Syllabus for the Stanford Program in STRUCTURED LIBERAL EDUCATION

Fall 1985

Department: 999
Course: 091
Units: 09
INTRODUCTION

This syllabus contains the academic calendar for the Program in Structured Liberal Education, the weekly reading assignments, lectures, discussions, films, etc. It should be used as a guide in preparing for the work of the Program. By studying it earlier rather than later, you can pace your work to ensure proper preparation for seminar participation. You should prepare the assigned texts before the first plenary session of each week.

The syllabus also contains Study Questions which deserve your attention. These questions are intended to stimulate your thinking about the topics and texts for each week. They do not require specific answers and are at times purposefully broad. They will not appear on the final examination, nor will they necessarily be used during discussion. They are meant, rather, to illustrate the kinds of questions you should be asking yourself about the topics and texts. You should think about them not only because they are valuable and relevant in and of themselves, but also because they are a means to learn how to generate questions. A question that is asked, and the way in which it is asked, is as important as the answer that is provided.

One should not study contemporaries and competitors, but the great men of antiquity whose works have for centuries received equal homage and consideration. Indeed, a person of really superior endowments will feel the necessity of this, and it is just this need for intercourse with great predecessors which is the sign of a higher talent. Let us study Moliere, let us study Shakespeare, but above all things, the old Greeks, and always the Greeks.

--Goethe
(Gespräche mit Goethe in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens)

"Each one of us must organize the chaos in himself by thinking himself back to his true needs. He will want all his honesty, all the sturdiness and sincerity in his character to help him revolt against secondhand thought, secondhand learning, secondhand action. And he will begin then to understand that culture can be something more than a decoration of life...And thus the Greek idea...will be discovered in him, the idea of a culture as a new and finer nature, without distinction of inner and outer, without convention or disguise, as a unity of thought and will, life and appearance."

--Friedrich Nietzsche
(The Use and Abuse of History)
SLE Faculty

Lawrence Ryan
Professor of Humanities, Director of SLE, Director of Humanities Honors Program, Interests in Renaissance English literature, Shakespeare, Italian literature, and culture. 497-3433 (office)

Steven Fuller
Lecturer SLE, Program Co-ordinator for SLE, Phd. candidate in German Studies (Philosophy), Research interests in the rise of German fascism, German and Austrian drama, classical German philosophy, acting and directing. 497-4205 (SLE office), 329-8903 (home)

Amy Sims
Lecturer in SLE, Resident Fellow Florence Moore Hall, Assistant to the Director of Overseas Studies. Ph.D. in Modern European History. Research interests in the Third Reich, Modern German cultural and political history, historiography. 497-3555 (office)

John Goheen
Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, Ombudsperson Office. Research interests in the pre-Socratic philosophers, Plato, Aquinas, Alfred Whitehead. 497-3682 or 497-2472 (office)

George Cattermole
Lecturer in SLE, Ph.D. in Philosophy. Research interests in Marxism and alienation, political philosophy and the philosophy of education. 726-9590 (home), 497-2472 (office)

Leigh Sealy
Lecturer in SLE, Ph.D. in Drama. Research interests in dramatic literature and criticism, theater history, and play analysis. Strong interest in directing and acting. 493-2189 (home)

Gregson Davis
Associate Professor of Classics, Research interests in Latin lyric, comparative mythology, West Indian literature and culture. 497-9031 (office), 323-7565 (home)

Suzanne Greenberg
Lecturer in SLE, Ph.D. in History of Education. Research interests in Modern Jewish history and history of Victorian England. 326-5548 (home)
REQUIRED TEXTS

Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound and Other Plays* (Penguin Press)
Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* (New American Library/Mentor)
Aristotle, *Introduction to Aristotle* (Modern Library)
Euripides, *Ten Plays* (Bantam Books)
Homer, *The Odyssey* (Anchor Books)
Pollitt, *Art and Experience in Classical Greece* (Cambridge University Press)
Sophocles, *Sophocles One* (Oedipus Trilogy) (University of Chicago Press)
Strunk & White, *The Elements of Style* (Macmillan)
Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* (Penguin Classics)
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to participation in scheduled SLE class meetings, the formal requirements of the program this quarter include five short papers and a final examination. The papers will vary from 2-5 pages in length according to the particular assignment. Your tutor will expect a rough draft of each paper. For more advice on writing papers, consult your tutor or section leader(s).

Papers are due at 5 p.m. on each date listed below. LATENESS WILL BE PENALIZED. Make four copies of each paper. Two should be put in Steven Fuller's box outside his office, and two in your tutor's box in the main lounge. In each case, the instructors will keep one copy and return one to you with comments. Always keep the original or one of the copies for yourself in case of loss. For convenience and to save money, we suggest you buy a copy card at the library, which will give you a discount on all their copy machines, and you won't need a supply of change. Remember to allow enough time on due dates for copying.

