

Profits of honour: Justice and moneymaking in classical Greece

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1. Plato, *Republic* I, 330d–331e

Text and (slighty adapt.) transl. Ch. Emlyn-Jones / W. Preddy (Cambridge, Ma. 2013)

[330] [d] ἀλλά μοι ἔτι τοσόνδε εἰπέ· τί μέγιστον οἶε ἀγαθὸν ἀπολελαυκέναι τοῦ πολλὴν οὐσίαν κεκτηῖσθαι; [...]

[331] [a] [...] πρὸς δὴ τοῦτ' ἔγωγε τίθημι τὴν τῶν χρημάτων κτῆσιν πλείστου βάζιον εἶναι, [b] οὐ τι παντὶ ἀνδρὶ ἀλλὰ τῷ ἐπιεικεῖ. τὸ γὰρ μηδὲ ἄκοντά τινα ἐξαπατῆσαι ἢ ψεύσασθαι, μηδ' αὐτὸν ὀφείλοντα ἢ θεῶν θυσίας τινας ἢ ἀνθρώπων χρήματα ἔπειτα ἐκεῖσε ἀπιέναι δεδιότα, μέγα μέρος εἰς τοῦτο ἢ τῶν χρημάτων κτῆσις συμβάλλεται. ἔχει δὲ καὶ ἄλλας χρείας πολλὰς· ἀλλὰ γε ἔν ἀνθ' ἐνὸς οὐκ ἐλάχιστον ἔγωγε θείην ἂν εἰς τοῦτο ἀνδρὶ νοῦν ἔχοντι, ὧν Σώκρατες, πλοῦτον χρησιμώτατον εἶναι.

[c] Παγκάλως, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, λέγεις, ὦ Κέφαλε. τοῦτο δ' αὐτό, τὴν δικαιοσύνην, πότερα τὴν ἀλήθειαν αὐτὸ φήσομεν εἶναι ἀπλῶς οὕτως καὶ τὸ ἀποδιδόναι ἂν τίς τι παρά του λάβη, ἢ καὶ αὐτὰ ταῦτα ἔστιν ἐνίοτε μὲν δικαίως, ἐνίοτε δὲ ἀδίκως ποιεῖν; οἷον τοιόνδε λέγω· πᾶς ἂν που εἴποι, εἴ τις λάβοι παρά φίλου ἀνδρὸς σωφρονοῦντος ὄπλα, εἰ μανεῖς ἀπαιτοῖ, ὅτι οὔτε χρὴ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἀποδιδόναι, οὔτε δίκαιος ἂν εἴη ὁ ἀποδιδούς, οὐδ' αὖ πρὸς τὸν οὕτως ἔχοντα πάντα ἐθέλων ἀληθῆ λέγειν. Ὁρθῶς, ἔφη, λέγεις. [d] Οὐκ ἄρα οὗτος ὄρος ἐστὶν δικαιοσύνης, ἀληθῆ τε λέγειν καὶ ἂν λάβη τις ἀποδιδόναι. Πάνυ μὲν οὖν, ἔφη, ὦ Σώκρατες, ὑπολαβὼν ὁ Πολέμαρχος, εἶπερ γέ τι χρὴ Σιμωνίδη πείθεσθαι. Καὶ μέντοι, ἔφη ὁ Κέφαλος, καὶ παραδίωμι ὑμῖν τὸν λόγον· δεῖ γὰρ με ἤδη τῶν ἱερῶν ἐπιμεληθῆναι. Οὐκοῦν, ἔφη, ἐγώ, ὁ Πολέμαρχος, τῶν γε σῶν κληρονόμος; Πάνυ γε, ἦ δ' ὅς γε λάσας, καὶ ἅμα ἦι πρὸς τὰ ἱερά. [e] Λέγε δὴ, εἶπον ἐγώ, σὺ ὁ τοῦ λόγου κληρονόμος, τί φῆς τὸν Σιμωνίδην λέγοντα ὀρθῶς λέγειν περὶ δικαιοσύνης; Ὅτι, ἦ δ' ὅς, τὸ τὰ

[330] [d] [Socrates] "But tell me this too; what do you believe is the greatest benefit you have enjoyed from the acquisition of all your wealth?" [...]

[331] [a] [...] [Cephalus] "I take the possession of wealth to be of the highest value, certainly not for everyone, but for the decent person. For when it comes to cheating anyone even unintentionally or telling lies, or again, owing anything— any sacrifices to a god, or money to a person, and so departing for the other world in fear, the acquisition of wealth goes a long way toward avoiding such a misfortune. And it has many other uses also; but taking one thing with another I would propose that, for a man of sense, Socrates, this is not the least important thing for which wealth is particularly useful."

