

School of Humanities

Department of Classics and Ancient History

Time, Temporality and Text

Professor Duncan Kennedy and Dr Ika Willis

Teaching Block 2

Unit Code CLAS32351, 40 credits

Unit Description – Time is one of the basic categories of human experience, but is peculiarly subject to cultural construction. In particular, our differing senses of time are encapsulated in the stories we tell. In this unit, as well as looking at the ways in which time has been conceptualized, past and present, we shall be examining a variety of texts, visual as well as written, ‘modern’ as well as ‘ancient’, to see how different types of writing and representation at different periods play with notions of time (speeding it up, slowing it down, even reversing it) and with the human experience of time to create different effects (e.g. inevitability, irony, suspense, pathos). Therefore we shall be looking at ancient epic, tragedy, historiography and philosophy but also such recent treatments of time as Martin Amis’ *Time’s Arrow*, films such as Christopher Nolan’s *Memento*, and the current interest in ‘counterfactual’ history.

Extended Description: (if applicable)

Contact Hours and Mode of Teaching: 4 hours per week, seminars.

Methods of Assessment:

1 essay of approx. 3000 words (25%); 1 seminar presentation (25%); 1 three-hour exam consisting of 3 passages (out of 8) for comment and two essay questions (out of 8). (50%)

Essential Reading

Homer, *Odyssey* (Lattimore tr.)

Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* (Fagles tr.)

Virgil, *Aeneid* (Penguin, West tr.)

George Orwell, *1984* (Penguin)

Martin Amis, *Time’s Arrow* (Penguin)

A selection of other set texts will be made available in a unit handbook

Further Information

A full bibliography and programme of study will be supplied in a unit handbook