The SLE Players

SLE will undertake the production of three plays this year. The scope of these productions will depend upon student interest and enthusiasm. In the Fall quarter, we have planned a production of Lysistrata by Aristophanes, directed by Steven Fuller. If you would like to be a part of this production in any way -- on stage or behind the scenes --, contact Steven as soon as possible. An organizational meeting will be announced within the first two weeks of the quarter. All students are encouraged to participate. The performance date is set for Thursday, November 14th, at 6:30 pm.
PAPER ASSIGNMENTS FOR FALL QUARTER

Paper #1  **Prometheus Bound**  2-3 pages.  Due October 7, 5:00 pm
Contrast the myths of Prometheus' gift of fire, and Adam and the Tree of Knowledge. Why were Prometheus and Adam punished for advancing man's knowledge? How do both the crimes and the punishments differ? (In your essay you may wish to include some of the following themes: man's sense of his intellectual power, the relationship of knowledge and power, the role of the gods, the explanation of the beginning of culture, the treatment of nature and technology, the role of women in each story, the symbols of fire and the apple, and the tragic vs. the religious method of myth narration.)

Paper #2  **Odyssey**  2-3 pages  Due October 14, 5:00 pm
Show how Odysseus' experiences with female figures whom he meets in the course of his wanderings affect our perception of the kind of character he is, or becomes in Homer's *Odyssey*. Do not try to account for all of the women and goddesses in the epic. Rather, focus specifically on his experience with two female figures. Consider in developing your paper how his encounters with these female figures reveal an Odysseus different from, or similar to the hero of the other adventures he describes in Books 9 - 12.

Paper #3  **Tragedy: Oresteia, Medea, Bacchants, Antigone**  3-5 pages  Due October 28, 5:00 pm
Tragedy often portrays conflicting world-views: individual vs. communal, religious morality vs. secular ethics, female vs. male, rational vs. irrational, to name but a few. Choose one of the plays we have read and explain how it illustrates one of the above conflicts. Make sure you present the validity of each position in the conflict. Pay special attention to the conflict's resolution and what it might imply about the purpose of tragedy.

Paper #4  **The Republic**  3-5 pages  Due November 11, 5:00 pm
Why is Socrates theory of forms essential to his theory of the nature of justice? Discuss the ways in which Socrates was or was not successful in refuting Thrasymachus' definition of justice.

Paper #5  **Aristotle**  3-5 pages  Due November 25, 5:00 pm
Contrast Plato and Aristotle's views of democracy. Explain which you find to be more cogent or appealing and why.
SLE STYLE SHEET

Papers should be typed, double-spaced, with one inch margins on both sides to allow for comments.

2. Papers should be stapled together, not paper-clipped. **Do not use folders.**

3. Papers should have a title page which includes the following information: (1) title, and (2) in the lower right-hand corner, in order: your name, your tutor's name, your discussion leader(s) name(s), date, and the number of the paper assignment.

4. Correct spelling, punctuation, and typing are essential and will be taken into account in grading. On questions of grammar, punctuation and word usage, Nancy Packer's *Writing,* (widely used in Freshman English) and Strunk and White's *Elements of Style* are recommended.

5. We want you to spend your time thinking and writing, not worrying about footnote format. Therefore, when dealing with sources, you may use this simple shortcut: if you are using a primary source such as Plato or Homer, put the work and the standard line number (not the page number) immediately after the quotation, in parentheses. For example: As Plato says, "Then a just man too will not differ at all from a just city" (*Republic IV, 435b*). If you are citing a secondary source, give the author and the page number. For example, "Not all Classical Art is Athenian..." (Pollitt, p. 64).

6. If you do not use sources other than assigned readings, you do not need a bibliography. However, if you do use additional sources, you list them at the end of your paper in proper form, including the date and place of publication. **You should not need to use any additional sources this quarter.** We are more interested at this stage in your own thinking, not your ability to do library research or summarize the work of other scholars. Of course, you are free to consult any materials you choose.

7. If you learn to use the text editing features of LOTS computer center, or the Macintosh cluster in the Undergraduate Library, you may have the computer print out the copies of your papers. Some students have found that this saves time and energy in the long run. However, the computer facilities are often crowded and occasionally a computer can go down just when you need to use it. These are not acceptable excuses for late papers. Of course, you may use your own computer if you have one, but please use only standard typefaces. We are interested in content, not graphics.
Week 1

The Philosophy of Education

Wednesday Sept. 25

3:15 Plenary: "The Aims of Education"
-- Larry Ryan, John Goheen & George Cattermole
6:30 Lecture: Protagoras
-- John Goheen & George Cattermole

Thursday Sept. 26

3:15 Discussion Sections
6:30 Writing Tutorial
7:30 Film: "Rashomon" - Multiplicity of voices
-- Steven Fuller

Reading
Plato, Protagoras (390 B.C.)
Whitehead, The Aims of Education, ch. 1, 3 and 5

Study Questions

Protagoras
1. On what grounds does Protagoras think that virtue can be taught?
2. Socrates does not seem to believe Protagoras' position. Why?
3. Protagoras claims that virtue is "one," "like a face," except for courage. What is the logical consequence for Protagoras' claim?
4. At what point does Protagoras abandon his position?
5. What is Socrates' position concerning virtue at the end of the dialogue?
6. Would it make any difference in the raising of your children whether or not you regard virtue as innate or something that must be acquired by instruction?