[c] "Most beautifully put, Cephalus," I [Socrates] said. "But let's take this very thing, justice: are we to say that it is simply truthfulness without qualification, and the giving back of whatever one may have taken from someone else? Or is it possible to do these very same things sometimes justly and sometimes unjustly? To take an example of what I mean: I think everyone would agree that if one were to take weapons from a friend who is a man of sound mind, and if he were to go mad and demand them back, one ought not to return them. The one giving them back would not be 'just' to do so, and again one should not be willing to tell the whole truth to somebody in that state." "You're right," he replied. [d] "Then this is not a definition of justice: to tell the truth and give back whatever one has taken." "Oh but it is, Socrates," said Polemarchus taking up the argument, "at any rate if we're to believe Simonides." "Well now," said Cephalus, "I'll hand the discussion over to you two; for it's time for me to see to the sacrifices." "So does that make me, Polemarchus, heir to what is yours?" he said. "Certainly it does," replied Cephalus with a laugh, and he promptly went off to the sacrifices. [e] "So tell me," I said, "you who are heir to the discussion, what is it that Simonides says about justice which you think is right?"

ὀφειλόμενα ἐκάστῳ ἀποδιδόναι δίκαιόν ἐστι· τοῦτο λέγων δοκεῖ ἔμοιγε καλῶς λέγειν. Ἀλλὰ μέντοι, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, Σιμωνίδη γε οὐ ῥάδιον ἀπιστεῖν—σοφὸς γὰρ καὶ θεῖος ἀνὴρ— [...].

[333] [a] Τί δὲ δὴ; τὴν δικαιοσύνην πρὸς τίνος χρεῖαν ἢ κτῆσιν ἐν εἰρήνῃ φαίης ἂν χρήσιμον εἶναι; Πρὸς τὰ συμβόλαια, ὦ Σώκρατες. Συμβόλαια δὲ λέγεις κοινωνήματα ἢ τι ἄλλο; [b] Κοινωνήματα δῆτα. Ἄρ' οὖν ὁ δίκαιος ἀγαθὸς καὶ χρήσιμος κοινωνὸς εἰς πεττῶν θέσιν, ἢ ὁ πεττευτικός; Ὁ πεττευτικός. Ἄλλ' εἰς πλινθῶν καὶ λίθων θέσιν ὁ δίκαιος χρησιμώτερός τε καὶ ἀμείνων κοινωνὸς τοῦ οἰκοδομικοῦ; Οὐδαμῶς. Ἀλλ' εἰς τίνα δὴ κοινωνίαν ὁ δίκαιος ἀμείνων κοινωνὸς τοῦ κιθαριστικοῦ, ὥσπερ ὁ κιθαριστικός τοῦ δικαίου εἰς κρουμάτων; Εἰς ἀργυρίου, ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ. Πλὴν γ' ἴσως, ὦ Πολέμαρχε, πρὸς τὸ χρῆσθαι ἀργυρίῳ, [c] ὅταν δέῃ ἀργυρίου κοινῇ πρίασθαι ἢ ἀποδόσθαι ἵππον· τότε δέ, ὡς ἐγὼ οἶμαι, ὁ ἱππικός. ἦ γάρ; Φαίνεται. Καὶ μὴν ὅταν γε πλοῖον, ὁ ναυπηγὸς ἢ ὁ κυβερνήτης; Ἔοικεν. Ὅταν οὖν τί δέῃ ἀργυρίῳ ἢ χρυσίῳ κοινῇ χρῆσθαι, ὁ δίκαιος χρησιμώτερος τῶν ἄλλων; Ὅταν παρακαταθέσθαι καὶ σὼν εἶναι, ὦ Σώκρατες.

2. Plato, *Republic II*, 361e–362c

[361] [e] καὶ δὴ κἂν ἀγροικότερως λέγηται, μὴ ἐμέ οἴου λέγειν, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἀλλὰ τοὺς ἐπαινοῦντας πρὸ δικαιοσύνης ἀδίκιαν. ἐροῦσι δὲ τάδε, ὅτι οὕτω διακείμενος ὁ δίκαιος [362] [a] μαστιγώσεται, στρεβλώσεται, δεδῆσεται, ἐκκαυθήσεται τῷφθαλμῷ, τελευτῶν πάντα κακὰ παθῶν ἀνασχιδυλευθήσεται καὶ γνώσεται ὅτι οὐκ εἶναι δίκαιον ἀλλὰ δοκεῖν δεῖ ἐθέλειν. τὸ δὲ τοῦ Αἰσχύλου πολὺ ἦν ἄρα ὀρθότερον λέγειν κατὰ τοῦ ἀδίκου. | τῷ ὄντι γὰρ φήσουσι τὸν ἄδικον, ἅτε ἐπιτηδεύοντα πρᾶγμα ἀληθείας ἐχόμενον καὶ οὐ πρὸς δόξαν ζῶντα, οὐ δοκεῖν ἄδικον ἀλλ' εἶναι ἐθέλειν,

