Thursday, 12/10

4) Expedience and Justice: What Is Useful vs. What Is Right - What position did these figures take on the question of expedience vs. justice, or on what is useful vs. what is right? What did they say about this topic? And what do their actions show on these questions?

ODYSSEUS - What Is Useful vs. What Is Right - Clearly favors what is useful over what is right – often deceives – in large matters and small – major examples: Trojan horse, Scylla & Charybdis, Circe, Sirens – smaller examples: does not reveal his identity until it is useful for him to do so – anytime he meets someone – His seven year stay with Calypso is another example of pursuing his own self-interest – Odysseus is heroic and admirable in many ways, but not for his truthfulness or faithfulness

Odysseus – Useful vs. Right 1) - Odysseus is known for his strategic plans and the amount of deception he used throughout his lifetime. His main point of strategy and deception was when he built a massive wooden horse with men hiding inside ready to attack the city. Also, as Odysseus and his crew were passing the Sirens he demanded his crew to fill their ears with melted wax while they fasten Odysseus to the ship. This is so the crew could not hear the voice of the sirens and get lured into their trick. Odysseus decided that he had to listen to the Sirens so he would know when they left The Sirens behind and his crew can then take the wax out. Furthermore, Odysseus told his crew no matter how much he was to fight against the ropes, they were to double the amount of ropes each time. 16/20 (but the Sirens example is not the clearest)

Odysseus – Useful vs. Right 2) - Odysseus is a very big character in Homer’s The Odyssey and throughout the book (epic poem) you learn he tends to do what is useful and maybe not as much what is right. He is known for his tricks and mind-games, but most of all for the famous Trojan Horse. This is his most popular trick and also the one that caused the Greeks to win the Trojan war. This trick may not have been “right” considering they snuck into Troy and killed many Trojans using this, but it was very useful to the Greeks. Also, when Odysseus was on his journey home and Circe turns his crew into pigs, Odysseus finds it useful to sleep with Circe to save his crew even if means ignoring what is right and being unloyal to his wife. Odysseus typically ignores what is right and does what is useful. 17/20

Odysseus – Useful vs. Right 3) - As you know Odysseus is famously known for his minds and tricks. Like when he made the Trojan horse. Or the problem he had between him and the crew about the cattle of the sun. For Odysseus, for him to pick between usefulness and what is right, it would be a tough call for him. When he decides not to tell the crew that they are facing Scylla and Charybdis, the plan sort of worked for them to escape. But who knows what would have happened if Odysseus had decided to tell them. Now that plan was a useful one, because if he did the right way then they might have been a mutiny. For this evidence and other plans that he had made, I would consider him as a one who favors usefulness over right. 17/20

Odysseus – Useful vs. Right 4) - Odysseus is a very important character. He is known for his strategic approaches towards war and his idea of the Trojan horse. Odysseus usually chooses the useful option over the right one. When he sleeps with Circe he is doing the useful thing because he needs to trick her and get off of her island. He made the Trojan horse because they wanted to
win the war even if it meant that many people would die. Odysseus is very intelligent and he chooses useful over right. 16/20 – fine but could go much further

**CLEON - What Is Useful vs. What Is Right** - Clearly favors what is useful over what is right – claims it is the only way to run an empire – says Athena must act strongly because the subject states hate Athenian tyranny – Athens should execute all Mytilenians to set an example for everyone else – death penalty has deterrent value – will keep Athens safe – Cleon shows no concern for the people killed and no concern for “what is right” – claims that justice is all about power – Reflects the change in Athenian values after the death of Pericles

**Cleon – Useful vs. Right 1** - The Mytilenian Debate was based around the fact that Mytilene had revolted and Cleon was the one that had decided to kill the whole population of Mytilenians. Cleon was known for his violence. He was not favorable toward democracy in this situation, he thought it was incapable of governing others. His says that you can’t treat your allies the same way you treat yourselves, it’s a sign of weakness. He was in favor of a city with bad laws, as long as they remained fixed. Cleon is a very concrete person in a way that he doesn’t like tricks or cleverness, and is a more common sense type of guy. He was very confident in his earlier option to kill the population of Mytilene. He thought there was no other choice, because he didn’t want to show weakness, and lose allies because of one mistake. He argues his side for saying that his state would suffer greatly.

