

*Selected Proceedings of the University of Florida Classics Graduate Student Symposium*

**Volume 1**

**Introduction**

The University of Florida Classics Graduate Student Symposium is an annual meeting of graduate students organized and hosted by the graduate students of the Classics Department of the University of Florida. Every year, under the supervision of Dr. Eleni Bozia, and with the generous support of the Rothman Endowment of the Classics Department and the Center for Greek Studies, we pose questions and invite consideration of topics that push the boundaries of our field in an attempt to interpret antiquity, modernity, and their intersection. Since October 2017, we have been welcoming graduate students from the United States and Europe whose research is invested in different fields in the humanities and engaging with them in constructive discussions that illuminate the Greco-Roman world as well as current social, political, and cultural issues.

To this day, we have organized three graduate symposia on the UF campus, and the present volume includes selected papers from the second and third. The First Classics Graduate Symposium, titled “Translation, Adaptation, and Interpretation” and held on October 21, 2017, hosted presenters from the University of Georgia, Washington University in St. Louis, the University of Toronto, the University at Buffalo, the University of North Florida, and the University of Florida who explored various aspects of literary translation and the adaptation of Greco-Roman works. Dr. Karl Galinsky, the Floyd A. Cailloux Centennial Professor Emeritus and Professor of Classics at the University of Texas, delivered the keynote address, “Translation, Adaptation, and Interpretation: Texts and Beyond.” Our first Symposium was sponsored by the Classics Department and the Center for Greek Studies at the University of Florida with the support of the Medieval and Early Modern Studies Department at the University of Florida .

The Second Classics Graduate Symposium, titled “NATURA/φύσις vs. ARS/τέχνη: Artificial vs. Natural in the Ancient World and Beyond,” took place on October 13, 2018. This symposium focused on the intertemporal interactions among man, nature, and technology. Graduate students from the University of Oxford, Sorbonne Université, Brandeis University, the University of Arizona, The Catholic University of America, the University of South Florida, and the University of Florida discussed the importance of *natura* and *ars* in the development of ancient and contemporary societies. Dr. Christopher Otter, Professor of History at The Ohio State University, delivered the keynote address, “The Technosphere: The Last 10,000 Years.” Our second symposium was also sponsored by the Classics Department and the Center for Greek Studies at the University of Florida with the support of the Medieval and Early Modern Studies Department at the University of Florida.

The Third Classics Graduate Symposium, titled “Justice Turns the Balance Scales” and held on October 26, 2019, gathered graduate students from the Università di Macerata, Bryn Mawr College, the University at Buffalo, the University of Maryland, the University of Texas Austin, the University of South Florida, and the University of Florida. The presenters, along with the panel respondents, Dr. Ifigeneia Giannadaki, Assistant Professor and Cassas Chair in Greek Studies (Classics Department, UF), Dr. Konstantinos Kapparis, Professor and Director of the Center for Greek Studies (Classics Department, UF), and Dr. Victoria Pagán, Professor (Classics Department, UF), delved into the issue of justice and its role in the life of the individual and society in the ancient world.

## NATURA/φύσις vs. ARS/τέχνη: Artificial vs. Natural in the Ancient World and Beyond

In selecting the theme for the annual UF Classics Graduate Student Symposium, our intent has always been to propose an area of study that is comprehensive enough to include a rich variety of contributions across time and disciplines, but also specific enough to investigate a core cultural idea or principle of the ancient world. One of the benefits of a graduate student symposium is that it helps young scholars find their own voice within the academic world.

