## ESSAY 03 • CLAS014 • HUMANITIES, I: OLD WORLD ENCOUNTERS • PROMPTS AND GUIDELINES

## DRAFT MON 23 NOV • CONFERENCES 27 NOV–2 DEC • FINAL ESSAY TUE 04 DEC

FOCUS on **Ibn Battuta *Travels*** and **Álvares *Prester John***, citing them often (as the main course)  
refer to **Ibn Fadlan** and **Ibn Munqidh**, citing them occasionally (as side dishes)  
sparingly cite Herodotus and Megasthenes (to add some spice)

*please pick one topic below that differs from your Essay 02  
use each for inspiration – but do not follow them thoughtlessly*

ETHNIC MIRROR

How do accounts of foreign cultures tell us more about authors’ own? How do descriptions of foreign food, appearances, etc. reinforce the author’s own norms? How do authors remain open to new experiences (or not)?

RELIGION

Why and how do our authors accommodate foreign beliefs (or not)? How do descriptions of foreign beliefs, rituals, fasting, rites of passage, etc. reinforce the author’s own norms? How do authors remain open to new beliefs (or not)? How and do they depict non-believers positively?

WOMEN

Ancient travelers’ tales were written by, for, and about men. How do accounts of foreign women confirm the authors’ own conceptions of women (or not)? How do unequal power relations reinforce norms, i.e. gender roles? How are depictions of maidenhood, marriage and motherhood used?

SLAVES

Ancient travelers’ tales were written by, for, and about free men. How do accounts of slaves/servants confirm the authors’ own self conceptions? How do unequal power relations reinforce norms? How is slavery legitimized?

SCIENCE/MEDICINE

What scientific methods do our authors employ (e.g. observation, hypothesis, experiment)? How do they treat illnesses and injuries? How do these authors remain open to new or foreign methods and treatments (or not)?

LAW

What legal methods do our authors employ (e.g. trial by ordeal, *lex talionis*)? How do they judge and punish? How do these authors remain open to new or foreign methods (or not)?

OPEN

Compare ancient sources concerning a topic of your choice (see me for prior approval). How can we explain their similarities (and differences)? How are their similarities important?

BE CLEAR • BE BRIEF • BE SPECIFIC — 1000-word limit

ORGANIZE BY TOPIC • DEMONSTRATE THE DEPTH OF YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Each paragraph should have a specific comparison involving two or more sources

CITE OFTEN • DEMONSTRATE YOUR COMMAND OF THE ANCIENT SOURCES

Focus on ancient primary sources. Use specific passages to establish comparisons.

You may refer to ONE secondary sources for this essay—but only with prior approval

CITE FORMAT

Use an abbreviated “Sacred Text” format for parenthetical citation of ancient primary sources.  
Use “Author-Date” format for parenthetical citation of modern secondary sources.

Refer to the “How to Essay” video for explanation of these points: www.phoinikeia.org/inhu/014/lectures/clas014\_how-to-essay.pptx  
Contact me if you have any questions: bgarnand@gmail.com

**THE RULES**

Basic Principles of Composition and Usage

# VOICE

## Use the active voice.

(Hacker 2008:3 no.2; Strunk and White 2000: no.14; Orwell 1946: no.4)

# TENSE

## Use the past tense.

(Hacker 2008:9, no.5b; Strunk and White 2000: no.21)

N.B. Dead authors speak in the past tense, although their texts may speak in the present.

# SPECIFICITY

## Use definite, specific, concrete language.

(Strunk and White 2000: no.16)

# BREVITY

## Use shorter words; omit needless words.

(Hacker 2008:2-­lZI 3, no.1; Strunk and White 2000: no.17; Orwell 1946: no.2-­lZI 3)

# CLARITY

## Use everyday words before foreign phrases, jargon, metaphors, and figurative language.

(Hacker 2008:16-­lZI 19, no.9; Strunk and White 2000:76-­lZI 79; Orwell 1946: no.1, 5)

# ORGANIZATION

## Choose a suitable design and hold to it; compose in paragraphs.

(Hacker 2008:198-­lZI 199, no.39; Strunk and White 2000: no.12-­lZI 13)

# FLEXIBILITY

## Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.

(Orwell 1946: no.6)

N.B. This concession in no way weakens the rules cited above.

tD. Hacker. 2008. *A Pocket Style Manual* (5th edition). Bedford/St. Martins.

G. Orwell. 1946. Politics and the English Language. *Horizon* 13.76: 252-­lZ265.

W. Strunk and E. B. White. 2008. *Elements of Style* (50th Anniversary Edition). Longman.