AHIS4140 - Classical Studies Honours I

**Course Co-ordinator:** Jane Bellemore  
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**Ph:** 4921 5231  
**Fax:** 4921 6933  
**Email:** Jane.Bellemore@Newcastle.edu.au  
**Consultation hours:** open hours

**Semester**  
Semester 2 - 2006  
**Unit Weighting**  
20  
**Teaching Methods**  
Weekly seminars

**Brief Course Description**

This course is studied in conjunction with AHIS4150, AHIS4160, and AHIS4170. These courses exist for administrative purposes only, have no independent existence, and do not receive separate results. The four courses together constitute an Honours program in the history, society and literature of Greek and Roman antiquity. Knowledge of Greek and Latin is not essential, but may be useful. Those without such knowledge are encouraged to acquire some as part of their programme. This component consists of a supervised thesis for which supervision is by arrangement.

**Contact Hours**

2 Hours per Week for the Full Term

**Learning Materials/Texts**

Plutarch Life of the Younger Cato

**Course Objectives**

1. In depth understanding of aspects of ancient Greece and Rome, and of the methods of enhancing our knowledge of them.
2. Ability to understand, interpret and criticise complex ideas and texts
3. Ability to research and interpret issues in a chosen discipline at nationally recognised levels of competence, and to present results with clarity and effectiveness, primarily in written form.
4. Preparation for work-place situations that require an exceptional level of literacy, analytical skills, and capacity to argue.
5. Preparation for high-level research into the classical world, or for other research employing similar skills.
6. Qualification for postgraduate research degrees in Ancient History and related areas.

**Course Content**

The content of the Ancient History programme is fixed each year by consultation between the staff and intending students. However, students are required to take four strands from the following options:

1. A short compulsory thesis of 8000 words on a topic to be arranged
2. A single full-year course in the Latin or Greek language at the level appropriate to the student's previous language experience
3. One or more studies each in an aspect of ancient history
4. One or more studies each in an aspect of ancient literature, culture, or thought

NB: Students are also expected to attend the Discipline’s staff/student research seminars wherever possible. Attendance at some may be compulsory.

**Assessment Items**

| Essays / Written Assignments | Assessment is by three 2500-word research assignments or equivalent. Where appropriate an examination of 2.5 hours may be substituted for one research assignment |

**Assumed Knowledge**

An undergraduate major sequence in Ancient History or equivalent

**Callaghan Campus Timetable**

AHIS4140  Semester 2 - 2006

CLASSICAL STUDIES HONOURS I

Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science

Seminar Wednesday 10:00 - 12:00  [MCLG16b]  Plutarch

**Plagiarism**

University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if he or she presents the thoughts or works of another as one's own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

- copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
- using another’s ideas without due acknowledgment;
- working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently.

Plagiarism is not only related to written works, but also to material such as data, images, music, formulae, websites and computer programs.

Aiding another student to plagiarise is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty.

For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on Student Academic Integrity at the following link -


The University has established a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items please be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may -

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking).
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

**Written Assessment Items**

Students may be required to provide written assessment items in electronic form as well as hard copy.

**Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations**

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date, as advised in the Course Outline, unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension of time for submission of the item. University policy is that an assessment item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised.

Any student:

1. who is applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or
2. whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment;

must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, to the appropriate officer on the prescribed form.

Please go to the Policy and the on-line form for further information, particularly for information on the options available to you, at:


Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:

- Requests for Special Consideration must be lodged no later than 3 working days after the date of submission or examination.
- Requests for Extensions of Time on Assessment Items must be lodged no later than the due date of the item.
- Requests for Rescheduling Exams must be lodged no later than 5 working days before the date of the examination.
Your application may not be accepted if it is received after the deadline. Students who are unable to meet the above deadlines due to extenuating circumstances should speak to their Program Officer in the first instance.

**Changing your Enrolment**
The last dates to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS Census Dates) are:
For semester 2 courses: **31 August 2006**
Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester and prior to the commencement of the formal exam period. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result in a fail grade.
Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of semester/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester/trimester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with the Student Enquiry Centre.
To change your enrolment online, please refer to [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/changingenrolment.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/changingenrolment.html)

**Contact Details**
**Facility Student Service Offices**
**The Faculty of Education and Arts**
Room: GP1-22 (General Purpose Building)
Phone: 02 4921 5314

**Ourimbah Focus**
Room: AB1.01 (Administration Building)
Phone: 02 4348 4030

**The Dean of Students**
Dr Jennifer Archer
Phone: 02 4921 5806
Fax: 02 4921 7151
resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

**Deputy Dean of Students (Ourimbah)**
Dr Bill Gladstone
Phone: 02 4348 4123
Fax: 02 4348 4145

Various services are offered by the University Student Support Unit:

**Alteration of this Course Outline**
No change to this course outline will be permitted after the end of the second week of the term except in exceptional circumstances and with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of any approved changes to this outline.