Our 2018 symposium invited its guests to consider the place of classical studies within several topics of global importance. The events of the day closed with a keynote address from Dr. Chris Otter, who presented a history of the Earth's transformation due to human activity: "The Technosphere: The Last 10,000 Years."<sup>1</sup> Within the modern era, the industrialized world has carved for itself an almost entirely artificial niche, air-conditioned and carefully sanitized. There are few places one can go to avoid feeling its effects, and we cannot learn about it without using its technology—computers or printed books.<sup>2</sup> Yet, there is also a long premodern history that has brought us to this stage.<sup>3</sup> Like the view from the top of Rome's *monte testaccio*, an ancient heap of broken jars that looks down over much of the city,<sup>4</sup> our view of the past rests upon a hundred

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<sup>1</sup> For further discussion, see Chris Otter, "The Technosphere: A New Concept for Urban Studies," *Urban History* 43, no. 4 (2016): 145-54, and Chris Otter, "Technosphere," in *Concepts of Urban-Environmental History*, ed. Sebastian Haumann, Martin Knoll, and Detlev Mares (Salzburg, Austria: Universität Salzburg, 2020): 21-32.

<sup>2</sup> As Otter has written elsewhere, "[t]his essay was written in and is sustained by the technosphere: it will probably never be read outside it" (Otter, "The Technosphere").

<sup>3</sup> Heike Weber addresses some misconceptions about the extent of material reuse in premodern societies in her chapter "Material Flows and Circular Thinking" in *Concepts of Urban-Environmental History*, ed. Sebastian Haumann, Martin Knoll, and Detlev Mares (Salzburg, Austria: Universität Salzburg, 2020): 130-32.

<sup>4</sup> Weber mentions the *monte testaccio* as Rome's "eighth hill," an eminently visible example of a premodern "ultimate sink" ("Material Flows," 131). The last few decades have seen a growing interest in the ecological history of antiquity. For the use of natural resources in antiquity, see Lukas Thommen, *An Environmental History of Ancient Greece and Rome*, trans. Philip Hill (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012); O. D. Cordovana and G. F. Chiai, eds., *Pollution and the Environment in Ancient Life and Thought* (Stuttgart, Germany: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2017); Christopher Schliephake, *The Environmental Humanities and the Ancient World* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2020); J. D. Hughes, *Pan's Travail: Environmental Problems of the Ancient Greeks and Romans* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); and Robert Sallares, *The Ecology of the Ancient Greek World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991).

centuries' worth of technology and its refuse. Our future as a species, in turn, will depend on how well we harness the most dangerous of these artifacts, which, since the Industrial Revolution—and 1945 especially—have become a growing threat to our survival.<sup>5</sup>

With its far-reaching perspective, Otter's lecture provided a sobering way to review the issues raised in the symposium. Its purpose was to explore these issues from the perspectives of various disciplines, including literary studies, art history and archaeology, and the history of science and philosophy. Several related philosophical problems arose in different contexts: how to define life and non-life, how to define ourselves as human beings and as members of various groups, and how the ancient antithesis of *physis* and *nomos* still influences our thinking about these subjects.

Especially within the last decade, a general interest in robotics and artificial intelligence has motivated classicists to reconsider certain Greek and Latin texts that seem to bear on these questions.<sup>6</sup> Such comparisons are prone to anachronism,<sup>7</sup> but they also provide rich material for contemplation. Where do the self-rolling tripods of Homer's Hephaestus, or Talos, the mythical bronze giant who guarded the shores of Crete belong in this discussion? How should we characterize the work of Hero of Alexandria (c. first century CE), the designer of a variety of automatic devices, such as moving statues and miniature "animated" theaters? It is not obvious

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<sup>5</sup> In our third panel, Katherine Peters offered an "anti-*Odyssey*" reading of W. G. Sebald's *The Rings of Saturn*, which includes a grim description of an abandoned military base at Orford Ness, a former testing site for Britain's Atomic Weapons Establishment ("Odyssean Afterlife: Navigating the Isle of the Dead on Sebald's Orford Ness," Katherine N. Peters, University of Florida).

