

# Humanities 110: Final Exam

## Tuesday, December 13, 2011

### 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 5:00 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.**

**Part One (one hour):** Identify 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. Then [she] said in reply to [him]: "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will also fast as you do. After that I will go to the king, though it is against the law; and if I perish, I perish."

2. Ah how shameless—the way these mortals blame the gods.  
From us alone, they say, come all their miseries, yes,  
but they themselves, with their own reckless ways,  
compound their pains beyond their proper share.

3. Xerxes now decided to hold a review of his army. On a rise of ground nearby, a throne of white marble had already been specially prepared for his use by the people of Abydos; so the king took his seat upon it and, looking down over the shore, was able to see the whole of his army and navy at a single view. As he watched them he was seized with the desire to witness a rowing-match. The match took place and was won by the Phoenicians of Sidon, to the great delight of Xerxes, who was as pleased with the race as with his army. And when he saw the whole Hellespont hidden by ships, and all the beaches and plains of Abydos filled with men, he called himself happy – and the moment after burst into tears. Artabanus his uncle . . . was by his side; and when he saw how Xerxes wept, he said to him: 'My Lord, surely there is a strange contradiction in what you do now and what you did a moment ago. Then you called yourself a happy man – and now you weep.'

'I was thinking,' Xerxes replied; 'and it came into my mind how pitifully short human life is – for of all these thousands of men not one will be alive in a hundred years' time.'

4. By the favour of Auramazda I am of such a kind that I am a friend to what is right, I am no friend to what is wrong. (It is) not my wish that to the weak is done wrong because of the mighty, it is not my wish that the mighty is hurt because of the weak.

5. [http://cdm.reed.edu/cdm4/extensions/full\\_size.php?CISOROOT=/vrcwork&CISOPTR=103041](http://cdm.reed.edu/cdm4/extensions/full_size.php?CISOROOT=/vrcwork&CISOPTR=103041)

6. And right away famous old Gimpy  
Plastered up some clay to look like a shy virgin  
Just like Zeus had wanted, and the Owl-Eyed Goddess  
Got her all dressed up, and the Graces divine  
And lady Persuasion put some gold necklaces  
On her skin, and the Seasons (with their long, fine hair)  
Put on her head a crown of springtime flowers.  
Pallas Athena put on the finishing touches,  
And the quicksilver messenger put in her breast  
Lies and wheedling words and a cheating heart,  
Just like rumbling Zeus wanted.

7. I would rather see her lovely step  
and the glancing brightness of her face  
than Lydian chariots and foot soldiers  
arrayed in armor.

8. Know of a surety that your descendants will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and will be slaves there, and they will be oppressed for four hundred years; but I will bring judgment on the nation which they serve and afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

9. If oxen and horses and lions had hands  
and were able to draw with their hands and do the same things as men,  
horses would draw the shapes of gods to look like horses  
and oxen to look like oxen, and each would make the  
gods' bodies have the same shape as they themselves had.

10. Wisdom is far the chief element in happiness  
and, secondly, no irreverence towards the gods.  
But great words of haughty men exact  
in retribution blows as great  
and in old age teach wisdom.

So shall my limbs grow numb again, for now old age has fallen:  
weakness has overtaken me,  
my eyes are heavy, and my arms weak;  
my legs have ceased to follow, and my heart is weary;  
I am near to dying.  
May they lead me to the cities of Eternity!

11. [http://cdm.reed.edu/cdm4/extensions/full\\_size.php?CISOROOT=/vrcwork&CISOPTR=38445](http://cdm.reed.edu/cdm4/extensions/full_size.php?CISOROOT=/vrcwork&CISOPTR=38445)

12. So shall my limbs grow numb again, for now old age has fallen:  
weakness has overtaken me,  
my eyes are heavy, and my arms weak;  
my legs have ceased to follow, and my heart is weary;  
I am near to dying.  
May they lead me to the cities of Eternity!

13. Even when I cry out, "Violence!" I am not  
    answered  
I call aloud, but there is no justice.

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

1. Thucydides and Euripides have both been characterized as “realists” – as portraying human beings as they *are*, not as they ought to be. Do they agree about the limitations of reason or of rational discourse? Explain your answer by drawing on specific examples from *The Bacchae* and *The History of the Peloponnesian War*.

2. Analyze the Athenians’ Sicilian Expedition as it is recounted in Thucydides’ *History of the Peloponnesian War*. To what causes does he attribute this catastrophe? How might you read Thucydides’ account as a tragedy?

3. Both Thucydides in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*, and Euripides in the *The Bacchae*, draw our attention to the breakdown of social order. Compare the collapse of democratic structure and Periclean values (as seen in the plague, the Corcyran civil war, or the destruction of the Sicilian expedition) to the inversions of order and values as recounted in *The Bacchae*. What, in each case, is contrasted with order? And what, in each case, might be the point of calling our attention to that contrast?

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

1. Many of the authors we have read use reversal/inversion and divine intervention to normalize social conventions and frame historical events in their narratives. Considering the role of God, gods, or divine power in your analysis, identify reversals and compare their outcomes in three of the following works: Sophocles' *Antigone*, The Book of Job, The Book of Ezra; Herodotus' *Histories*, The Book of Exodus; *The Tale of Sinuhe*; Aeschylus' *Eumenides*. You may choose to describe a reversal's impact on a given character, or more broadly, its effects on the destiny, fate, or history of a culture or people.
2. The appeal to gender conventions provides an important means of moralizing about various types of 'foreignness' in many of the texts and works of art we have studied. Describe the role of gender in characterizing others/otherness in three of the following: Aeschylus' *The Persians*, *Greek versus Persian* (Vase painting, ca. 460 BCE), *A Persian fights with a Hoplite* (Vase painting by the Triptolemos Painter, ca. 500-475 BCE), Herodotus' *Histories*, The Book of Esther, the *Parthenon* friezes.
3. Discuss and analyze the use of violence to resolve conflicts as depicted in three of the following texts: *Horus and Seth*, Homer's *Odyssey*, the Bisitun Monument, The Book of Exodus, Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, Herodotus' *Histories*.