

Study Questions
Res Publica Final Exam
Scheduled for Monday, Dec. 5

I. We have studied major works by each of the following writers. Consider the list that follows each name and be prepared to identify the meaning and the importance of each concept in the writer's work we have read.

- a. Homer: honor and shame, the gods, force
- b. Plato: obligation, law, persuasion
- c. Aristotle: virtue of character, prudence, happiness
- d. Seneca: reason, passion, the forum
- e. Hobbes: covenant, the Sovereign, reason
- f. Locke: property, liberty, State of Nature
- g. Strauss: natural right, classic and modern

II. Be prepared with clear, concise, accurate answers to each (and every) of the following questions.

a. Working with one of the following passages:

- Book 9: the Embassy scene. This begins on I. 240 and goes to the end of the book, but choose one of the exchanges between Achilles and Odysseus, Achilles and Phoenix, or Achilles and Ajax, as your specific focus.
- Book 16: Patroclus kills Sarpedon, II. 499-598.
- Book 24: Priam visits Achilles, II. 592-730.

Address the following questions:

- What does this scene reveal about the character of _____? (pick one)
- What does it reveal about the conflict(s) between the characters?
- What does it reveal about one of the larger themes or issues of the entire composition?

How do the particulars of the scene you have chosen animate, illustrate, and give shape to one of the major themes of the *Iliad*?

- b. In *Apology* (28c-d) Socrates compares his situation as a philosopher in Athens to that of Achilles as a warrior before Troy. In *Crito* (44a-b) Socrates quotes from Achilles' threat to sail home, leaving the other warriors to carry on the siege without him.

By having Socrates make these allusions, what is Plato conveying about the nature of shame and honor or the tensions between duty and dissent?

- c. According to Aristotle (in *Nicomachean Ethics*), on what grounds should we be seriously concerned for the well-being of others?

Your explanation of Aristotle's view on this problem must take into account his discussion of justice and friendship in Books V, VIII, and IX.

- d. What is the role and value of passion in Seneca's political thought? In what way is his understanding of its particular role different from or similar to Aristotle's?
- e. Hobbes and Aristotle have sharply different views about human nature and what humans are capable of becoming. How are these differences reflected in their views of the purposes of public life?
- f. Locke concludes that peace can be secured by limited government. What are his critical differences with Hobbes, over property and human nature, that lead him to this conclusion?

III. Throughout the quarter, three thematic questions have stood at the top of our program description (and been inscribed in our hearts and minds). Be prepared to show what you have learned from (1) something you read, (2) something you encountered on retreat, and (3) something that happened during community service (if this applies to you) about one of these questions:

- a. What is in the public interest and how are public and private interests balanced?
- b. How is one educated for communal and public life?
- c. What is the relationship between one's political identity and one's membership in a larger "ethnos" (a grouping based on language, ethnicity, religion and other characteristics that seem "prior" to citizenship)?