<sup>6</sup> Our symposium preceded another devoted entirely to this topic: "Greek Epic and Artificial Intelligence," International Zoom Conference (University of Oslo, September 25–26, 2020). The program may be found at [https://www.hf.uio.no/ifikk/english/research/groups/novel-and-epic-ancient-and-modern/greek-epic---ai\\_oslo\\_sep-2020\\_programme.pdf](https://www.hf.uio.no/ifikk/english/research/groups/novel-and-epic-ancient-and-modern/greek-epic---ai_oslo_sep-2020_programme.pdf). For another relevant conference program from the past year, see "Technological Animation in Classical Antiquity," Department of Classics and Ancient History (University of Exeter, December 6–7, 2019), <http://sites.exeter.ac.uk/techanimation/>.

<sup>7</sup> Or, as Minsoo Kang puts it, to "teleological" thinking. See Kang's discussion, and his caveats on the subject: Minsoo Kang, *Sublime Dreams of Living Machines: The Automaton in the European Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011): 14ff.

where this narrative should begin, and some historians of technology have preferred to focus more on medieval and early modern examples than ancient ones. In this regard, Jessica Riskin's *The Restless Clock*, an especially thorough recent study, traces the role of automata (both real and fictional) in the history of debates about the nature of life.<sup>8</sup> Between the seventeenth and early twentieth centuries, philosophers argued for several possibilities<sup>9</sup>:

- (1) We have incorporeal souls, which somehow interact with our brains.
- (2) We have some kind of "life force" (*vis viva* or *élan vital*) that exists as a property of matter.
- (3) We are moist robots, explainable—at least in principle—entirely in terms of mechanistic processes that obey the known laws of physics.

From option (3) follows the most difficult problem for neuroscientists and challenge for A.I. research: Can computers ever become conscious? If so, such technology will erase the most fundamental difference between art and nature.

Some classicists have found ways of extending this inquiry into antiquity, especially by focusing on Hellenistic machines. Sylvia Berryman has argued that the technical advances of this era led some philosophers and physicians to develop mechanistic explanations for natural phenomena, including human physiology.<sup>10</sup> Others have maintained that even older, Archaic and Classical (including pre-fourth century), authors had already begun considering such ideas. The debate depends on how strictly one defines the terms *mechanistic* and *materialistic*.<sup>11</sup> Taking a

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<sup>8</sup> Jessica Riskin, *The Restless Clock: A History of the Centuries-Long Argument over What Makes Living Things Tick* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2016). See also, E. R. Truitt, *Medieval Robots: Mechanism, Magic, Nature, and Art* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> Riskin, *The Restless Clock*, covers the history of each of these three questions.

<sup>10</sup> See Sylvia Berryman, "Ancient Automata and Mechanical Explanation," *Phronesis* 48, no. 4 (2003): 344–69; Sylvia Berryman, *The Mechanical Hypothesis in Ancient Greek Natural Philosophy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

<sup>11</sup> For a thorough explanation of these distinctions, see Berryman, *The Mechanical Hypothesis*. For a general survey of the topic, see Adrienne Mayor, *Gods and Robots: Myths, Machines, and Ancient Dreams of Technology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018). For more information and references, see Kenneth Silverman, "The Androids of Hephaestus: Between Human and Machine in the *Iliad*," this volume.

broad interpretation, Kenneth Silverman (this volume) observes that the Homeric poems imagine a universe describable in terms of physical properties and processes. Its inhabitants include mortal, immortal, and artificial beings, all of whom belong to the same materialist worldview. Later Greek natural philosophers had a rich field to plough in developing these Archaic beliefs about the inner-workings of living things.