**Web Address for Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards**

**Web Address for Rules Governing Postgraduate Academic Awards**

**Web Address for Rules Governing Professional Doctorate Awards**

**STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS**
The University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness.
If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies, please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.
Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register please contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 02 4921 5766, or via email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au
As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester.
For more information related to confidentiality and documentation please visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website at: [www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability)
Online Tutorial Registration:
Students are required to enrol for this course via the Online Registration system:
Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/
This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

Hard copy submission:
Type your assignments: All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 or double spacing, and include page numbers.
Word length: The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
Proof read your work: because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
Staple the pages of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
University coversheet: All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet:
Assignments are to be submitted directly to the Course Coordinator
Keep a copy of all assignments: All students must date stamp their own assignments using the machine provided. Mailed assignments to schools are date-stamped upon receipt. However, it is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in hard copy and on disk.

Online copy submission to Turnitin
In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of the following assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website:
All work
Prior to final submission, all students have the opportunity to submit one draft of their assignment to Turnitin to self-check their referencing.
Assignments will not be marked until both hard copy and online versions have been submitted. Marks may be deducted for late submission of either version.

Penalties for Late Assignments
Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted more than ten days after the due date will be awarded zero marks.

Special Consideration/Extension of Time Applications
Students wishing to apply for Special Consideration or Extension of Time should obtain the appropriate form from the Student Focus.
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/index.html

No Assignment Re-submission
Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.
Remarks
Students can request to have their work re-marked by the Course Coordinator or Discipline Convenor (or their delegate); three outcomes are possible: the same grade, a lower grade, or a higher grade being awarded. Students may also appeal against their final result for a course. Please consult the University policy at:

Return of Assignments
Students will be informed when marked assignments will be available for collection.

Preferred Referencing Style
In this course, it is recommended that you use in-text referencing of ancient sources, and that you use footnotes (or endnotes) for modern sources. In footnotes, it is enough to use the surname of the modern authority, followed by a page number (e.g. Jones, 52), unless there is some ambiguity (e.g. Jones (1966) 52, Jones (1989) 21). Consistency and comprehensibility are the only criteria. At the end of the paper, however, provide a bibliography of all works cited, separating ancient from modern, and give full bibliographical listing of all works, including translators, etc. This section should appear on a separate page, headed ‘Bibliography’. Further information on referencing and general study skills can be obtained from:

Student Representatives
We are very interested in your feedback and suggestions for improvement. Student Representatives are the channel of communication between students and the School Board. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on the School website.

Student Communication
Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

Essential Online Information for Students
Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at:

