



A ROMAN ROADS MEDIA *Video Course*

Old Western Culture

A Christian Approach to the Great Books

THE GREEKS

DRAMA AND LYRIC

The Tragedies, Comedies, and Minor Poems



Wesley Callihan



Guide to the Art

ABOUT ROMAN ROADS MEDIA



ROMAN
ROADS
MEDIA

Roman Roads Media combines its technical expertise with the experience of established authorities in the field of classical education to create quality video resources tailored to the homeschooler. Just as the first century roads of the Roman Empire were the physical means by which the early church spread the gospel far and wide, so Roman Roads Media uses today's technology to bring timeless truth, goodness, and beauty into your home. By combining clear instruction with visual aids and examples, we help inspire in your children a lifelong love of learning. As homeschool graduates themselves, our producers know the value of excellent educational tools, and strive to ensure that Roman Roads' materials are of the highest caliber.

ABOUT OLD WESTERN CULTURE

Old Western Culture: A Christian Approach to the Great Books is an integrated humanities course designed to give students an overview of Western culture by studying the great books from a Christian perspective. The video series consists of four courses, designed to be completed over four years:

Year 1: The Greeks

Year 2: The Romans

Year 3: Christendom

Year 4: The Moderns



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Introduction and Overview

How to Use This Course

Old Western Culture: A Christian Approach to the Great Books is a four-year course of study designed for grades 9–12. Each year of *Old Western Culture* is a double-credit literature and social studies course. The four units that make up each year may also be used individually as one-quarter electives.

MATERIALS

- **DVD Lessons.** Instructor Wes Callihan's deep knowledge of the classics and decades of teaching experience are a rich resource for homeschool families.
- **The Great Books.** *Old Western Culture* immerses students in reading the classics themselves rather than just reading about them. *The Roman Roads Reader: Drama and Lyric* contains seven of the ten texts in this unit, and is available for \$22—a savings of more than \$50 compared to the cost of purchasing all of the books independently. Families have several options for acquiring the texts not included in the reader:
 1. Purchase the recommended translations. Visit the *Old Western Culture: The Greeks* page at www.romanroadsmedia.com, and click on the “Books” tab for Amazon links.
 2. Use copies you already own, even if they're not the recommended translations. Mr. Callihan frequently emphasizes the benefit of referencing multiple translations.
 3. Download ebook versions of the original source texts at romanroadsmedia.com/materials. These digital text versions are not the recommended translations, but they are satisfactory.
- **The Student Workbook.** Purchase a hard copy or download a free PDF at romanroadsmedia.com/materials. The workbook questions allow students to test their understanding of the reading assignments and the lectures. If you can't remember the answer to a video lecture question, visit the section of the DVD menu labeled “Study Question Links,” which hyperlinks each video questions to the relevant chapter of the lecture where the question is addressed.
- **Guide to the Art.** This publication extends the curriculum into an exploration of ancient art and more recent artistic responses to the literature.
- **Additional Resources.** Visit romanroadsmedia.com/old-western-culture-extras for an up-to-date list of additional resources.

RECOMMENDED SCHEDULE

Old Western Culture is designed to accommodate either traditional nine week-terms (for a thirty-six-week school year) or fast-track seven-week terms for advanced readers who can handle a more intense reading load. A recommended nine-week schedule is provided below. The seven-week schedule is available in the student workbook. We expect the average student to spend one to three hours per day on this course: first completing the assigned readings and answering the workbook questions related to the reading, and then watching the lectures and answering the video questions.

ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

In addition to the reading, lectures, and workbook questions, students will complete the following:

- **Term Paper.** The lists of discussion topics at the end of each lesson in the student workbook is a good place to look for paper topics. Students should also feel free to come up with their own original topics as long as they are based on the term's lectures or reading. We recommend a paper length of 750–1,200 words.
- **Final Exam.** Visit www.romanroadsmedia.com/materials to download the most recent final exams. Two options, Exam A and Exam B, are provided. The exams are similar in style and difficulty, but the content varies. Students who score lower than 90 percent on Exam A should take Exam B two days later to help reinforce subject mastery.

AGE LEVEL

In *Old Western Culture* students will encounter mature themes such as paganism, sexual immorality, detailed battle descriptions (mostly in actual reading), and nudity in classical painting and sculpture. We recommend the series for ages fourteen and above, but of course parents will want to consider the maturity levels of their children and decide whether *Old Western Culture* will be appropriate.