These perspectives help situate Graeco-Roman engineering within a long history of ancient *technai*. One of the most comprehensive projects in classical studies is to understand how poets and craftsmen (including visual artists and engineers) interacted with philosophy and medicine, and vice versa. In his preliminary study on this question,<sup>12</sup> Guy Métraux notes a variety of features that early Classical sculptors may have drawn from philosophical ideas: from lower-lid eyelashes to posture and proportions, surface veins and the illusion of respiration, the art of this period (c. 480-450 BCE) records a suite of observations about what makes us human. Métraux regards these sculptures as three-dimensional essays that did not adhere to any artistic dogmas.<sup>13</sup> Later on, both philosophers and visual artists began relying on more systematic approaches to their work,<sup>14</sup> but Métraux believes that the earlier period was especially open to eclecticism and experimentation.<sup>15</sup> One could argue that creativity in general depends on a balance between these two poles: the organic and spontaneous, and the artificial and deliberate.<sup>16</sup> The artist must somehow harness the power of the first within the constraint of the second. This is as broadly true of scientific disciplines as it is of the visual and musical arts, in the present as well as in antiquity. The recent interest in

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<sup>12</sup> Guy Métraux, *Sculptors and Physicians in Fifth-Century Greece: A Preliminary Study* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995).

<sup>13</sup> Métraux uses the term *undogmatic* in this context (Métraux, *Sculptors and Physicians*, 58).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 67–8. Métraux discusses Polykleitos' *Canon* as an example of such systematization.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 58, 66.

<sup>16</sup> A thought-provoking discussion on this dichotomy, as it pertains to the history of rhetorical education and to modern pedagogical practices, can be found in C. H. Knoblauch and Lil Brannon, *Rhetorical Traditions and the Teaching of Writing* (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1984).

Hero of Alexandria has highlighted this connection insofar as this inventor cared as much about aesthetic as technical concerns.<sup>17</sup>

The topic of *ars/natura* also lends itself to discussions about how visual artists imitated the natural world through various media. This act of imitation was described with the Greek word *mimēsis*. From Hesiod onwards,<sup>18</sup> it became commonplace for poets and philosophers to express ambivalence about all forms of *mimēsis* and ornamentation, including cosmetics. Yet, not all intellectuals shared this ambivalence. Dimitri Mézière (this volume) examines Ovid’s lively defense of women’s make-up in his *Medicamina Faciei*. We humans, says Ovid, naturally take pleasure in earthly delights, and there is therefore no shame in making the pretty prettier (or the unattractive less so). Ovid makes this point with a somewhat facetious analogy between agriculture and cosmetics—partly adapted, as Mézière argues, from a passage of Lucretius’ on farming.<sup>19</sup> For all its irony, Ovid’s “praise of *cultus*” encodes a serious commentary on the relationship between *ars* and *natura*, which in its way befits the author’s colorful style as well as his cultural context. Unlike the classical Greeks, the Romans did not hesitate to build a temple in brick with marble revetment, rather than insist on the investment in marble to the core.

On a similarly practical level, we can meditate on this opinion from Aristotle:

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<sup>17</sup> See Karin Tybjerg, “Wonder-Making and Philosophical Wonder in Hero of Alexandria,” *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 34 (2003): 443–66. Courtney Roby, *Technical Ekphrasis in Greek and Roman Science and Literature: The Written Machine Between Alexandria and Rome* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

<sup>18</sup> See, for instance, Christine Hunzinger, “Wonder,” in *A Companion to Ancient Aesthetics*, ed. Pierre Destrée and Penelope Murray (Oxford, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2015): 422–37.

<sup>19</sup> This discussion raises a number of gender- and sexuality-related issues, on which our second panel focused, and about which there is a large background literature. To give one point of contact, A. R. Sharrock, in her influential and memorably titled article “Womanufacture,” interprets Ovid’s *Pygmalion* story in light of the genre of Latin love elegy. Like *Pygmalion*’s ivory maiden, who turned to flesh in his embrace, the elegist’s *puella* was a kind of art object that brought her creator’s erotic obsessions to life (A. R. Sharrock, “Womanufacture,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 81 (1991): 36–49). See also, in general, Marilyn B. Skinner, *Sexuality in Greek and Roman Culture* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005); Amy Richlin, “Reading Ovid’s Rapes,” in *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome*, ed. Amy Richlin (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1992): 158–79. The *Pygmalion* myth often appears in discussions about classical automata as an illustration of the ancient fascination with the idea of a living statue. The automaton, or animated statue, perhaps better than any other image represents the eerie liminal space between art and nature.