Whitehead, Chap. I
12. What does Whitehead mean by an "inert idea"?
13. Why does Whitehead place so much emphasis on the application of ideas?
14. Why does Whitehead attribute so much importance to style?

Whitehead, Chap. III
15. "Wisdom" is different from knowledge according to Whitehead. How?
16. Is there wisdom in Whitehead's conception of education?
17. How is the stage of "generalization" attained according to Whitehead?
18. What does Whitehead understand by "beauty" in life?
Week 2

Myth

Monday Sept. 31
6:30 Workshop: "How to read a work of art"
-- Steven Fuller

Tuesday Oct. 1
3:15 Plenary "The Mythic World"
-- Prof. Bruce Rosenstock, Classics
Lecture: Prometheus Bound, Hesiod
-- Gregson Davis

Wednesday Oct. 2
3:15 Discussion Sections
6:30 Lecture: The Hebrew Bible
-- Prof. Edwin Good, Religious Studies

Thursday Oct 3
3:15 Discussion Sections
6:30 Writing Tutorial--ROUGH DRAFT DUE
7:30 Film: "The White Rose"
-- Amy Sims & Steven Fuller

Reading
Hebrew Bible, Genesis 1-22, (1500 B.C.); Exodus 1-24, 31-34 (1250 B.C.)
Hesiod, Theogony, Works and Days, lines 1-104. (8th century B.C)
Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound

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Study Questions

Myth
1. What is a myth? Do myths differ from "logical" thought? Is myth pre- or non-
   scientific? Why are myths associated with religion? Are myths necessarily false?
2. How do myths work? What is their logic? What kinds of problems do they solve?
   How do they instruct behavior? What does it mean to believe in a myth? What
   makes a mythical explanation satisfactory?
3. The Greek gods are anthropomorphic and/or associated with natural phenomena.
   Moreover, they are part of a polytheistic system. What is the importance of these
   differences from the Hebrew single abstract deity?
4. How do the two mythical systems treat history and their own past? Why is history a
   part of the Hebrew system but not of the Greek? What makes it possible for
   Thucydides to make a radical distinction between myth and history? What is the
   matter with this distinction?
5. Compare the two creation stories. What are the essential differences? Are there any
   striking similarities?
6. What are some modern myths that continue to work in our own society?

Genesis
7. What is the function of the serpent in the story of Adam and Eve? Are there other
   figures or situations that belong in the same logical category as the serpent?
8. What is the significance of all the "begats" in Genesis? Do they contribute to the
   story? Are they necessary for it? Do they have any non-narrative significance?
   Why is there so much emphasis on descent and lineage? "Was you begat?"
9. What is the significance of the succession from Adam to Noah to Abraham? What
   is God's relationship with them?
10. In Greek and other Near Eastern religions, the snake is a positive symbol usually associated with worship of a powerful female deity. With this background what would be the purpose of the writers of the Genesis myth in changing the symbolism from positive to negative? How is this associated with the view of woman as all evil (Eve-il)?

Hesiod
11. What is the significance of Zeus' victory in the Theogony? What kind of ruler is he? What does the world of gods tell us about the world of men?
12. What is the significance of the male-female polarities in Hesiod's cosmology? What different roles do the female gods play?
13. What is the logic of Hesiod's cosmology? Is his thought "rational" in some sense? How does he think?
14. Is there a similarity between Genesis and Works and Days? Why is an explanation of worldly suffering necessary?

Prometheus
15. How does the portrayal of Zeus in Prometheus differ from that in Hesiod? Is Zeus just in his punishment? What motivated his harsh treatment of Prometheus?
16. Aeschylus modifies the traditional Prometheus myth. If it is compared to Hesiod, how does it differ? What might have been some reasons for the changes?
17. Why would Zeus not want humanity to possess technology? In what ways does Prometheus prove the affinity of knowledge and power?
18. Prometheus gives humanity not only fire, but a number of other skills. How do these skills change the nature of the human condition? What psychological changes take place? Why was it possible for human beings to see their fate before the gift of Prometheus? What does this imply about the nature of civilization?
19. Can Prometheus be read as a text for political action? Should the threat of punishment be a motivating factor in determining one's political position? What is the relationship between self-interest and political action? Under what circumstances would you make a choice similar to Prometheus'?
### Week 3

**Myth: The Journey of Education**

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<td>Monday Oct. 7</td>
<td>5:00</td>
<td><strong>PAPER DUE</strong> --- <em>Prometheus Bound</em></td>
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<td>Tuesday Oct. 8</td>
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<td>Plenary: Homer's <em>Odyssey</em></td>
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<td>-- Larry Ryan &amp; Gregson Davis</td>
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<td>Lecture: Homer's <em>Odyssey</em></td>
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<td>-- Prof. Mark Edwards, Classics</td>
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<td>Wednesday Oct. 9</td>
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<td>Lecture: The History of Ancient Greece</td>
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<td>-- Jon Reider, Asst. Director of Admissions</td>
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<td>Thursday Oct. 10</td>
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<td>Discussion Section</td>
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<td>Writing Tutorial: <strong>ROUGH DRAFT DUE</strong></td>
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<td>Film &quot;Black Orpheus&quot;</td>
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<td>-- Steven Fuller</td>
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### Reading