**Cleon – Useful vs. Right 2** - Cleon is known for his role in the Mytilenian Debate, in this his argues with Diodotus over whether or not they should kill all of the Mytilenian men. Cleon argues that they should kill all of the men of military age and enslave the women and children. Whereas Diodotus argues to only kill the guilty men. Cleon is arguing for what is expedient and not for what is right. If they kill all of the men then Athens will profit from a new member of the Delian league (careful here – Cleon does not make this point). Though Cleon knows that it is not right to strip the smaller guy of his freedom, he goes ahead and puts benefit above what is right. Also not only Cleon but the people who voted for him, do not remember when they were the little guy against the Persians. Cleon is not right in this argument and he should have paid attention to what he was arguing for. The voters came together and voted for what was right over what was expedient. This reaction shows that the people understood Cleon’s flaws and they choose the greater good. Similar to flawed great leaders, Cleon puts expedience over the welfare of the state. 17/20 – very good except for error in the middle

**Cleon – Useful vs. Right 3** - Cleon has no care for what is right. After Pericles died he took leadership of the city and started the decline of Athens took a turn for the worst. His idea to put down a revolt against the Athenian empire was to kill everyone in the city. He wanted to kill all the men and sell the women and children as slaves. He wanted to do this
because it was a quick and easy way to deal with such a situation. Instead of restoring order to the city which takes a lot of time and resources, he wanted to destroy the city and take the resources for Athens. 15/20 – but could go further

Cleon – Useful vs. Right 4) - Cleon is all about what the laws are and does not care in any way what is right. Cleon is fighting to kill all the Mytilenian people and make their families slaves. When he was doing this he was “acting on his own interest” and doing things that only he cared about. In the Mytilenian debate Diodotus, believed that they should only kill the people who they found guilty, and the vote won for this. Cleon thought his actions were doing what was useful to Athens and he thought that killing all of them would make Athens better. Overall the people voted for the right thing to do and not what Cleon believed should happen. 16/20

Diodotus – What Is Useful vs. What Is Right 1) - Diodotus and Cleon believed in two different ways to stop the rebellion of former allies during the Mytilenian debate. Diodotus believed in leniency. He believes that not being lenient will give them a reason to rebel. He said that they shouldn’t punish them, but rather take care of the situation before something like this happens. The rebels will want to continue to rebel if they are treated badly. It would be useful to spare their lives because the Athenians could enslave them, but he wants to do the right thing (but not because it is right – see above). He believes that killing the men and enslaving the women and children would be wrong. Diodotus is trying to do what is right because killing them could cause revolts from other places. Diodotus’ actions are showing that he has given thought towards this problem, and he is thinking about what will be in Athens best interest. 17/20 – be sure to emphasize that expedience is more important in Diodotus’s argument than is justice

Diodotus – Useful vs. Right 2) - Diodotus was the opponent of Cleon and believed in doing what was right instead of what is useful. In 427 BC, Cleon was the leader of a political party who decided that after the defeat of Mytilene, they should kill all Mytelenian males and enslave their wives and children. Diodotus argued that killing off these people would have absolutely no positive outcomes and thousands of citizens would lose their lives. It was obvious that it would have been useful for them to just kill off all the Mytelenians (no, he does not make this point – he argues it would NOT be useful to kill everyone) but this would only lead to more conflict and revolt. In the end, Diodotus’ proposal won over the assembly and he saved the lives of many
families. The execution of about a thousand still took place without a proper trial, but this was only a small percentage of the people that Cleon originally wanted to kill off. 16/20

**Diodotus – Useful vs. Right 3)** - Diodotus believed in doing what was right (no – see above) vs. what was useful. He had saved so many innocent lives when a political party run by Cleon wanted to kill and enslave the Mytelenian people. Cleon believed in doing what was useful vs. what was right so of course he would try to push this plan to a possibility to benefit Athens. Dioditus felt that if they continue to not give the Mytelenian people leeway that they would just rebel even more. But Diodotus did not believe that it would reflect on the reputation of Athens very well and would have more negative outcomes than positive. (right – the point here is that Diodotus and Cleon BOTH care about what is useful – they disagree about what would be more sueful) He thought that not going through with this barbaric plan would be the right thing to do. The people of Athens seemed to think so too and voted that the political party call of such plans, but they ended up killing many people anyway without anyone agreeing to it. 15/20

