

# HUMANITIES 110 Final Examination

Tuesday, December 15, 2015

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## INSTRUCTIONS

Closed Book Examination. For this exam, as for all exams at Reed, the Honor Principle applies.

This is a four-hour exam. Your work is due back, either in Vollum Lecture Hall or in your instructor's electronic mail box, no later than 10:00 p.m.

The exam consists of three parts: Part One should take one hour; Part Two, one and one-half hours; and Part Three, one and one-half hours. Save some time from each section for revision.

## EXAM

**Part One (one hour):** Identify TEN, and ONLY TEN of the following quotations and images. Supply the title of the work, and where appropriate, identify author and speaker. **Follow each identification with a few sentences describing the quotation or image's significance.**

1.

"And here's a fable for kings, who'll not need it explained:

It's what the hawk said high in the clouds

As he carried off a speckle--throated nightingale

Skewered on his talons. She complained something pitiful,

And he made this high and mighty speech to her:

"No sense in your crying. You're in the grip of real strength now,

And you'll go where I take you, songbird or not.

I'll make a meal of you if I want, or I might let you go.

Only a fool struggles against his superiors.

He not only gets beat, but humiliated as well."

Thus spoke the hawk, the windlord, his long wings beating."

2.

"Death is to me today

<like> a sick man's recovery,

like going out after confinement.

Death is to me today

like the smell of myrrh,

like sitting under a sail on a windy day.  
Death is to me today  
like a well-trodden path,  
like a man's coming home from an expedition."

3.

"This day shall be to you one of remembrance: you shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord throughout the ages; you shall celebrate it as an institution for all time. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; ... whoever eat leavened bread from the first day to the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel."

4.

"Justice turns the balance scales, sees that we suffer and we suffer and we learn..."

5.

"If my husband were dead, I might have had another,  
and child from another man, if I lost the first.  
But when father and mother both were hidden in death  
no brother's life would bloom for me again."

6.

"O that my words were written down!  
O that they were inscribed in a book!  
O that with an iron pen and with lead  
they were engraved on a rock forever!  
For I know that my Redeemer lives,  
and that at the last he will stand upon the earth;  
and after my skin has been thus destroyed,  
then in my flesh I shall see God,  
whom I shall see on my side,  
and my eyes shall behold, and not another."

7.

"All the equipment to be put in a tomb shaft --  
its share of these things was made.  
I was given funerary priests;  
a funerary demesne was made for me,  
with fields in it and a garden in its proper place,  
as is done for a Chief Friend.

My image was overlaid with gold,  
and its kilt with electrum.  
It is his Majesty who has caused this to be done.

There is no other lowly man for whom the like was done.  
I was in the favours of the king's giving,  
until the day of landing came."

8.

"As for the people, if it is right to censure them openly,  
the things that they now possess they never could  
have seen in dreams . . .  
And those of the greater sort, superior in force,  
may praise me and regard me as their friend.  
For if some other man had gained this honor,  
he would not have restrained the people, nor would he have stopped  
his churning until he had extracted the rich fat from the milk.  
As for me, in the middle ground between the two parties  
I stood like a boundary stone."

9.



10.

"Nobody of course can have all these advantages, any more than a country can produce everything it needs: whatever it has, it is bound to lack something. The best country is the one which has most. It is the same with people: no man is ever self-sufficient—there is sure to be something missing. But whoever has the greatest number of the good things I have mentioned,



and keeps them to the end, and dies a peaceful death, that man, Croesus, deserves in my opinion to be called happy. Look to the end, no matter what it is you are considering. Often enough God gives a man a glimpse of happiness, and then utterly ruins him.”

11.

“It will be enough for me, however, if these words of mine are judged useful by those who want to understand clearly the events which happened in the past and which (human nature being what it is) will, at some time or other and in much the same ways, be repeated in the future.”

12.



13.

The voice of the goose sounds forth  
as he's caught by the bait. Your love  
ensnares me. I can't let it go.

I shall take home my nets,  
but what shall I tell my mother,  
to whom I return every day  
laden with lovely birds?

I set no traps today,  
ensnared as I was by love.

**Part Two (one and one-half hours):** Write an essay on **ONE** of the following topics:

1. Following Archilochus (“The fox knows many things, the hedgehog only one--but big”), the intellectual historian Isaiah Berlin argued that all thinkers could be categorized as hedgehogs or foxes. He categorized Herodotus as a fox. Do you agree? Is this an appropriate characterization of what Herodotus believed to be the historian's task? Or should the historian, like the hedgehog, aim for knowledge of a universal principle? In formulating your answer, compare the respective intellectual outlooks of Herodotus and Thucydides, using evidence from their histories.
2. This semester, we have read two self-avowed historians: Herodotus and Thucydides. Yet many other texts and objects we have encountered this semester also perform historical work. Choose two other texts or objects and consider how they do the work of history. Would Herodotus (or Thucydides) consider these works to be history?
3. Throughout the semester we have returned again and again to the question of language and its relationship to meaning, to truth, to history, to authority, and to belief. Evaluate three texts from this semester (including visual and cultural artifacts) and consider: can language be trusted?

**Part Three (one and one-half hour):** Write an essay on **ONE** of the following topics:

1. Throughout this semester, we have encountered explicit and implicit references to the relationship between being at home and being a stranger. *Exodus* 23:9 references this relationship by means of a command: “You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in Egypt.” Choose one other cultural setting (Egypt, Persia, Athens, Sparta) and analyze that culture’s understanding of the relationship between home-dweller and stranger. Be as specific as possible in your citation of textual references that could support your argument.

2. In many texts that we've read this term, oracles, dreams, and visions play an important role. Recall (to take just a few instances) Gilgamesh's dreams, Joseph's dreams from Genesis 37, the bird sign that Polydamas interprets in Book XII of the *Iliad*, Clytemnestra's snake dream, or the Delphic oracle about "wooden walls" that Herodotus discusses in Book 8 of his *Histories*. There are many others that one might cite. With reference to at least two such passages, discuss the relationship of dreams, visions, and oracles to historical knowledge.
3. Xenophanes famously asserted that if horses, oxen, and lions had hands, they would draw gods shaped, respectively, like horses, oxen, and lions (B15). For Xenophanes, popular theology of the sort found in Homer and Hesiod was just as parochial. Xenophanes believed instead that god, of which there is only one, is nothing at all like mortals "in body or in thought" (B23).

In your essay address **just one** of the following questions:

- a) Is there anything to be said in defense of Homer and Hesiod against the charge that they are merely human counterparts of horses drawing horse-shaped gods?
- b) How might Xenophanes have reacted to the monotheism of *Genesis* and *Exodus*, one in which humans are made in the image of God, but in which images of the divine are forbidden?
- c) Does Xenophanes' assertion about horses, oxen, and lions frame a general concern about human representations and human knowledge? If so, what is that concern, and how does it manifest in two of the other texts you have read?

---end of final---