And it is also clear that some of the useful subjects as well ought to be studied by the young not only because of their utility, like the study of reading and writing, but also because they may lead on to many other branches of knowledge; and similarly they should study drawing not in order that they may not go wrong in their private purchases and may avoid being cheated in buying and selling furniture, but rather because this study makes a man observant of bodily beauty; and to seek for utility everywhere is entirely unsuited to men that are great-souled and free.

*Politics 8.1338a-b (trans. H. Rackham)*

Aristotle reserved an important place in his moral philosophy for *technē*, in the broad sense of “productive knowledge.”<sup>20</sup> On his view, our well-being depends on skills that we can acquire and develop, as well as on the practical wisdom of using them to our benefit.<sup>21</sup> This idea reminds us that we each have within our grasp a variety of tools with which we can improve our society and help avoid the dire consequences that Dr. Otter’s closing remarks forbode.

### **Summary of Papers**

One of the strengths of our symposia has been the participants’ wide range of interpretations of the symposia themes. In this volume, the two selections from the second annual symposium, “NATURA/φύσις vs. ARS/τέχνη: Artificial vs. Natural in the Ancient World and Beyond,” provide perspectives from Latin and Greek, one about automata and one about cosmetics.

Silverman’s paper explores the automata of Hephaestus’ workshop in Book 18 of Homer’s *Iliad* and presents a case for reading these figures as robots. This discussion reconsiders Archaic Greek beliefs about the relationship between art and nature while appreciating the poet’s own art of stimulating the audience’s imagination with descriptions of material wonders.

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<sup>20</sup> See Gavin Lawrence, “Human Excellence in Character and Intellect,” in *A Companion to Aristotle*, ed. Georgios Anagnostopoulos (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013): 419–41 (esp. 424–25).

<sup>21</sup> Lawrence provides a useful summary of Aristotle’s tripartite division of the areas of knowledge and the role of *technē* within it: “It is the role of practical thought to use and command the productive skills and their products to help it organize human life at individual, domestic, and social levels—so as to live well..., where this is a matter of providing as much free time as is ever possible for doing the most valuable activity, pure theoretical reasoning, or contemplation” (Lawrence, “Human Excellence,” 425).

Mézière's paper investigates the problem of Ovid's *Medicamina Faciei Femineae* and how its *praeceptor* interacts with the philosophy and ethics of the art of cosmetics in the text. This paper seeks to explain the interaction of *ars* and *natura* in the text in relation to the proper use of self-adornment and cosmetics.

## Justice Turns the Balance Scales

For our 2019 symposium, we invited graduate students to present their research on the topic of justice. The wide scope of this topic welcomed a vast array of contributions, each shaping our understanding of the ancient world by treating one historical actualization or literary representation of the ideal of justice. We also changed the format, inviting respondents from the Classics Department of the University of Florida to engage in conversation with the presenters and lead Q&A. Since the idea of justice can be studied from a vast array of perspectives, the respondent format allowed for more in-depth discussion and critique of the papers, grouped by area of interest.

That justice constitutes a key problem for the ancient world, and one that has persisted for modern scholars, will be clear with a few significant examples. In fact, the Greek literary tradition *begins* with a dispute about justice and fairness, when Achilles and Agamemnon quarrel over the distribution of war prizes. Both Greek heroes frame the argument in terms of what is proper, or what is just. Agamemnon addresses these words to Achilles and the Argives: “So find another prize; it’s wrong for me / to be the only Argive with no prize.”<sup>22</sup> Achilles’ rebuttal, a few lines later, claims that “people *shouldn’t* give back what they’ve got.” Despite the different word choices of the translation, the language is almost identical: ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ ἔοικε and δ’ οὐκ ἐπέοικε.<sup>23</sup> The verb ἔοικα denotes what is proper, fitting, or *just*.