**ATHENIANS IN MELIAN DIALOGUE - What Is Useful vs. What Is Right** - Athenians argue openly for expedience over justice in this dialogue – claim that the stronger can do whatever they want – and the weak have to get what they can get – Controlling Melos would be useful for Athens (would remove threat to their sea lanes) – and simply living as subjects would be useful for Melos – that’s the best deal they could get – Athens is unconcerned about doing what is right, and acts only in self-interest – tries to convince Melos to yield without a fight – But Melos resists – take their chaces that the gods will favor those with right on their side – Athens answers that the gods favor the strong, not the just – Athens crushes Melos – kill the men and enslave the women and children – Neither side benefits from this result – Example of Athens’ moral decline during the war

**Athenians – Useful vs. Right 1)** - Athens acted expediently with the Melian dialogue. Athens wanted to have a decision quick. They felt threatened by the islanders attacking their trade routes and they would take nothing less than Melos joining Athens. They felt that was the only way that Athens could come away unscathed. If they let Melos be neutral, then Athens would look week. Athens felt the only way this problem could be solved is if Melos joined Athens or was destroyed. 15/20 – OK, but go further

**Athenians – Useful vs. Right 2)** - Melos, a colony of Sparta had refused to join the Athenian Empire and remained neutral. Athenians thought that this was arrogant for they thought that the strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept. Athenians didn’t want to look weak, and thus attacked Melians for not surrendering to them. Athenians acted on their self-interest rather than justice and it is hypocritical to what they had said on the Pericles Funeral Oration. “Athenians make friends by doing good to others, not by receiving good from them”, is not what Athenians exhibit in Melian Dialogue. Rather than doing good to others, Athens was acting as a tyranny. From this, one can observe that the idea of ‘ making friends by doing good’ only applied within the citizenship of Athens. 18/20 – good on Pericles contrast
Athenians – Useful vs. Right 3) - The time of the Melian dialogue (416) was stressful for Athens. They didn’t have time to make a strong and smart decision. They felt inclined to let Melos join them due to there suspicion of there trade routes being under attack. If they lost their trading routes, there economy would crash and the city would fall. They thought if they made a neutral relationship between them and Melos, that they would come out un harmed, but looked cowardly. The only way they could come out unharmed without looking week was to let Melos join Athens. There was that or they could possible destroy Melos. However, if they destroyed Melos it would be possible that it would lead to unwanted conflict. This was a stressful choice for Athens because their economy was depending on it. 16/20

Athenians – Useful vs. Right 4) - Athens in the Peloponnesian War needed the support of the Melos for the simple reason that Athens wanted their trade route to be secured. Melos, however, did not even want to get into the conflict. Melos decided to remain neutral during the fight between Sparta and Athens. For Athens, it was definitely the self-interested that got them to destroy Melos. They believed that Melos should remain as neutral, however, it was a threat to them. They believe that it could be very useful if Athens made them as their subject state. However, people of Melos, they fight for freedom and they refused to surrender to Athens. Therefore, it gave Athens no choice but to destroy them. Athens sold their children and their women as slaves. For Athens, they have lost their moral compass during the war, and they did not care about what is right, they cared about how to make profits. 19/20

ANTIGONE - What Is Useful vs. What Is Right - This one is pretty straightforward – Antigone definitely and proudly favors justice over expedience – does what is right rather than what is useful – (Though she does acknowledge that she will be dead a lot longer than she will be alive, so it is better for her to please the gods and her family and do the right thing in honoring her brother)

Antigone – Useful vs. Right 1) - Antigone, the strong character that she was, always valued doing the right thing over all else, including what was useful. The prime example of this is when she buried her brother, defying Creon's laws. In this case, in spite of Creon's ominous decree, Antigone stuck to her morals. She did the right thing and buried him, even though she knew that doing it would come at the cost of death. That right there is the epitome of doing what's right over what's expedient. It would have been useful and easy to ignore her brother's unjust treatment and save her own life, like what her sister Ismene did. However, Antigone still did the right thing even though it was the harder thing to do and would most likely have come at the highest consequence. Not only that, but she acknowledged and even defended what she did to the grave, making it so that even ages after this play took place, we can still see Antigone whose tremendous character and zeal in her morals lead her to always put what is right and just above everything else. 19/20