*Homer, The Odyssey*
*Mc Neill, The History of Western Civilization, Part II, A and B*

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### Study Questions

**Odyssey**

1. What is education in the *Odyssey*? How do Telemachus and Odysseus learn? How is the story of the Exodus similar? different?
2. Compare Moses and Odysseus as heroic leaders. To what extent is their leadership dependent on divine favor? Does this make them less responsible for their own actions? Can you be a hero if Athena or God is always coaching you?
3. Why is Odysseus' "cunning" celebrated over his strength or his wisdom?
4. How is an epic poem different from other kinds of poetry? Why would this kind of poetry develop earlier than other forms of literature?
5. What is the significance of each of the unusual adventures -- Lotus Eaters, Scylla and Charybdis, Sirens, Circe, etc. -- Odysseus has? What does each of these show about the development of his character? Why might the adventure be ordered in this way?
6. What is the nature of justice in the *Odyssey*? Why is revenge so important? What does this say about social values? From where do these values derive? Compare this to the ethics of revenge in the Bible.
7. What kind of society is depicted in the *Odyssey*? What are this culture's ideas about wealth, social class, family, the individual, government?
8. The *Odyssey* portrays a wide variety of female characters: Penelope, Helen, Nausicaa, Calypso, Circe, the Sirens, etc. How do they demonstrate positive and negative feminine qualities?
9. "The *Odyssey* depicts a struggle between nature and culture." What do you think this means?
Week 4

Kinship and Justice

Monday Oct. 14
5:00 PAPER DUE --- Odyssey

Tuesday Oct. 15
3:15 Plenary: Oresteia
-- Leigh Sealy
6:30 Lecture: Justice in the Hebrew Bible
-- Prof. Bruce Rosenstock, Classics

Wednesday Oct. 16
3:15 Discussion Sections
6:30 Film: "Iphigenia"
-- Steven Fuller

Thursday Oct. 17
3:15 Discussion Sections
6:30 Writing Tutorial
7:30 Lecture: Women in Greek Society
-- Leslie Jones, Classics

Reading
Hebrew Bible, I Samuel 8-31; II Samuel 1-20; I Kings 1 (1050-1010 B.C.)
Aeschylus Oresteia (458 B.C.)

Study Questions

Hebrew Bible
1. What is the relationship between formal outward observance of the laws and rituals given by God and inner spiritual belief?
2. How are Moses, Saul, and David different? What are the responsibilities of a king for the Israelites? Is there a division between political and religious roles? What is Samuel's role? Does he have an analogue in the Greek myths?

Oresteia
3. How does Aeschylus' description of wisdom in lines 175-183 of Agamemnon differ from the kind of wisdom Plato is arguing for in the Euthyphro?
4. How does the Chorus function in the Oresteia? in Antigone?
5. What is Zeus' justice in the Oresteia? Is justice an abstract law or a god? How would Aeschylus criticize Homer's conception of justice as revenge? How different is this "justice" at the end of the trilogy from the beginning?
6. How does the possibility for justice change in The Libation Bearers? How does our view of Clytemnestra's crime change? Does Orestes have any choice? Why does he feel guilty for obeying Apollo? Isn't obeying the gods' commands just?
7. Why is the third play a trial? What kind of trial is it? Is the "just" solution in the Oresteia preferable to that in the Odyssey? What has changed? Why is the trial fought on sexual and generational grounds? What do you think of Athena's reason for voting the way she does? Are the Erinyes treated fairly? Is justice really being served?
8. How has the portrayal of the gods changed? Why are the gods involved in the solution? Why is Athena's solution better than Apollo's? How does it reflect the relationship of human society to nature?
Week 5

Tragedy: Reactions to Myth

Tuesday Oct. 22
3:15  Plenary: Tragedy - Rational/Irrational
      -- Leigh Sealy
6:30  Lecture: Presocratic philosophy / Euthyphro
      -- John Goheen & George Cattermole

Wednesday Oct. 23
3:15  Discussion Sections
6:30  Film: "Medea"
      -- Leigh Sealy

Thursday Oct. 24
3:15  Discussion Sections
6:30  Film: "A Dream of Passion"
      -- Steven Fuller

Reading
Pre-Socratics, (hand-outs)
Plato, Euthyphro (390 B.C.)
Euripides, Medea (431 B.C.), The Bacchants (408 B.C.)
Sophocles, Antigone (440 B.C.)

Study Questions:

Euthyphro
1. In a world dominated by myth, what does it mean to be rational or reasonable? What does it mean to be free or responsible in such a world?
2. What historical factors might explain the emergence of a critical attitude toward myth? How might this change human self-consciousness and the attitude toward nature?
3. Does morality require a religious justification?
4. How is the "dialectic" used as a method for knowing in Plato? How is it different from earlier modes of knowledge?
5. Does Plato finally arrive at a definition for piety in the Euthyphro? If not, why not?