Was it Achilles’ *rights* that Agamemnon violated? Was it a problem of *equality* and *fairness*? Or was it a matter of competition for power? The argument between the two great leaders of the Achaean host proves how the problem of justice forces modern readers to revisit their vocabulary, question the meaning of words deployed to describe familiar situations, and wonder whether there exists a way to frame our understanding of societal relationships that is different

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<sup>22</sup> Homer, *Iliad* (*Il.*), trans. Denison Hull, 1.118-9.

<sup>23</sup> *Il.* 1.119, 1.127, respectively.

from the narratives of our world. Another word appears interwoven within this narrative and becomes central to the understanding of Homeric ethics: *τιμή*.<sup>24</sup> Achilles threatens to leave Troy and head back home to Phthia because the distribution of wealth from war looting is unequal, and he is left without *τιμή* (*ἄτιμος*).<sup>25</sup> *Τιμή* is the word that in Classical Athens denotes what modern English translates to “civic rights.” Its derivatives (*ἀτιμία*, *ἀτίμητος*) assume the technical meaning of *disenfranchisement* and *disenfranchised*.

In 1989, Margaret Thatcher gave a TV interview to the French channel Antenne 2 in the context of the celebration of the French Revolution bicentennial. To the question whether human rights are a French invention, Thatcher replied, “No, of course they are not, they are far older than that. We had Magna Carta 1215 and human rights were part of Classical Greek (*sic*).”<sup>26</sup> With this polemical yet diplomatic statement, the British prime minister pinpointed a historical reference for the invention of human rights in the world of ancient Greece. Mirko Canevaro has tried to verify the Iron Lady’s claim and has explored the language of civic rights and duties in Classical Athens.<sup>27</sup> His argument focuses on the concept of *τιμή*, the exact word used in the quarrel between the Homeric heroes, and concludes that Thatcher’s observation is partly true and partly false. The substantial difference between our modern idea of human rights and that of the Athenians lies in the fundamentally individualistic character of modern societies. Modern rights produce social ethics focused on the individual and their autonomy, whereas Greek *τιμή* focuses on the social connections the individual establishes with their peers. Rights and duties, in the Athenian mindset, arise from the negotiation between the value and honor the individual assigns to themselves, those

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<sup>24</sup> See, for example, Arthur Adkins, “Homeric Ethics,” in *A New Companion to Homer*, ed. Ian Morris and Barry Powell (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 694–714.

<sup>25</sup> *Il.* 1.172.

<sup>26</sup> Margaret Thatcher, “TV Interview for French TV (Antenne 2),” July 11, 1989, <https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107499>.

<sup>27</sup> Mirko Canevaro, “I diritti come spazio di socialità,” *MicroMega*, December 21, 2018, <http://temi.repubblica.it/micromega-online/i-diritti-come-spazio-di-socialita-la-lezione-ateniese/>.

which society acknowledges to them, and those bestowed on them by the individuals with whom they interact at any given moment. Therefore, civic rights are contingent upon the performance of the individual. A citizen retains their *τιμή* as long as they perform or act like a citizen.<sup>28</sup> Throughout the century, Achilles' *τιμή* links with the way the citizens of Classical Athens conceptualized their communal life and its interactions.

Justice runs through the ancient tradition in different forms: it brings man's relationship with fate into question, particularly regarding the problem of human suffering and guilt; it generates conflict when human justice contradicts divine mandates; it informs debates over political actions; it spurs philosophical reflection; it gives rise to judicial and juridical systems whose influence reaches modern democracies; finally, it informs modern concerns about patent inequalities that the ancient world took for granted and our contemporary world has struggled (and it is still struggling) to overcome. In all these areas of human life, the ancient views about and reflections on justice continuously challenge our modern ways of thinking.