βαθεῖαν ἄλοκα διὰ φρενὸς καρπούμενον,
ἐξ ἧς τὰ κεδνὰ βλαστάνει βουλευόμενα,

[b] πρῶτον μὲν ἄρχειν ἐν τῇ πόλει δοκοῦντι δικαίῳ εἶναι, ἔπειτα γαμεῖν ὁπόθεν ἂν βούληται, ἐκδιδόναι εἰς οὓς ἂν βούληται, συμβάλλειν, κοινωνεῖν¹ οἷς ἂν ἐθέλῃ, καὶ παρὰ ταῦτα πάντα ὠφελεῖσθαι κερδαίνοντα τῷ μὴ δυσχεραίνειν τὸ ἀδικεῖν· εἰς ἀγῶνας τοίνυν ἰόντα καὶ ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ περιγιγνεσθαι καὶ πλεονεκτεῖν τῶν ἐχθρῶν, πλεονεκτοῦντα δὲ πλουτεῖν καὶ τοὺς τε φίλους [c] εὖ ποιεῖν καὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς βλάπτειν, καὶ θεοῖς θυσιάσας καὶ ἀναθήματα ἰκανῶς καὶ μεγαλοπρεπῶς θύειν τε καὶ ἀνατιθέναι, καὶ θεραπεύειν τοῦ δικαίου

“That it is just to give back to everyone what he is owed,” he replied. “At least I think he is right in putting it like this.” “Well, it is certainly not easy to disbelieve Simonides,” I said, “for he was after all a wise and inspired man.[...]”

[333] [a] “So what about justice, now? For what use or for what acquisition would you say it was useful in peacetime?” “It’s useful in connection with business contracts, Socrates.” “By business contracts do you mean partnerships, or something else?” [b] “Yes, I mean partnerships.” “Now, when it comes to playing draughts, is the just man a good useful partner, or someone skilled in playing draughts?” “The person skilled in playing draughts.” “And in laying bricks and stone is the just man a better, more useful partner than the builder?” “Of course not.” “Well then, for what partnership is the just man a better partner than the lyre player, just as the lyre player is better at playing the lyre than the just man?” “Where money is involved, I would say.” “Except, Polemarchus, perhaps when it comes to using money [c] as when you need to buy or sell a horse jointly; then, I presume, you need a trained horseman: isn’t that so?” “Apparently.” “And again, when it comes to a ship, the shipbuilder or ship’s captain?” “It seems so.” “So what then is the occasion for the joint use of silver or gold when the just man is a more useful partner than others?” “When it is to be put on deposit and kept safe, Socrates.”

[361] [e] “Moreover if my [Glaucón] account is delivered in a somewhat uncouth manner, don’t think that it is me speaking, Socrates, but those who commend injustice over justice. What they will say is that, such being his character, the just person [362] [a] will be whipped, stretched on the rack and imprisoned, his eyes will be burned out and finally, after suffering every evil, he will be impaled on a stake, and come to realize that not to be just, but to seem just is what one must aim for. So the saying I quoted from Aeschylus would be more correctly applied to the unjust person. In reality they will say that the unjust person, inasmuch as he is pursuing something that relates to the truth and is not living with an eye on his reputation, does not want to seem to be unjust but to be unjust:

harvesting the deep furrow throughout his mind,
from which spring valuable resolutions,

[Aesch. Sept. 593–94]²

[b] first, by holding office in the city because he is thought to be just, secondly by marrying into any family he wishes, marrying off his children to whomever he wishes, joining up in business with anyone he likes. And in all this he is helped to gain advantage by the fact that he does not have any scruples about committing injustice. And so, by engaging in lawsuits, private and public, he wins and gets the better of his enemies, and this enables him to become rich and do good to [c] his friends and harm to his enemies. He will make sacrifices and dedicate votive offerings to the gods on an appropriately magnificent scale, and do service to the gods and any humans he wishes far more

¹ Emlyn-Jones/Predy bracket κοινωνεῖν.

² In Aeschylus, the lines quoted are preceded by the statement that the seer Amphiaraus wants to really *be* excellent, not simply to *appear* so (Sept. 592: οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν ἄριστος, ἀλλ' εἶναι θέλει).

πολὺ ἄμεινον τοὺς θεοὺς καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων οὓς ἂν βούληται, ὥστε καὶ θεοφιλέστερον αὐτὸν εἶναι μᾶλλον προσήκειν ἐκ τῶν εἰκότων ἢ τὸν δίκαιον. οὕτω φασίν, ὡς Σώκρατες, παρὰ θεῶν καὶ παρ' ἀνθρώπων τῷ ἀδίκῳ παρεσκευάσθαι τὸν βίον ἄμεινον ἢ τῷ δίκαιῳ.

effectively than the just person, so that it is reasonable to suppose that he is also more loved by the gods than the just person. Thus they say, Socrates, that a better life has been provided by gods and men for the unjust than for the just person."