Euripides
6. How can Medea be thought of as a "reaction to myth?" How do Jason and Medea represent different cultures? Is Jason justified? Is Medea? For whom do we feel sympathy at the end?
7. What is the structure of Euripides' version of the Medea story? What are the key episodes? What is the story about? How does Pasolini, the director of the film, change the original version? What is the new focus? Was this present in Euripides' version? Is it still the same myth, or a different one? What is Pasolini trying to say about myth?
8. Why are Pentheus and Hippolytus destroyed? Do they deserve their punishments? To what extent are they pawns in the gods' hands? Is this more true than in Homer?
9. Are the gods still just in some sense? Is this a relevant question anymore? How much of human action is reasonable, subject to choice? If people can't be fully rational, how can they be good? Who is responsible for justice, mortals or gods?
10. What kind of gods are Apollo and Dionysus? What kind of religion is Dionysian? Are there modern equivalents? Is Euripides attacking the traditional anthropomorphic belief in the Homeric gods?

11. Does Euripides present a message or moral? Does he differ significantly from Aeschylus or Sophocles in his dramatic style?

**Antigone**

12. On what grounds does Antigone disobey Creon's order? Is the play a struggle between the individual and the state, or between other forces as well?

13. What is Creon's dilemma? Is he wrong to issue his order? To condemn Antigone? Is Creon rather than Antigone the tragic hero?

14. What seems to be Sophocles' view of the state and justice?
Week 6
Justice

Monday Oct. 28  5:00  — Tragedy
Tuesday Oct. 29  3:15

6:30

Wednesday Oct. 30  3:15
6:30

Thursday Oct. 31

Reading
Thucydides, The Peloponnesian War:
"Melian Dialogue," pp. 400-408
"The Debate over Mytilene," pp. 194-223
(circa 420-404 B.C.)

Plato, Apology, Crito, Republic Book I-III,
(375-365 B.C., set in Athens circa 411 B.C.)

Study Questions
Thucydides
1. How consistent is the moral tone of the Athenian position in the "Melian Dialogue" and the speeches over the fate of Mytilene? Are the speeches of Cleon and Diodotus all that different in terms of their underlying values?
2. Is the morality Thucydides describes compatible with a democratic form of government; i.e., can a state practice imperialism abroad and democracy at home, as Athens did? How comparable is the contemporary American situation?
3. Do you think the reversal of the first decision to destroy Mytilene was a just one? How might you have argued this issue? Was the final result a merciful one? On what basis would you make your conclusion?

Apology, Crito
4. Compare the pictures of Athens' democratic values in Pericles' Oration and in the Apology. How do they both compare to modern American democracy?
5. Are the Apology and the Crito consistent with each other? How can you reconcile Socrates' resistance in the former with his submission in the latter?
6. What do you think of Socrates' defense? Is it an effective one? Could you make a stronger case? What is the effect of his irony?
7. Is Socrates a hero? In what sense of the term?
8. What is Socrates' conception of "the Laws" in the Crito, and why does he feel his loyalty to them to be essential?
9. Could you construct a better argument than Crito to dissuade Socrates from drinking the hemlock?
Republic, Book I
10. What is Socrates' criticism of Cephalus and Polymarchus? Is he convincing? How is Thrasymachus' argument more sophisticated? How does Socrates argue that the 'stronger' can err in judgment? What role does the analogy of the ruler and the skilled craftsman play? What does this say about the 'stronger'?
11. Why does Plato hint that Socrates is descending into the Underworld at the very beginning? Is the Republic a journey? To where?
12. What is the dramatic structure of Book I? Why are these characters speaking in this order? Is Socrates convincing? Does he "win"?

Republic, Book II
13. How is Book II the real beginning of the defense of justice by Socrates? What is essential to justice? How do basic human needs justify this view? How do Glaucon and Adimantus develop the earlier arguments of Thrasymachus?
14. Why does society need a new kind of person, a just person? Why is justice not natural, but has to be taught and learned?
15. Is the ideal society of the Republic only the second best society? Why does Socrates take so much trouble to describe only the second best?

Republic, Book III
16. What is wrong with traditional education? Why does it cause injustices? Is there a difference between education and training?
17. Why does Socrates criticize Homer? Is he right that the gods sometimes provide bad examples and should not be used as models in education? Doesn't Odysseus, for example, lie for good reasons?
18. Why does Socrates condemn laughter, art, and poetry? Why is imitation bad? Why is some music good while all poetry is bad?
19. Is the "Noble Lie" (414c) justified? How can a philosopher, of all people, justify lying? What is its true purpose?
Week 7

Plato

Tuesday Nov. 5
3:15  Plenary: Plato's Epistemology
       -- John Goheen & George Cattermole
6:30  Lecture: A Marxist Look at Ancient Greece
       -- Steven Fuller

Wednesday Nov. 6
3:15  Discussion Sections
6:30  Lecture: Plato's Critique of Democracy
       -- T.B.A.