Antigone – Useful vs. Right 2) - In Sophocles’ play, Antigone, the young yet strong-headed character, Antigone, serves as a model to justice. With her family lineage polluted, the strong daughter of the destroyed man, Oedipus, does all in her ability to grasp on to the little worth she has in life. Her strong sense of self purpose and boundaries between right and wrong, allow her to
conduct her life in accordance to her conscience. Antigone values the Gods law far more than man’s, and when faced with a moral dilemma, she chooses what is just rather than what is expedient. Like the Greek philosopher, Socrates, Antigone does what is right rather than agreeing with the majority. After the ruler of Thebes, Creon, declared a creed stating that Antigone’s brother, Polynices, was not to be buried, the strong girl disobeyed his orders, knowing the risk of death. Antigone did not fear death as she thought it more important to honor the deceased on Earth, in order to live in peace in the underworld. She believed herself to be a “holy outlaw,” and therefore responded to a greater power than the King of Thebes. She acted on her beliefs by burying her brother, against the law, suffered the consequences and ultimately committed suicide by hanging herself. Antigone, unlike her sister Ismene, was a powerful and tough women, whose life was directed by justice. 20/20

**Antigone – Useful vs. Right 3)** - Antigone believed in justice and doing the right thing. This is why she is referred to as a holy outlaw because she chose the right thing over her life. Antigone was faced with the question; to bury her brother against the laws of the king and her uncle Creon. She chose to bury her brothers and do the right thing over doing what is useful for her, leaving his body. Since Antigone made this decision she risked doing the right thing over her life. Antigone is a strong character who will always chose what is right (justice) over what is useful (expedience). It would have been useful for her to leave her brother unburied because then she would have not faced death but that is not in Antigone’s nature as a person. 18/20

**Antigone – Useful vs. Right 4)** - Antigone was a very independent. She did not believe in following the status quo. She believed in doing what was right which was abiding by the Gods rules. In her mind, what was useful was irrelevant to what she needed to do in her life, and to Antigone, even if it meant defying the laws of her step-father, she was going to do it. Unlike her sister Ismene who was weak at heart and just followed the laws because she was a woman, Antigone was strong willed and didn't think anything of the standards set for women. *Antigone is sort of like an Achilles of her time. This is because she did what she needed to do to gain honor and glory* (not so sure about this – she certainly received no honor and glory while alive!). She did what she had to do because of what the Gods commanded her to do (in the sense that she had to follow the Gods laws). 16/20

**SOCRATES (IN PLATO) - What Is Useful vs. What Is Right** - Another major example of favoring what is RIGHT over what is useful – dedicates his life to the search for truth and justice – believes that Athenians have lost their way – have put wealth and self-interest above justice and the health of their souls – criticizes both the public and private life of his fellow citizens – became unpopular in doing so – but believed he had a duty assigned by the gods – Did what he thought was right during the trial of the generals - so committed to this principle that he is willing to die for it – refuses to run away from his penalty or even to admit guilt because he knows that would be wrong

**Socrates – Useful vs. Right 1** - Socrates, a man known in Athens for asking questions to the educated and corrupting the youth, knew exactly what was worth dying for. In Plato, Socrates believed more in the idea of right independently rather than what was correct in
the state's rules. Socrates thought that fighting for what you thought was right was something worth dying for, and his actions proved this. Socrates could have told the jury that he would stop his questioning and teaching during his trial and the jury would have let him go. Instead, Socrates would not let his beliefs get in the way of right and wrong. Socrates ended up dying for what he believed in and never gave up on his beliefs. This is what Socrates strived for all of mankind to do. 15/20 – this response would work much better for the question about "What is Worth Dying For?"