A NOTE ABOUT SPELLING

Most of the painting titles in this booklet reference names transliterated from Latin, while the student workbook uses Richmond Lattimore's transliterations, which are based on the Greek spellings. Both variations are acceptable and students are free to use whichever they prefer.

RECOMMENDED NINE-WEEK SCHEDULE

Color Key: Watch Lectures Answer Workbook Questions Read Texts Complete Additional Assignments

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	Lecture 1 Video Questions	Lecture 2 Video Questions	<i>Agamemnon</i>	<i>Agamemnon</i>	Reading Questions
2	Lecture 3 Video Questions	<i>Libation Bearers</i>	Reading Questions	<i>The Eumenides</i>	Reading Questions
3	Lecture 4 Video Questions	<i>Oedipus the King</i>	Reading Questions	Lecture 5 Video Questions	<i>Oedipus at Colonus</i>
4	Reading Questions	<i>Antigone</i>	Reading Questions	Lecture 6 Video Questions	<i>The Trojan Women</i>
5	Reading Questions	<i>Medea</i>	Reading Questions	Lecture 7 Video Questions	<i>The Frogs</i>
6	Reading Questions	<i>The Clouds</i>	Reading Questions	Lecture 8 Video Questions	Sappho, Pindar, and Theocritus Reading Questions
7	Lecture 9 Video Questions	<i>Works and Days</i> Reading Questions	Lecture 10 Video Questions	<i>The Fall of Troy</i>	Reading Questions
8	Lecture 11 Video Questions	<i>The Argonautica</i>	<i>The Argonautica</i>	Reading Questions	Lecture 12 Video Questions Paper: Draft Due
9	Exam A		Exam B (if score on Exam A is below 90%)		Paper: Final Due





Lesson 1

The Development of Theater



Pollice Verso

Jean-Léon Gérôme, AD 1872, oil on canvas, 96.5 x 149 cm.

Jean-Léon Gérôme is considered one of the most influential French painters from the period known as Academicism (influenced by the European art academies) that combined elements of both Neo-classicism and Romanticism. This painting is titled *Pollice Verso* (from the Latin, “with thumb turned”), referring to the judgement that the crowd would pronounce on a defeated opponent in the Roman gladiatorial games. The early Greek dramatists would have considered the violence of the Roman games obscene—literally, that which ought to take place “off-scene.” They believed that training yourself to see violence without the ability to take action was corrosive to the soul.

Incidentally, *Pollice Verso* reportedly played a role in inspiring Ridley Scot’s 2000 film, *Gladiator*.



Roman Theater at Bosra, Syria
Second Century AD

The Roman theater at Bosra was one of the largest ever constructed in the Roman world, with seating for about 15,000 spectators. It was built in the second century AD and is the best preserved theatre in the Middle East. Notice the well-preserved *skéné* in the background.



Lesson 2

The Period, the Poets, and the Presentation



The Acropolis, Athens, Greece

Fifth Century BC

The majestic beauty of the Acropolis was funded by the Athenians' unlawful use of the Delian League treasury—an act of imperial arrogance that sets the stage for the political satire of Aristophanes.



Lesson 3

Aeschylus: *Agamemnon*



The Sacrifice of Iphigenia

Jan Steen, AD 1671, oil on canvas, 135 x 173 cm.

Although Jan Steen was more famous for his paintings of everyday life during the Dutch Golden Age, *The Sacrifice of Iphigenia* is more evocative of the Italian High Renaissance in its classical subject matter, definite light source, and static composition (stability). The story of Iphigenia provides contextual backdrop to both *The Iliad* and *The Oresteia*. Agamemnon sacrifices his daughter Iphigenia so that Artemis will give the Greek fleet fair winds to Troy. The act provokes the anger of both his wife, Clytemnestra, and Achilles. Clytemnestra murders Agamemnon when he returns from Troy, largely on account of this wicked act.



Lesson 4

Aeschylus: *The Libation Bearers* and *The Eumenides*



Electra at the Tomb of Agamemnon
Frederic Leighton,
AD 1869,
oil on canvas,
150 x 75.5 cm.

Frederic Leighton was among the most famous painters of Victorian England. Focus on a solitary female figure was considered one of Leighton's artistic signatures. (Recall his painting "Nausicaa" from Unit 1: The Epics.) The dramatic pose, vivid facial emotion, and long dark robes all communicate a sense of Electra's palpable grief at the death her father as well as a foreshadowing of the cycle of violence that will continue to haunt the House of Atreus.



Lesson 5

Sophocles: *Oedipus the King*

Priestess at Delphi

John Collier, AD
1891, oil on canvas,
160 x 80 cm.

