.) *The Homeric Hymns: Interpretative Essays* (Oxford 2011); A. Faulkner, A. Vergados, and A. Schwab (eds), *The Reception of the Homeric Hymns* (2016); A. Faulkner and O. Hodkinson (eds), *Hymnic Narrative and the Narratology of Greek Hymns* (Leiden 2015).