In a famous 1966 article, Eric Dodds revisits the interpretations of *Oedipus Rex*.<sup>29</sup> He intended to once more "clear up some of these ancient confusions."<sup>30</sup> Interpreters of the play have traditionally taken one of two sides: those who consider Oedipus at fault and impute to him a moral version of the Aristotelian *hamartia*, and those who convict the gods for Oedipus' plight. Dodds, instead, shows that such interpretations might be skewed by modern concerns, because "while

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<sup>28</sup> "Il concetto di *timé* tende a creare 'diritti' che non sono mai inalienabili, ma dipendono da una performance: il cittadino mantiene la *timé* di cittadino finché si comporta come tale. Tant'è che vari crimini e comportamenti considerati indegni di un cittadino erano puniti ad Atene appunto con l'*atimia*: disonore che era insieme negazione del valore di cittadino e privazione dei diritti che derivano da quel valore. [The idea of *timé* tends to create 'rights' which are never inalienable, rather, they depend upon a performance: the citizen upholds the *timé* of a citizen as long as he behaves like one. As a matter of fact, at Athens various crimes and behaviors deemed unworthy of a citizen were punished with *atimia*: dishonor which was both the rejection of citizen-worthiness and the privation of the rights that such worthiness granted.]" (Canevaro, "I diritti," our translation).

<sup>29</sup> Eric Robertson Dodds, "On Misunderstanding the 'Oedipus Rex,'" in *Greece & Rome*, 13.1 (April 1966): 37–49.

<sup>30</sup> Dodds, "On Misunderstanding," 38.

Sophocles did not pretend that the gods are in any human sense just he nevertheless held that they are entitled to our worship. [...] For him, as for Heraclitus, there is an objective world-order which man must respect, but which he cannot hope fully to understand.”<sup>31</sup> Once we get past our modern categories, the ancient world appears in its fascinating otherness.

From divine to human justice, ancient legal scholarship has studied, systematized, and discussed the laws and procedures of ancient Rome, first, and of classical Athens later.<sup>32</sup> One particular problem that has divided the scholars of ancient Greek law, especially in the Anglo-American dialectic, is the problem of the rule of law.<sup>33</sup> An interesting development of this problem has been the widening scope of research, and the contamination of legal and procedural arguments with social and cultural customs and ideas. Following the monumental works of Harrison and MacDowell,<sup>34</sup> who illustrated ancient Athenian law in a coherent system, David Cohen appealed to the dialectic to forgo its traditional attempt to infer a system or code of law and to instead widen the scope of research to include culture and sociology.<sup>35</sup> His appeal did not fall on deaf ears, and in the following years a wealth of study brought ancient legal scholarship to new life. The debate

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>32</sup> For a brief history of ancient legal scholarship, see Alberto Maffi, “Gli Studi di Diritto Greco,” in *Etica & Politica* IX, 1 (2007): 11–24.

<sup>33</sup> For an excellent and recent summary of the debate over Athenian awareness, or lack thereof, of the rule of law, see Konstaninos Kapparis, *Athenian Law and Society* (London, UK: Routledge, 2019), especially the first chapter. Also, classic examples of the two opposing views are Virginia Hunter, *Policing Athens: Social Control in the Attic Lawsuits, 420–32 B.C.* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), and Edward Harris, *The Rule of Law in Action in Democratic Athens* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). Sealey offers a middle ground in Raphael Sealey, “On the Athenian Concept of Law,” in *The Classical Journal* 77, 4 (1982): 289–302.

<sup>34</sup> Robin Harrison, *The Law of Athens* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1968-1971); and Douglas MacDowell, *The Law in Classical Athens* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978).