Thursday Nov. 7
3:15  Discussion Sections
6:30  Writing Tutorial --- ROUGH DRAFT DUE
7:30  Film: "Orphee"
       -- Steven Fuller

Reading
Plato, Republic Book IV - X (375-365 B.C., set in Athens circa 411 B.C.)

Study Questions

Republic, Book IV
1. What are the three basic virtues? How are they allotted to each class? If wisdom is confined to one class, how can it characterize a whole society?
2. What is distinctively new about Plato's concept of justice?
3. How is justice connected to "doing one's own business" (433b)? Doesn't this contradict Plato's ideal of communism?

Republic, Book V
4. Why does Plato want women to be educated? How does this differ from traditional Greek practice? Why don't biological differences matter so much to Plato?
5. What is Plato's criticism of the traditional family? How would society survive if the family were destroyed?
6. What is the difference between opinion and knowledge?

Republic, Books VI-X
7. What is Plato's purpose in the first part of Book VI? Who are the Sophists? If they were philosophers, why does Plato relate them to the "multitude"? What was their role in Greek political life in the 5th century? Review Socrates' defense against the charge of corrupting the young in the Apology. How does this relate to his view of the Sophists?
8. How does Plato distinguish between opinion and knowledge? How does the "divided line" clarify this in terms of the objects of knowledge? What is dialectic for? What is the purpose of the cave allegory? In what sense could this be taken as the center of the Republic? Is it a myth?
9. How do good states differ from bad ones? What causes good ones to degenerate? Why cannot bad ones improve just as easily?
10. How does Socrates' description of democracy differ from the standard one? Why is tyranny even worse? How does his view of democracy reflect recent Athenian history?
11. What does tyranny depend on?
12. What aspects of human beings are irrational? Is the irrational evil? Can it be eradicated? If it is so durable, how can Socrates be serious about thinking about an ideal state?

13. Why does the Republic end with a myth when Plato is so critical of many traditional myths? What is different about this one? How can myth express "truth"?

14. What is the structure of the Republic as a complete work? Why is it framed by the argument of Book I and the myth of Book X? Why is Book VI in the middle? Is the rest symmetrical? How? What purpose does it serve?

15. Is the Republic really a description of an ideal government, or is it something else?
Week 8

Love

Monday Nov. 11 5:00 PAPER DUE --- The Republic
Tuesday Nov. 12 3:15 Plenary: Love in Plato's Symposium
-- John Goheen & Gregson Davis
6:30 Lecture: Sappho
-- Gregson Davis

Wednesday Nov. 13 3:15 Discussion Sections
6:30 Lecture: Sexuality in Ancient Greek Society
-- Leslie Jones, Classics

Thursday Nov. 14 3:15 Discussion Sections
6:30 Live Performance: Lysistrata
-- SLE Players

Reading
Sappho, Poem #37-43 and translator's footnote pp. 95-106,
(circa 580 B.C., Lesbos)
Plato, Symposium, (360 B.C.)
Hebrew Bible, Song of Songs, (4th century B.C.)
Aristophanes, Lysistrata, (411 B.C.)

Study Questions

Sappho
1. Sappho is the only female writer we have read this quarter. Does her perspective
differ fundamentally from that of male writers?

Symposium
2. What is the relationship between each speaker's ideas and his social role? Why are
Socrates' ideas appropriate to a philosopher?
3. What is the significance of the sequence of speeches? How do they build on each
other? How does Socrates use the ideas presented earlier? What does he criticize in
Agathon's discussion of love?
4. Why does Socrates alone attribute his ideas to someone else? Why to Diotima?
Why not a conventional god like Zeus?
5. How does Socrates connect beauty and love? Is this a natural connection? How
does Socrates know these things? Is it through recollection?
6. Why does this dialogue occur at a symposium or banquet? What is the purpose of
the occasion, and how does the conversation fit with it? Is it important that some of
the guests are Socrates' lovers?
7. How does Diotima reach the astonishing conclusion that love is desire for the
everlasting possession of the good? Does this make any sense?
8. What does Diotima mean in her account of the ascent from the love of an individual
to beauty itself? How can one be in love with an idea?
9. What are the implications of Diotima's doctrine for education? What is the role of
irrational factors in education?
Week 9

Aristotle I: The Ethics of Political Life

Tuesday Nov. 19
3:15 Plenary: The Basics of Aristotle
-- John Goheen & George Cattermole
Lecture: Aristotle's Ethics
-- T.B.A.

Wednesday Nov. 20
3:15 Discussion Sections
6:30 Lecture: Changing Images in Greek Art
-- Prof. Emeritus Antony Raubitschek, Classics

Thursday Nov. 21
3:15 Discussion Sections
6:30 Lecture: The Parthenon: The Culmination of Greek Art
-- Prof. Emeritus Antony Raubitschek, Classics

Reading
Aristotle. Politics: Book I: ch.1-9, 12-13, Book II: ch.1-5, 9, Book III: ch. 6-11,
Book V: ch. 4 & 12.