John Collier was an English writer and artist who painted in the Classicist and Pre-Raphaelite styles. His works were influenced by the style of Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema. (Recall “A reading from Homer”, from Unit 1.) Notice the gases rising from the chasm. Archeologists suspect that the alleged trance-like state from which the Pythia spoke notoriously ambiguous prophecies may have been related to the narcotic effects of hydrogen sulfide, ethylene, or benzene escaping from the earth. The Oracle at Delphi also plays an important role in several historical accounts that we will study next term.





Lesson 6

Sophocles: *Oedipus at Colonus* and *Antigone*



Oedipus at Colonus

Jean-Antoine-Théodore Giroust, AD 1788, oil on canvas,
165 x 194 cm.

French neoclassicist Jean-Antoine-Théodore Giroust studied alongside Jacques-Louis David as a teenager. *Oedipus at Colonus* was the work with which Giroust earned entrance to the French Académie. According to its inscription at the the Dallas Museum of Art, the painting “embodies the formal, thematic, and ethical issues of neoclassicism [and] depicts the climactic confrontation between the blind king Oedipus and his son Polynices, who had sent him into exile. Aware that the place of his father’s demise will be blessed, Polynices, with his sisters Antigone and Ismene, entreats the aged Oedipus to return to Thebes.” Disgusted with Polynices’ self-serving motives, Oedipus refuses his supplication. Notice the shallow and stage-like layout of the painting. Like the playwright himself, Giroust uses his own artistic medium to capture the drama of Sophocles’ tragedy.



Lesson 7

Euripides: *Medea* and *The Trojan Women*



Menelaus and Helen

450-40 BC 1788, red-figure krater

Red figure vase painting, developed in Athens around 520 BC, relies on the chemical properties of iron in the clay. By drawing outlines with charcoal, and then using a variety of protective coating methods during the firing process, the artists created resilient and sharp color contrasts as various areas of the design oxidized into one of three iron compounds: grayish iron oxide, red iron oxide (rust), and deep black iron oxide. In this red figure vase, an enraged Menelaus approaches Helen, but, having not seen her for ten years, he drops his sword as he is smitten by her beauty.



Jason Charming the Dragon

Salvator Rosa, c. AD 1665–70, oil on canvas, 78 x 66.5 cm.

Italian Baroque painter, poet, and printmaker Salvator Rosa lived a turbulent life. Some even speculate that he spent time in a band of outlaws! In this painting Jason attempts to steal the Golden Fleece by sedating the sleepless dragon with a potion from the sorceress Medea, whom Aphrodite has caused to fall in love with him. This event sets the backdrop for Euripides' tragedy *Medea*.



Lesson 8

Aristophanes: *The Frogs* and *The Clouds*



Ruins of the Temple of Bacchus

David Roberts, AD 1840, oil on canvas, 150 x 240 cm.

In the Spring of 1839 Scottish-born David Roberts wrote of the Temple of Bacchus in Baalbek, Lebanon, “The beauty of its form, the exquisite richness of its ornament, and the vast magnitude of its dimensions are altogether unparalleled.” Bacchus was the Roman realization of the Greek god Dionysus, who bring Euripides back from Hades to Athens in Aristophanes’ *The Frogs*.



Lesson 9

Lyric Poetry: Sappho, Pindar, and Theocritus



Sappho and Alcaeus

Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, AD 1881, oil on canvas, 66 x 122 cm.

Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema was a Dutch-born British painter who is best remembered for his realistic but idealized depictions of everyday Greek and Roman life. He is admired to this day for his masterful treatment of stone and marble in his paintings. *Sappho and Alcaeus* is a prime example of Alma-Tadema's style, with its classical subject matter, leisurely feel (recall *A Reading of Homer* from last term), marble setting, and vibrant blue sea in the backdrop. The painting depicts the poet Sappho and her companions listening to Alcaeus play a kithara (ancient Greek lyre) as he recites poetry. Though not much is known of Sappho's personal life, her poetry was well known and greatly admired throughout antiquity.



Lesson 11

Lesser Epics: Quintus of Smyrna's *The Fall of Troy*



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Penthesilea

Gabriel-Vital Dubray,
AD 1862

French sculptor Gabriel-Vital Dubray first exhibited his work in 1840. His statue of Penthesilea, queen of the mythical warrior women known as Amazons, is featured on the east façade of the Cour Carrée in the Louvre palace. The daughter of Ares and Otrera, Penthesilea accidentally killed her sister Hippolyta with a spear while they were deer hunting. Grief-stricken and desiring to appease the gods, Penthesilea sought an honorable death in battle. Quintus of Smyrna tells how she joined in the Trojan war on the side of Troy and vowed to kill Achilles, but was instead slain by him.