<sup>35</sup> David Cohen, “Greek Law: Problems and Methods,” in *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte: Romanistische Abteilung* 106 (1989): 81–105. In 1975, Wolff had already warned ancient Greek legal scholars that “[the Greeks’] categories were not those of the Romans, and neglect of this fact has often led to the result that explanations and identifications, suggested by modern scholars, not only conflict with the language of the sources, but even distort anachronistically the picture of the institutions or ways of legal thinking under discussion” (397). Hans Julius Wolff, “Greek Legal History: Its Functions and Potentialities,” in *Washington University Law Review* no. 2 (1975), 395–408.

over the existence or lack of rule of law is far from over, and it might never be, but it has brought an incredible richness to our understanding of ancient justice and society.

Justice, therefore, appears to be not only fertile ground for diverse disciplines, from literature to history and from philosophy to law, but also a place where our modern ideas of justice are challenged and forced to recognize that things have not always been the way they are today and that our modern attempts to pursue and realize a more just world are not necessarily the best. In this process of questioning our cultural and political institutions, classical studies flourish not only because they find new subjects to research, but also because they claim their relevance in today's world.

Aristotle famously defined man a *πολιτικὸν ζῷον*, a political animal. What follows this oft-quoted definition might be less known, but it accounts for the importance of symposia like this one. The philosopher marks the distinction between humans and other political beings, like bees and gregarious animals, in this way: if they all have voice (*φωνή*), only humans have speech and reason (*λόγος*).

*ὁ δὲ λόγος ἐπὶ τῷ δηλοῦν ἐστὶ τὸ συμφέρον καὶ τὸ βλαβερόν, ὥστε καὶ τὸ δίκαιον καὶ τὸ ἄδικον: τοῦτο γὰρ πρὸς τὰ ἄλλα ζῷα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἴδιον, τὸ μόνον ἀγαθοῦ καὶ κακοῦ καὶ δικαίου καὶ ἀδίκου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων αἰσθησὶν ἔχειν: ἡ δὲ τούτων κοινωνία ποιεῖ οἰκίαν καὶ πόλιν. καὶ πρότερον δὲ τῇ φύσει πόλις ἢ οἰκία καὶ ἕκαστος ἡμῶν ἐστίν.*

But speech is designed to indicate the advantageous and the harmful, and therefore also the right and the wrong; for it is the special property of man in distinction from the other animals that he alone has *perception of good and bad and right and wrong and the other moral qualities, and it is partnership in these things that makes a household and a city-state.*<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. Harris Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, 1944), 1253a.

Academic endeavors such as our symposium desire to partake in and offer contributions to such partnership (*κοινωνία*) and to encourage a fruitful exchange of ideas among its participants and the human community at large.

### **Summary of Papers**

The four selected papers from our third annual symposium, “Justice Turns the Balance Scales,” represent another strong group of submissions investigating Greek works ranging over a long timespan, and one such submission also draws a modern parallel. The varied fields from which these submissions draw their main methodologies represent another way in which the papers of this volume are diverse.

Wallace argues that Socrates’ depiction of the justice-serving rhetorician in Plato’s *Gorgias* is actually a self-reference for Socrates himself. Through a careful reading of passage 480e–481a, this paper finds that Socrates’ arguments lead to an eventual conclusion that being wronged is better than doing wrong oneself.

In her paper on Peter McGarry’s modern adaptation of Euripides’ *Medea*, Pantazopoulou examines the injustice faced by the play’s protagonist in ancient and modern times. Drawing on the effects of our war-filled modern society, for which the young and innocent often pay the price, the piece tries to understand Medea’s “just cause.”

De Simoni’s paper, by exploring the writings of Libanius of Antioch, reveals the condition of prisons in antiquity. Through the author’s goal to set the groundwork for a study comparing pagan and Christian narratives on the just treatment of prisoners, the piece finds the humanity and justice at the heart of Libanius’ calls for prisoner release and the alleviation of their suffering.

Clancy's paper examines the concept of a just government by comparing the tyranny of the Peisistratids to the relative stability of a democratic system focused on human rights. After this, the author studies the reforms of Solon and Cleisthenes before concluding with a look at the effects of these ancient reforms on modern democracies.

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