**Socrates – Useful vs. Right 2** - Socrates was the man who knew what is right and what is wrong. He would definitely choose justice over what is useful. He is the smartest man in Athens since he knew what is right. He spoke in front of everyone to persuade them to do what is right. He didn't care about his own reputation, but cared about what is right to do. At the trial at 399, he could survive but he decided not to because he believed that his actions were right. By looking at his actions and thoughts, we can tell that he would choose what is right. 15/20 – needs more content

**Socrates – Useful vs. Right 3** - When it came to expedience vs. justice, Socrates definitely supported justice. He believed that the only guideline for one when one takes actions is whether the action is just. He tried to persuade people out of taking actions based on expedience during the Peloponnesian War. He stood against all when he spoke against the group trial of the generals. He kept his life on perpetual questioning even though he knew this would cause him unpopularity. He refused to run away from the unjust execution of himself only to ad more credibility for the judicial and law enforcement system. Through his words and actions, he clearly showed that he was someone who cares more about justice than expedience. 18/20

**"SOCRATES"/SOPHISTS (in Aristophanes) - What Is Useful vs. What Is Right** - Aristophanes makes “Socrates” the embodiment of expedience over justice, of what is useful over what is right – The Sophists were known to teach how to make the weaker argument appear the stronger – They did so for a fee - and that is what Strepsiades is looking for (so that he can do the wrong thing and avoid paying his debts) – “Socrates” appears ludicrous because he and his students do not care about truth – they teach Pheidippides that a son may beat his father, and even his mother – The irony to this is that the actual historical Socrates believed just the opposite – unlike the Sophists, the actual Socrates cared passionately about doing what was right, regardless of the costs – even to the point of death

**Sophists – Useful vs. Right 1** - The Sophists are the ones who believe in getting as many people on their side as humanly possible. In the play The Clouds, Aristophanes portrayed Socrates as a crazy person who believed that clouds were gods and that it was right to beat your parents. To the Sophists, doing that is most useful and beneficial for them because they get money and votes from doing it. As for Socrates, he is always doing what is right. During his trial he not once thought to succumb to the daunting words of the jury and accusers. While it might seem like Socrates doesn’t get a lot out of this, he does. For Socrates, it is the satisfaction of knowing at the end of the day that you were doing what's right. 17/20 – focus more on the Sophists than the historical Socrates
Sophists – Useful vs. Right 2) - To Socrates and the Sophists of Aristophanes’ *The Clouds*, expedience always took precedence over justice. In the play, this group of characters teaches strategic arguments for use on any side of any conflict, whether for ethical purposes or not. Their only concern is the money they gain from teaching their arguments, not caring about any political, social, or legal consequences of them. Yes, a sophist of *The Clouds* would argue against an innocent man if it meant they would be paid. They even teach their pupils how to argue for an immoral point and be victorious. None of these characters have a care in the world concerning morality or justice, and all of their actions demonstrate this uncaring, self-centered perspective. Socrates and the Sophists of Aristophanes’ works were ridiculous, self-loving characters who were willing to aid any cause for profit. However, it is valuable to note that Socrates as a real Athenian contemporary of the time was incorrectly personified by his corresponding character of *The Clouds*; his main concerns in his life were justice and to act according to his conscience, and he never requested payment for his ideas, remaining poor throughout his entire life. 20/20

Sophists – Useful vs. Right 3) - The unreal portrayal of Socrates in *The Clouds* by Aristophanes, which is actually a sophist, values expedience more than justice. Socrates is portrayed as someone who believes the clouds are the gods, and lifts himself high in the clouds just to think more clearly. He has an academy where he get paid to teach students how to win a debate. In the play, he claims that son can beat his father up and proves this using some verbal tricks. The standard of whether to do something or not for the sophists is not justice. They do not have judge which side they should support based on if it is right. Instead, they can teach the rich people to win the argument on both sides just because they can earn money. Thus, the wealthiness is supported instead of rightness. 18/20

Sophists – Useful vs. Right 4) - To the Sophists, what they find useful is manipulation of Athenian citizens, and in the play: ‘*The Clouds*’ by Aristophanes, Socrates is portrayed as a Sophist. The way the Sophists find manipulation useful is that they earn money from it – they make you think that you need their service, then make your pay for it. This is not right as the people who pay for services such as these, which can be considered education by some, should not be manipulated into paying for this service. Being taught to argue should be free, as the contrary turns the Athenian government system into a ‘Pay to Win’ system where the wealthier you are, the more powerful you are. 18/20