Study Questions

Ethics
1. What does Aristotle mean by happiness? How does it differ from pleasure? What does he mean when he says, "Happiness, then, is something final and self-sufficient, and is the end of action"?
2. People differ on their views of what constitutes the good life. How does Aristotle resolve these differences?
3. What does Aristotle think is wrong with Plato's doctrine of the good?
4. Why does Aristotle think that there is no one common element answering to one Idea?
5. What does Aristotle mean by the irrational part of the soul?
6. Does Aristotle consider the utility of friends to be the basis of friendship?
7. What is true friendship according to Aristotle?
8. What has love got to do with friendship?

Politics
9. How does Aristotle study politics? What is his method? Why does he start with household management? How does he justify slavery?
10. Why is unity of a state not a desirable aim? Why does he reject Plato's communism of wives and children? of property? Is he correct in saying that Plato denies happiness even to the guardians? How is his concept of happiness different from Plato's? How would Plato respond to these criticisms?
12. What is "constitutional" government? Is this an ideal government? If not, why does Aristotle espouse it?
13. How important are economic conditions for good government? How did Plato treat these? Is it fair to call Plato an economic determinist?
14. What are the three parts of government, and how do they function in different forms of states? How does tyranny differ from aristocratic government?
15. What function does the middle class serve? Is it different from our idea of middle class?
16. What does it mean to say that "politics is a practical science rather than a theoretical one"?
17. How does Aristotle's description of the best possible state compare with a modern bourgeois democracy? Why is moderate wealth a virtue, but too much is bad? Would Aristotle approve of modern capitalism more than Plato?

Pollitt
18. How can a work of art be said to impose an "order" on chaos? According to Pollitt, what are the values embodied in Archaic sculpture? How are these evident? Why should an event such as the Persian wars alter the style of artistic production? How does a change in artistic style indicate a more general historical shift?
19. What was the oriental influence on classical sculpture and design? How did the Greeks react to this influence? What is "mannerism"? What social conditions might motivate such a return to an earlier style?
20. The archaic period sees a rise of Gorgons and other monstrous female figures in the art. Similarly, after the Persian wars, artistic subjects of Greeks fighting the Amazons or Centaurs proliferate. How do these subjects represent an imposing of order on chaos? Whose order is being imposed?
Week 10

Aristotle II: Aesthetic Theory

Monday Nov. 25  5:00  PAPER DUE --- Politics/Ethics
Tuesday Nov. 26  3:15  Plenary: The Aesthetics of Tragedy
                           -- Prof. Jack Winkler, Classics
       6:30  Discussion Sections

Wednesday Nov. 27  NO CLASSES
Thursday Nov. 28    THANKSGIVING DAY!

Reading
Aristotle. Poetics (circa 335 B.C.)
Sophocles. Oedipus Rex (427 B.C.)

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Study Questions

Aesthetic Theory
1.  Does a modern audience respond to Greek "tragedy" the way a classical Athenian
    audience would? What parts retain their impact even if one does not believe in the
gods?
2.  How do Aristotle and Plato differ in their use of the word "imitation", specifically
    in "art imitates nature"? Why would Aristotle reject Plato's idea that art is twice
    removed from reality? Are Plato's and Aristotle's evaluations of art related to their
    conceptions of the place of emotions in human behavior? How is the effect of
    poetry in purging the emotions related to the understanding of poetry?
3.  In Aristotle's view, what distinguishes a work of art from ethical or scientific
    thought? Why does Aristotle say that poetry is more philosophical than history?
    What does Aristotle mean by his notion that drama expresses a "probable
    universal"?
4.  To what does Aristotle attribute the origin of poetry? How is drama related to
    learning? Does Aristotle consider that art is primarily concerned with the teaching
    of truths? How would Plato feel about this? Why does Aristotle use his general
    distinctions between matter and form, body and soul as a basis for his conception
    of art?
5.  How does Aristotle distinguish between epic, tragedy, and comedy? Why does he
    consider tragedy superior to both comedy and epic? Is ethical doctrine of the mean
    involved in the description of the noble character in tragedy? in comedy? What is
    the function of red recognition in tragedy? What forms of plot in tragedy should be
    avoided? Why? How is the purging of the emotions accomplished?
6.  To what extent are Aristotle's views of tragedy applicable to the plays studied
    earlier in this course? Are Aristotle's comments on the discoveries in the Odyssey
    and Oedipus Rex convincing to you?

Oedipus Rex
7.  When the hero is led to disaster by some hereditary flaw, does this violate a sense
    of justice and equity in the world? Or, does tragedy present some higher order of
    justice in portraying the necessary or probable consequences of earlier errors?
8. Could Oedipus have heeded Jocasta's warning not to pursue "knowledge" in the climactic moments of *Oedipus Rex*? To what extent is Oedipus' "hubris" responsible for his fate? Does 'knowledge' bring wisdom for Oedipus, or simply madness?

9. Trace the themes of light and darkness, vision and blindness in the play. What is the symbolic role of Teresias?

10. Did Oedipus have any real choices, or was everything so determined in advance that he is simply a pawn of the fates? If this is so, is he really noble?

11. What is Oedipus' crime? Can you be guilty of a crime if you did not know it was one? Which is he punished for, patricide or incest?