Grading guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fail (FF)</td>
<td>An unacceptable effort, including non-completion. The student has not</td>
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<td>understood the basic principles of the subject matter and/or has been unable</td>
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<td>to express their understanding in a comprehensible way. Deficient in terms</td>
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<td>of answering the question, research, referencing and correct presentation</td>
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<td>(spelling, grammar etc.). May include extensive plagiarism.</td>
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<td>Pass (P)</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a reasonable attempt to answer the question,</td>
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<td>shows some grasp of the basic principles of the subject matter and a basic</td>
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<td>knowledge of the required readings, is comprehensible, accurate and</td>
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<td>adequately referenced.</td>
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<td>Credit (C)</td>
<td>The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question, a capacity</td>
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<td>to integrate research into the discussion, and a critical appreciation of</td>
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<td>a range of different theoretical perspectives. A deficiency in any of the</td>
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<td>above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought.</td>
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<td>The work is coherent and accurate.</td>
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<td>Distinction (D)</td>
<td>Evidence of substantial additional reading and/or research, and evidence</td>
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<td>of the ability to generalise from the theoretical content to develop an</td>
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<td>argument in an informed and original manner. The work is well organised,</td>
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<td>clearly expressed and shows a capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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<td>High Distinction (HD)</td>
<td>All of the above, plus a thorough understanding of the subject matter</td>
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<td>based on substantial additional reading and/or research. The work shows a</td>
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<td>high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful</td>
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<td>discussion of the topic, particularly the theoretical issues involved, and</td>
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<td>demonstrates a well-developed capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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<td>Week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week One</td>
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<td><strong>No meeting</strong></td>
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<td>1. Week Two</td>
<td>26th July</td>
<td>Life and works of Plutarch</td>
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<td>2. Week Three</td>
<td>2nd August</td>
<td>Plutarch Cato minor 1-15</td>
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<td>3. Week Four</td>
<td>9th August</td>
<td>Plutarch Cato m 16-29</td>
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<td>4. Week Five</td>
<td>16th August</td>
<td>Plutarch Cato m 29-46</td>
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<td>5. Week Six</td>
<td>23rd August</td>
<td>Plutarch Cato m 47-58</td>
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<td>Week Seven</td>
<td>30th August</td>
<td><strong>No classes</strong></td>
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<td>6. Week Eight</td>
<td>6th September</td>
<td>Plutarch Cato m 59-73</td>
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<td>7. Week Nine</td>
<td>13th Sept.</td>
<td>Comparison of Cato m with Phocion</td>
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<td>8. Week Ten</td>
<td>20th Sept.</td>
<td>Genre of biography</td>
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<td>9. Week Eleven</td>
<td>27th Sept.</td>
<td>Sources for the Cato minor</td>
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<th>Semester Break (From Mon 2nd to Fri 13th October inclusive)</th>
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<td>10. Week Twelve</td>
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<td>11. Week Thirteen</td>
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<td>12. Week Fourteen</td>
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Assessment

Assessment is by three 2500-word research assignments, to give a total of 7500-8000 words. You may, however, choose another configuration, if that suits your needs. If you choose to do three essays, you should hand these in at regular intervals through the semester, one every four or five weeks (e.g., the first during Week 7, the second in the first week of the break, and the third at the end of the semester), but if you choose to do two 4,000-word essays, for example, you would submit these in, say, Week 8 or 9 and at the end of semester. It is up to you to choose a format and a timetable, but you should keep in constant communication with me on the subjects and dates, etc.

I would like to discuss all work with students long before essays are submitted. In addition, I expect the essay-format to be adhered to quite rigidly, with the nature of the ‘problem’ or ‘topic’ to be outlined in some detail first, along with a methodological statement included as part of the introductory section of an essay. Then the work should examine the relevant evidence, and finally draw conclusions. We should see literary skills in the overall presentation of work, as well as logical and analytic skills in the argumentation. An in-depth degree of research should also be evident in the essay, such as, for example, in the secondary literature in the footnotes and fully annotated in the bibliography. At the basis of each essay, however, should be the ancient evidence, the fabric from which all arguments are constructed.

I would like your work to be handed in at regular intervals, since this will enable me to get your marked work, with feedback, returned to you quickly. If any emergency arises, let me know, and some arrangements will be made.

Many ancient sources and modern articles are available on-line (e.g through Lacus Curtius: http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/home.html), and you may obtain other articles through the library via get it (for which you will have to register), but please come to see me if you require access to any literature not on-line.

See the databases:  
L’Annee philologique (accessible to you via the library)  
http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/cgi-bin/amphoras/tocfind  
Week Two

1. Life and Works of Plutarch

Find out as much biographical detail as you can on Plutarch. See general introductions to be found as prefaces to texts and translations of Plutarch’s works.

As part of this study, examine Plutarch’s short essay, *Consolation to his wife*. How does Plutarch present himself and his family life?

Gather detail about Plutarch’s extant works. What sort of works did he compose?

How might Plutarch’s wealth, background, lifestyle and political career have affected the way he presented characters from the Late Republic?

**Bibliography**

Brenk, F.E.  ‘The eschatological dimension of Plutarch’s biographies’ in *The statesman in Plutarch’s works*, ed. L. de Blois, at al. (Leiden, 2005) 61-73 (920.038 PLUT-2 BLOI 2004 V.2)

Harrison, G.W.M.  ‘Plutarch the dramaturg’ in *The statesman in Plutarch’s works*, ed. L. de Blois, at al. (Leiden, 2005) 53-9


1-8  Ancestry, birth and early life

9-15  First post: military tribune, followed by travels in the east

Consider the way that Plutarch has deal with these sections of Cato’s life. What literary devices has he used to display the character of Cato, and do these differ from section to section? Is this hagiography?

