THE ANCIENT ECONOMY

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Fickle humanity steals, discards, avoids, buys, hoards, covets and sells goods and services with such bewildering unpredictability that economists' predictions never have an even chance of being correct. The student who wishes to study the economy of the Classical Mediterranean has the added disadvantage of attitudes shaped by modern industrialization. A society whose majority performed agricultural labor bears no resemblance to the modern world, where most people in advanced countries live and work in cities.

Each participant in this seminar will consider and report on an economic document or economic aspect of the Ancient World -- for instance, Hesiod's Works and Days, Xenophon's Oeconomicus, the economic dimension of the Roman conquest of the Hellenistic East, and Diocletian's Edict on Prices. Introductory discussions on modern attitudes toward the economies of the Classical Mediterranean and pre-industrial societies in general will precede the reports on specific topics.

ASSIGNMENTS

All participants will present an oral report on an assigned topic. In addition, all undergraduate participants will submit in two drafts a final term paper (suggested maximum length: 10-15 pages); while all graduate participants may submit in one draft a final term paper (same suggested length) OR demonstrate significant progress on advanced degree work (especially theses and dissertations). A detailed course schedule will be distributed at the second meeting of the seminar.
A READING GROUP (OPTIONAL)

Students who wish may participate in a reading group which will meet one hour per week in addition to the regular Tuesday meeting time. The group will read in Greek Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*, the classical work which best treats the realm of economics as it was originally conceived -- a study of the management of the household. The meeting time of this reading group will be set in accordance with the schedules of the participants. The text used will be E. C. Marchant (ed.), *XENOPHANTIS OPERA OMNIA, II: COMMENTARII, OECONOMICUS* etc. (Oxford Classical Texts). Copies of this work will be available as a recommended purchase in the bookstore. For those who do not wish to buy this text, copies of XENOPHON: MEMORABILIA, OECONOMICUS (tr. E. C. Marchant/Loeb Classical Library) will be available as a required purchase at the bookstore. The reading group will start meeting in the fourth week of the semester.

READINGS

*Xenophon, Memorabilia; Oeconomicus*, etc. Harvard University Press: Loeb Classical Library #L168 (=vol. 4 of Xenophon ed.).
*S. Pomeroy, Xenophon's Oeconomicus: A Social and Historical Commentary*. Oxford University Press.
*Isocrates, Evagoras; Helen; etc.* Harvard University Press: Loeb Classical Library, #L373 (=vol. 3 of Isocrates ed.)


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