12. If Oedipus is an exemplary king, why is he punished? Could his crime have been ignored?

**Poetics and Oedipus Rex**

13. There is no doubt that Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* is one of Aristotle's favorite plays when he wants an example of a well-constructed tragedy. The other is *Iphigenia among the Taurians* (whose plot is described in chapter 17). Aristotle renders a judgement between the two plot-types in chapter 14. Why is *Oedipus Rex* only second best?

14. Aristotle's analysis privileges plot or story-line above all other components of a literary-musical performance. Though he has tragedies primarily in view, his analysis of plot in terms of reversal and recognition applies equally well to detective stories, doesn't it? And to comedies of mistaken identity?

15. Is *Oedipus Rex* a detective story? (Cite examples to show the similarities and differences: imagine Colombo in a Greek robe, limping more than usual....)

16. Chapter 4 argues that imitation is a natural trait of the human species (and therefore that great poetry is not 'inspired', great poets are just naturally gifted) and that imitation is essentially a form of learning. Is it? Consider examples from your own experience in performing, scripting, viewing.

17. Chapter 13 speaks of the proper pleasure inherent in a well-constructed tragedy. What kind of pleasure is this -- emotional or intellectual or what? Look for examples of similar and dissimilar pleasures -- solving a math problem, pressing on a sore tooth, watching Bobby Ewing die....

18. Chapter 26 argues that all drama is rather low-class or vulgar insofar as the actors don't simply say what they mean but actually move around and gesture, as if the audience were incapable of understanding without this extra help. Why then is tragedy finally ranked higher than epic?

19. Chapters 1-3 try out three different ways of dividing up the field of musical-literary composition. Show how the second way (by subject matter) and the third way (by mode of presentation) lead to potentially contradictory results. (Clue: Aristophanes)

20. Chapters 13 and 14 form a notorious contradiction: the issue is whether happy endings are less good (ch. 13) or more good (ch.14). Look at chapter 13 as a continuation of the argument about serious and dreadful deeds necessary for a tragedy as opposed to a comedy: see if you can thus resolve the apparent contradiction.

21. Oedipus, of course, is perfectly innocent of any crime, since he not only had no intention of committing patricide or incest but even left home to avoid that possibility. What kind of justice is it that punishes such an innocent man? Are the gods who maneuvered Oedipus into his situation fundamentally unjust, or beyond justice, or beyond all human reckoning altogether?
Week 11

Wisdom

Monday Dec. 2
6:30 Workshop: How to Review for the Final Exam

Thursday Dec. 5
3:15 Discussion Sections

Tuesday Dec. 3
3:15 Plenary: The Greek Conception of Wisdom
-- John Goheen

Wednesday Dec. 4
3:15 Discussion Sections
6:30 Film: "The Chosen"
-- Amy Sims & Steven Fuller

The Hebrew Conception of Wisdom
-- Prof. Bruce Rosenstock, Classics

6:30 Lecture: Aristotle's Scientific Method
-- T.B.A.

Reading
Aristotle. Metaphysics. Book I: ch. 1-2, 6, 9, Book XII: ch. 6-7
Physics. Book II: ch. 7-9
Sophocles. Oedipus at Colonus (circa 410 B.C.)
Hebrew Bible. Ecclesiastes (4th - 3rd century B.C.)
Proverbs (4th century B.C.)

Study Questions

Metaphysics
1. What is the relationship of experience to knowledge? How is it different from Wisdom? In what sense is it divine? How does it compare to the Hebrew idea of Wisdom (Ecclesiastes)?
2. What is Aristotle's criticism of Plato's Forms (Ideas)?
3. How does Aristotle prove the existence of the unmoved mover? Is this a logical deduction? How would you challenge it?
4. How does the unmoved mover resemble God? How is it radically different from the Homeric Zeus or the Hebrew concept of God? Is this compatible with Judaism? With Christianity?
5. How does Aristotle complete his metaphysical system? Is a final cause necessary?

Physics
6. What are the "four causes"? In what sense are they "causes"? Why are they important in Aristotle's system of thought? How are they, when taken together, a criticism of both materialism (Democritus) and idealism (Plato)?

Oedipus at Colonus
7. What does it mean to be wise? Is Oedipus wise in his old age? Must one suffer to be wise?
8. Does Oedipus act out of wisdom toward his son or is he merely vengeful?

Hebrew Bible
9. How do the Greeks and Hebrews distinguish between knowledge and wisdom? Do they distinguish between goodness and wisdom?
10. What is the role of God or gods in defining wisdom?
Proverbs
11. What is the relation of wisdom to God (the Lord)?
12. What does wisdom recommend as essential to the good life? Do you find some of the recommendations more central than others? (Proverbs ch.1-10)
13. In Proverbs, chapters 10-21, what do you understand as the significance of wealth? of poverty? Can one be poor and still virtuous?
14. What are the purposes of the restrictions on sexuality in Proverbs?
15. Do you think that fear is a prerequisite for wisdom?

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FINAL EXAM: Sunday Dec. 8 9:00 am - 12:00 Jordan 041