How much do the historical concerns of the period (e.g. Livius Drusus, tribune of 91, Social War) interest Plutarch? Do these have a role to play in the way he presents his biographical material?

Was Cato’s early life unusual in any way? How does Plutarch see Cato’s family?

What were the functions of a military tribune of the time of Cato? Cf. Suet. Caes. 5

In general, how credible is this material? What public records would have been available on Cato’s early life?

**Bibliography**


Gruen, E.  Last Generation of the Roman Republic (Berkeley, 1974) (320.93705 GRUE)

McDermott W. C.  ‘Cato the Younger. Loquax or eloquens?’ Classical Bulletin 46 (1970) 65-75


Pelling, C.  ‘Childhood and personality in Greek biography’ in Characterization and Individuality in Greek Literature (Oxford, 1990) 213-44 (880.9001 PELL)

Tatum, W. J.  The patrician tribune: Publius Clodiatus Pulcher (Chapel Hill, c1999) (937.06092 CLO)
Week Four

3. Plutarch Cato m. 16-29
66 to 62 BC

Cato’s quaestorship: what were Cato’s functions and what was the political background? Why does Plutarch spend so much time describing Cato’s tenure of this office? What are the main literary developments seen in this year of office?

Cato’s tribunate: what were Cato’s functions? What were the main events of 63/2? What role does the Catilinarian conspiracy play in Cato’s period of office? See esp. Sallust Bellum Catilinae 52.

What is the effect of the digression on Cato’s women (24-5)?

Bibliography

Bellemore, J. ‘The quaestorship of Cato and the tribunate of Memmius’, Historia 45 (1996) 504-8 (S930.5 1)
Harris W. V. ‘The development of the quaestorship, 267-81 B.C.’ Classical Quarterly 26 (1976) 92-106
Pelling, C.B.R. ‘Plutarch and Catiline’, Hermes 113 (1985) 311-29 (S480.5/6)
Ridley R. T. ‘Notes on the establishment of the tribunate of the plebs’, Latomus 27 (1968) 535-54 (S870.5/2)
Stokes S. V. ‘M. Porcius Cato Uticensis’, Ancient Society 16 (1986) 19-51 AUCH $930.0705/1
Tatum, W. J. The patrician tribune: Publius Clodius Pulcher (Chapel Hill, c1999) (937.06092 CLO)
Consider Cato’s alleged interaction with Pompey, the most powerful man in the Roman world. What does this material indicate about Cato’s political leanings and about his character? How does Plutarch see Cato’s opposition to Pompey as part of the formation of the so-called First Triumvirate? Does Plutarch see any philosophical differences between the Optimates (Lucullus, Cato, etc.) and the Populares (Pompey, Caesar, Crassus, et al.)?

There is much benefit to be gained from reading Cicero’s letters from 61 to 59, particularly those to Atticus (ad Att. 1.12 ff.)

What was the importance of Cato’s command in Cyprus? See Florus 1.44
How does Plutarch characterise relations between Romans and others?
What is the role of Munatius?
What criticisms were made of Cato over this command?

How does Plutarch depict the power and influence of Cato after the Conference at Luca in 56? Consider his praetorship of 54 (44).

**Bibliography**

Badian E., M. ‘Porcius Cato and the annexation and early administration of Cyprus’, *Journal of Roman Studies* 55 (1965) 110-21
Brennan, T.C. *The Praetorship in the Roman Republic* (Oxford, 2000) (937.02 BREN)
Frost, B-P. ‘An interpretation of Plutarch’s Cato the Younger’, *HPTh* 18.1 (1997) 1-23
Linderski J. ‘The aedileship of Favonius, Curio the younger, and Cicero’s election to the augurate’, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 76 (1972) 181-200
Stokes S. V. ‘M. Porcius Cato Uticensis’, *Ancient Society* 16 (1986) 19-51
Tatum, W. J. *The patrician tribune: Publius Clodius Pulcher* (Chapel Hill, c1999) (937.06092 CLO)
5. Plutarch Cato m. 47-58
53-46 BC

Why is the death of Clodius in early 52 BC missing from chapter 48? (that of Crassus too, in 53 BC)? (On Clodius’ death, read Cicero Pro Milone, LCL vol. 14, trans N.H. Watts)

Why does Plutarch see Cato as the architect of Pompey’s third (sole) consulship, and how does he portray Cato’s actions during 52? How does Plutarch explain Cato’s failure to win the consulship (during 52) for 51 BC? Does he accept Cato’s own explanation (50)?