The Fire of Troy

Kerstiaen de Keuninck, seventeenth century AD,
oil on board, 76 x 50 cm.

Kerstiaen de Keuninck was a Flemish Baroque painter known for his landscapes. *The Fire of Troy* depicts a story that everyone in the ancient world was familiar with, but that is not actually recorded in Homer. *The Fall of Troy*, written almost a thousand years later by Quintus Smyrnaeus, fills in the centuries-old informally recorded narrative of the events between *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.



Lesson 12

Lesser Epics: Apollonius of Rhodes's *The Argonautica*



The Meeting of Dido and Aeneas

Nathaniel Dance-Holland, AD 1766, oil on canvas, 124 x 174 cm.

Sir Nathaniel Dance-Holland was an English portrait painter, politician, and founding member of the Royal Academy of Arts. In his painting *The Meeting of Dido and Aeneas*, we jump ahead to an episode from Virgil's *Aeneid*, the great Roman epic that we will study next year. Virgil was familiar with and influenced by Apollonius of Rhodes, and probably drew inspiration for Dido's character from Medea in *The Argonautica*. Though *The Argonautica* is nowhere near as famous as *The Aeneid*, no study of epic poetry would be complete without it.



The Alexander Mosaic (Detail)

Roman floor mosaic, c. 100 BC, 2.72 x 5.13 m

Discovered in the ruins of Pompeii in 1831, the Alexander Mosaic depicts a battle between the armies of Alexander the Great and Darius III of Persia. Though now badly damaged, the mosaic originally comprised about a million and a half tesserae, tiny stone tiles, that covered about 150 square feet of floor space. This detail of the figure of Alexander shows the shading effects created by the intricate tilework. Medusa is depicted on his breastplate.



Comprehensive List of Artwork in *The Greeks: Drama and Lyric*

Delve deeper into art history by exploring more of the works used to illustrate the lectures in *Old Western Culture*. The list below reflects the sequence in which the images are presented in the lessons.

Lecture 1: Background of Greek Drama: Development of Theater

Pollice Verso, Jean-Léon Gérôme, AD 1872

Chorus of Stilt Walkers (painted amphora), attributed to the “Swing Painter,” 550-25 BC

Lecture 3: Aeschylus’ Oresteia: *Agamemnon*

The Sacrifice of Iphigenia, Jan Steen, AD 1671

Tantalus, Gioacchino Assereto, c. AD 1630-40

Pelops and Hippodamia (terracotta relief, c. 27 BC–AD 68

The Last Supper, Leonardo da Vinci, AD 1495–98

Cassandra, Evelyn De Morgan, c. AD 1898

The Procession of the Trojan Horse in Troy, Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, c. AD 1773

Clytemnestra and Sleeping Agamemnon, Pierre-Narcisse Guérin, c. AD 1817

Lecture 4: Aeschylus’ Oresteia: *The Libation-Bearers* and *The Eumenides*

Electra at the Tomb of Agamemnon, Frederic Leighton, c. AD 1869

Orestes Slaying Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, Bernardino Mei, c. AD 1654

Orestes Pursued by the Furies, William-Adolphe Bouguereau, AD 1862

Pallas Athena (marble statue), first century BC

The School of Athens (detail: Plato and Aristotle), Raphael, AD 1509–11

Lecture 5: Sophocles’ *Oedipus the King*

Servant Carrying Oedipus (red-figure vase), c. 450-45 BC

Oedipus and the Sphinx, François-Xavier Fabre, c. AD 1806-08

Priestess of Delphi, John Collier, AD 1891

Tiresias Appears to Odysseus, Henry Fuseli, AD 1780–85

Wedding of Peleus and Thetis, Abraham Bloemaert, AD 1638

The Judgement of Paris (detail: Paris), Peter Paul Rubens, c. AD 1636

Oedipus and Antigone, Charles Jalabert, AD 1842

Lecture 6: Sophocles’ *Oedipus at Colonos* and *Antigone*

Blind Oedipus Commending His Children to the Gods, Bénigne Gagneraux, AD 1784

Oedipus at Colonos, Jean-Antoine-Théodore Giroust, AD 1788

Oedipus at Colonos, Fulchran-Jean Harriet, AD 1798

Theseus Victor of the Minotaur, Charles Edouard Chaise, c. AD 1791
Antigone, Frederic Leighton, AD 1882
Antigone in Front of Dead Polynices, Nikiphoros Lytras, AD 1865
Louis XIV of France, Hyacinthe Rigaud, AD 1701

