

## COL 243 – Fall 2008

### Proportion, Measure, and Virtue: The Development of Justice in the Ancient World

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Office hours: Mon. 1:00-3:00pm (Russell 211); Wed. 1:00-3:00pm (Butterfield C-512) and by appointment

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Office hours: Mon. 10:30am-12:00pm; Thurs. 2:45-4:15pm (Butterfield C-415) and by appointment

#### Description

We will be studying the thought and culture of the ancient world through historical, philosophical, and literary records of classical Greece and Rome, and through Jewish and Christian scriptures. Diverse as the societies and the texts representing them are, they exhibit fascinating and complex threads of connexion and analogy. Among these are an interest in origins, of the natural world and of humankind, and of human customs; in the relations between the natural and the supernatural, variously understood as between forces ascribable to the ordinary processes of nature and forces that cannot be explained by such processes; between human powers and forces that seem to lie beyond human control, such as fate; and in the explanation of human social and political life, including the ideas and institutions that serve to regulate it.

Of these latter, we have chosen one that was thought to be of paramount importance in classical and biblical antiquity, the idea of justice, as our central thematic concern. We will seek primarily to explore the evolution of this thematic idea and its practical manifestations within various historical contexts, but with a view to reaching an understanding of its significance to our contemporary world, and therefore, with appropriate sensitivity to and interest in ancient representations of women, as much as of men, and of the dynamics of power relations among different peoples in the ancient world. We will be especially interested in tracing the origins and development of the parallel between the human response to external forces and the idea of an individual soul wherein different forces can be in conflict. The readings selected to investigate this theme are seminal texts in antiquity that have had and continue to have lasting influence on the western tradition. Together, we will examine how the idea of justice arises in these works both implicitly and explicitly, often in contexts of struggle, though always with the aim of achieving some sort of balance: externally, between individuals or groups with competing interests and concerns, as well as internally, between the voices competing for dominance within oneself.

#### Readings

The translations below are required and available at Broad Street Books. ISBN numbers are provided in case you wish to purchase the texts online. Many different editions of these texts are available, but it's important you obtain the translations below so that we're all on the same page for classroom discussion. Note that the assigned reading for each class does not include the various introductions, notes, and glossaries in each edition, but this material is strongly recommended for a deeper understanding of the primary texts.

Aeschylus, *Oresteia*, translated by Alan Shapiro and Peter Burian [019513592X]  
Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, translated by Terence Irwin [0872204642]  
Augustine, *Confessions*, translated by R.S. Pine-Coffin [014044114X]  
Cicero, *On Moral Ends*, translated by Raphael Woolf [0521669014]  
Euripides, *Medea*, translated by Diane Svarlien [0872209237]  
Hesiod, *Works and Days / Theogony*, translated by Stanley Lombardo [0872201791]  
*Holy Bible*, Revised Standard Version [0452006473]  
Homer, *Iliad*, translated by Richmond Lattimore [0226469409]  
Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, translated by Rolfe Humphries [0253200016]  
Plato, *Republic*, translated by G.M.A. Grube, revised by C.D.C. Reeve [0872201368]  
Sophocles, *Three Theban Plays*, translated by Robert Fagles [0140444254]  
Tacitus, *Annals of Imperial Rome*, translated by Michael Grant [0140440607]  
Thucydides, *Landmark Thucydides*, edited by Robert Strassler [0684827905]

## Organisation

Two notes:

1. Please note that three Tuesday classes (September 30, October 14, and October 21) have been displaced to the preceding Sundays (September 28, October 12, and October 19, respectively). Attendance at these Sunday classes is as mandatory as at any of the other classes throughout the semester. We will meet on these days at the same time and place: 1:00-2:20pm in Butterfield C-314.
2. At our first meeting, we will divide the class into four groups of 4 to 5 members, and the members of each of these groups, in rotation, will have the responsibility of submitting to both instructors via e-mail ([tirani@wesleyan.edu](mailto:tirani@wesleyan.edu) and [hneedler@wesleyan.edu](mailto:hneedler@wesleyan.edu)), the night before every class, a question about the reading assigned for that class. These questions should be thoughtfully composed and intended to stimulate discussion. We will give all questions careful consideration and hope to discuss them together in class. It probably won't be possible to address all of them, and at times, perhaps, not even more than one in a given class, but they will to the extent possible be used in classroom discussion. These questions are to be submitted by midnight on the night before each class. For the first class of September 2, on Hesiod's *Theogony*, you are all invited to submit a question by midnight on September 1.

Tues. September 2:	Hesiod, <i>Theogony</i>
Thurs. September 4:	Homer, <i>Iliad</i> , Book I-VIII
Tues. September 9:	Homer, <i>Iliad</i> , Book IX-XVI
Thurs. September 11:	Homer, <i>Iliad</i> , Book XVII-XXIV
Tues. September 16:	Aeschylus, <i>Oresteia – Agamemnon, Libation Bearers</i>
Thurs. September 18:	Aeschylus, <i>Oresteia – Libation Bearers</i> (cont'd); <i>Eumenides</i>
Tues. September 23:	Euripides, <i>Medea</i>
Thurs. September 25:	Sophocles, <i>Oedipus the King</i>
[Sun. September 28]:	<i>Genesis</i> 1-38
Mon. September 29:	* * * <b>FIRST PAPER DUE</b> * * *
Thurs. October 2:	Thucydides, <i>History of the Peloponnesian War</i> , 1.1-23, 1.66-88, 1.118-125, 1.140-146
Tues. October 7:	Thucydides, <i>History of the Peloponnesian War</i> , 2.35-54, 2.65, 3.37-68, 3.81-85, 5.84-116
Thurs. October 9:	Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Books I-IV
[Sun. October 12]:	Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Books V-VII
Thurs. October 16:	Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Books VIII-X
[Sun. October 19]:	Aristotle, <i>Physics</i> , Book II, chapter 3 (handout); <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Books I-II
Thurs. October 23:	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Books III, V, VII
	[Fall Break]
Thurs. October 30:	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Books VIII-X
Tues. November 4:	Cicero, <i>De Finibus</i> , Books I-III
Thurs. November 6:	Tacitus, <i>Annals of Imperial Rome</i> , Chapters 1, 10-12, 14.
Fri. November 7:	* * * <b>SECOND PAPER DUE</b> * * *
Tues. November 11:	Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses – Arachne, Philomela and Procne, Medea, Daedalus and Icarus</i>
Thurs. November 13:	<i>Genesis</i> 39-50; <i>Deuteronomy</i> 16.18-20, 17.2-7
Tues. November 18:	<i>Judges</i> 4-5; <i>Numbers</i> 27.1-11; <i>Job</i>

Thurs. November 20: *Gospel of Matthew*  
Tues. November 25: St. Paul's *Letter to the Romans*

[Thanksgiving Break]

Tues. December 2: Augustine, *Confessions*, Books I-VIII  
Thurs. December 4: Augustine, *Confessions*, Books IX-XI

Mon. December 8: \* \* \* **THIRD PAPER DUE** \* \* \*