Does Plutarch adequately depict the background to the outbreak of civil war (51)? Why does Plutarch omit the actions of the senate that provoked Caesar? See, for example, the sources collected by Sabben-Clare for 51 and 50, and read the first part of Caesar’s Civil Wars.

What was Cato’s role during the civil war?

In chapter 54, Plutarch claims that Pompey refused to give Cato a command over the fleet, although he gave one to Cato’s son-in-law Bibulus. Is Plutarch’s a reasonable claim (cf. 55)?

Why does Plutarch refer so often to Cato’s family (e.g. 54)?
Why the focus on Cato’s relations with Juba and Scipio (57-8). Cf. Caes. African War. 57

Bibliography

Burns A. ‘Pompey's strategy and Domitius' stand at Corfinium’, Historia 15 (1966) 74-95
Stocker A.F. ‘The legis dies of Caesar’s command in Gaul,’ CJ 56 (1961) 242-8
Tatum, W. J. The patrician tribune: Publius Clodius Pulcher (Chapel Hill, c1999) (937.06092 CLO)
How does Plutarch depict the aftermath of the Battle of Thapsus (4th April, 46)? Compare with the account given by the Caesarian continuator in the African War.

How does Plutarch explain Cato’s decision not to join his allies, nor fight on?

Discuss Cato’s alleged treatment of the people of Utica?

What are the main elements of Cato’s death as reported by Plutarch (from 64, but in earnest from 67-70). Compare his account with that offered by ‘Caesar’s’ African War (86-9)?

Why is the death so important? See also Florus 2.1370-2; Appian Civil Wars 2.98-9; Dio 43.10-11. Note that Velleius does not mention Cato’s death.

What does the aftermath of Cato’s death reveal about the man?

Why does Plutarch omit the famous deaths of Juba and Petreius (Caes. Af.W. 94)?

Is it just to call a death, such as that of Cato depicted by Plutarch, suicide?

Bibliography

Week Nine

Comparison between Cato M. and Phocion

Draw some major parallels between the two lives. What made them alike enough for Plutarch to have seen a possibility for comparison?

What difference in birth, deeds and character can you discern?

Why do you think that Plutarch did not provide a syncrisis (comparison) between his characters? Note, for example, what Plutarch has said in comparison of Sertorius and Eumenes.

Were Cato and Phocion good comparators?

Bibliography

Larmour, D.H.J. ‘Making Parallels: Synkrisis and Plutarch’s “Themistocles And Camillus”’, Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt II.33.6 (Berlin, 1992) 4154-200
Tritle, L.A. Phocion the Good (London, 1988) (938.07 TRIT)
Stadter, P. ‘Paradoxical paradigms, Lysander and Sulla’ in Plutarch and the historical tradition (London, 1992)
Week Ten

Comparative Biography - Plutarch's thesis

How good a biography is Plutarch’s Cato? What are its strengths and weaknesses?

Does the comparison between Cato and Phocion tell us more about these two men?

Why did Plutarch write as he did?

Bibliography

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Week Eleven

Sources for the Cato m

Who were the major sources for Plutarch’s Cato minor?

Discuss each source and his philosophy.

What particular influences would these sources have imparted to their constructions of Cato?

How independent of these was Plutarch?

How much does Plutarch’s Cato m owe to its sources?

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Week Twelve

Plutarch's reconstruction of the late Republic
A case-study

Examine two incidents reported in the Life of Cato, the first in 33, attached to the year of Caesar’s consulship 59 BC, and the second in 43, assigned to 55 BC.

Discuss the events of 59 relating to Plut. Cat. 33.

Discuss the events of 55 relating to Plut. Cat. 43.

Are these doublets?

What light does your examination throw on Plutarch’s techniques of composition?

For other ancient sources, see Sabben-Clare.

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Plutarch’s historical reliability

What are the strengths of Plutarch as a recorder of the history of the Late Republic? Cite some instances.

What are the weaknesses of Plutarch in the late Republic? Cite specific examples where Plutarch’s technique has led him astray in the Cato m

What criteria should we observe in using Plutarch as a historian?

What level of trust should we put in his material?

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Week Fourteen

Cato Uticensis, the man and his reputation

Most ancient sources regard Cato almost as a saint. Consider:

Velleius Paterculus 2.35

Dio 38.3, 43.10-13

What kind of biography has Plutarch created?

Why has Plutarch written of Cato as he did?

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