Lecture 7: Euripides' *Medea* and *The Trojan Women*

Euripides (marble statuette), second Century AD
Fire of Troy, Kerstiaen de Keuninck, seventeenth century AD
The Death of Priam, Jules Joseph Lefebvre, AD 1861
Menelaus and Helen (red-figure krater), 450–40 BC
Helen and Menelaus, Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein, AD 1816
Hector's Departure from Andromache, Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein, AD 1812
Captive Andromache, Frederic Leighton, c. AD 1886–1888
Jason with the Golden Fleece (marble statue), Bertel Thorvaldsen, AD 1803
Jason Bringing Pelias the Golden Fleece (red-figure krater), c. 240 BC–AD 330
Jason Charming the Dragon, Salvator Rosa, c. AD 1665–70
Jason and Medea, John William Waterhouse, AD 1907
Medea and the Pleiades, Copy and Restoration of Stone Relief, fifth Century BC
Glauke: Pensive, Edwin Long, AD 1883
Medea, Eugène Delacroix, AD 1862
Medea Departing from Jason, Charles-André van Loo, AD 1760
Jason and Medea, Carle Van Loo, AD 1759

Lecture 8: Aristophanes' *The Frogs* and *The Clouds*

Charon Ferries Souls Across the Styx, Alexander Litovchenko, AD 1861

Lecture 9: Lyric Poetry: Sappho, Pindar, and Theocritus

Sappho and Alcaeus, Sir Laurence Alma Tadema, AD 1881
Fighting Pankratiasts (black-figure skyphos), c. 500 BC

Lecture 10: Lyric Poetry: Hesiod

Iron Age, John Flaxman, AD 1814–17

Lecture 11: Lesser Epics: Quintus of Smyrna's *The Fall of Troy*

Female Amazon Gladiator (copy and restoration of stone statue), fifth Century BC
Penthesilea, Gabriel-Vital Dubray, AD 1862
Achilles and Penthesilea, Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein, c. AD 1823
Eos Lifting Up the Body of Her Son Memnon (red-figure cup), c. 490–80 BC
Funeral Games in Honour of Patroclus, Antoine Charles Horace Vernet, c. AD 1790
The Funeral of Patroclus, Jacques-Louis David, AD 1778

Thetis Bringing the Armor to Achilles, Benjamin West, AD 1804
Suicide of Ajax the Great (red-figure calyx-krater), c. 400–350 BC
The Trojan Horse, Henri Paul Motte, AD 1874
Fire of Troy, Kerstiaen de Keuninck, seventeenth Century AD
Thetis Dipping Achilles in the River Styx, Peter Paul Rubens, AD 1630–35

Lecture 12: Lesser Epics: Apollonius of Rhodes's *The Argonautica*

Alexander Mosaic (detail: Alexander), c. 100 BC
Ptolemy II Philadelphus Examining a Roll of Papyrus, Vincenzo Camuccini, AD 1813
Jason with the Golden Fleece, Bertel Thorvaldsen, AD 1803
Pelias Meets Jason, Fresco, first century AD
Medea, Evelyn De Morgan, AD 1889
Eros (red-figure bobbin), c. 470–50 BC
The Meeting of Dido and Aeneas, Nathaniel Dance-Holland, AD 1766
Jason Charming the Dragon, Salvator Rosa, c. AD 1665–70
Circe Transforms Odysseus' Companions into Animals, Giovanni B. Castiglione, AD 1650–51
Circe Offering the Cup to Odysseus, John William Waterhouse, AD 1891



The Blind Oedipus Commending His Children to the Gods

Bénigne Gagneraux, 1784, oil on canvas

Drama and Lyric is the second installment in The Greeks, year one of the Old Western Culture series. Join Wesley Callihan as he uncovers the origins of Greek drama and guides students through some of the earliest comedies and tragedies known to the Western world. Learn how the political backdrop of the Greco-Persian wars informs our understanding of Athenian drama, as well as the comedies of Aristophanes—one of the earliest known examples of cultural and political satire. *Drama and Lyric* also covers some of the lesser known poets of Ancient Greece such as Sappho and Pindar, whose works are somewhat obscure, yet nevertheless affected the writing of men such as C. S. Lewis.



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