3. Aristotle, *Rhetoric* II,6 (1383^b11–30; 1384^a6–25)

Text and transl. J. H. Freese (Cambridge, Ma, 1926)

[1383^b] [10] Ποῖα δ' αἰσχύνονται καὶ ἀναισχυντοῦσιν, καὶ πρὸς τίνας καὶ πῶς ἔχοντες, ἐκ τῶνδε δῆλον. **ἔστω δὴ αἰσχύνη λύπη τις ἢ παραχῆ περὶ τὰ εἰς ἀδοξίαν φαινόμενα φέρειν τῶν κακῶν, ἢ παρόντων ἢ γεγονότων ἢ μελλόντων, ἢ δ' ἀναισχυν** [15] **-τία ὀλιγωρία τις καὶ ἀπάθεια περὶ τὰ αὐτὰ ταῦτα. εἰ δὴ ἐστὶν αἰσχύνη ἢ ὀρισθεῖσα, ἀνάγκη αἰσχύνεσθαι ἐπὶ τοῖς τοιοῦτοις τῶν κακῶν ὅσα αἰσχροῦ δοκεῖ εἶναι ἢ αὐτῷ ἢ ὧν φροντίζει· τοιαῦτα δ' ἐστὶν ὅσα ἀπὸ κακίας ἔργα ἐστίν, οἷον τὸ ἀποβαλεῖν ἀσπίδα ἢ φυγεῖν· ἀπὸ δειλίας γάρ. καὶ τὸ [20] ἀποστερῆσαι παρακαταθήκην· ἀπ' ἀδικίας γάρ. καὶ τὸ συγγενέσθαι οἷς οὐ δεῖ ἢ ὅπου οὐ δεῖ ἢ ὅτε μὴ δεῖ· ἀπ' ἀκολασίας γάρ. καὶ τὸ κερδαίνειν ἀπὸ μικρῶν ἢ ἀπ' αἰσχροῦ ἢ ἀπ' ἀδυνάτων, οἷον πενήτων ἢ τεθνεώτων· ὅθεν καὶ ἡ παροιμία, τὸ κἂν ἀπὸ νεκροῦ φέρειν· ἀπὸ αἰσχροκερδείας γάρ καὶ [25] ἀνελευθερίας. καὶ τὸ μὴ βοηθεῖν δυνάμενον εἰς χρήματα, ἢ ἥττον βοηθεῖν. καὶ τὸ βοηθεῖσθαι παρὰ τῶν ἥττον εὐπόρων. καὶ δανείζεσθαι ὅτε δόξει αἰτεῖν, καὶ αἰτεῖν ὅτε ἀπαιτεῖν, καὶ ἀπαιτεῖν ὅτε αἰτεῖν, καὶ ἐπαινεῖν ἵνα δόξη αἰτεῖν, καὶ τὸ ἀποτετυχηκότα μηδὲν ἥττον· πάντα γάρ ἀνελευθερίας ταῦτα [30] σημεῖα.**

[1383^b] What are the things of which men are ashamed or the contrary, and before whom, and in what frame of mind, will be clear from the following considerations. **Let shame then be defined as a kind of pain or uneasiness in respect of misdeeds, past, present, or future, which seem to tend to bring dishonour; and shamelessness [15] as contempt and indifference in regard to these same things.** If this definition of shame is correct, it follows that we are ashamed of all such misdeeds as seem to be disgraceful, either for ourselves or for those whom we care for. Such are all those that are due to vice, such as throwing away one's shield or taking to flight, for this is due to cowardice; or [20] withholding a deposit, for this is due to injustice. And illicit relations with any persons, at forbidden places or times, for this is due to licentiousness. **And making profit out of what is petty or disgraceful, or out of the weak, such as the indigent or dead; whence the proverb, "to rob even a corpse," for this is due to base love of gain and [25] stinginess.** And to refuse assistance in money matters when we are able to render it, or to give less than we can; to accept assistance from those less able to afford it than ourselves; to borrow when anyone seems likely to ask for a loan, to ask for a loan from one who wants his money back, and asking for repayment from one who wants to borrow; to praise in order to seem to be asking for a loan, and when you have failed to obtain it to keep on asking; for all these are signs of [30] stinginess.

[...] [1384^a] [6] ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων ἐκάστης τῶν τοῦ ἠθους κακιῶν τὰ ἔργα καὶ τὰ σημεῖα καὶ τὰ ὅμοια· αἰσχροῦ γὰρ καὶ αἰσχυντικά. καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦτοις τὸ τῶν καλῶν ὧν πάντες μετέχουσιν ἢ οἱ ὅμοιοι πάντες ἢ οἱ πλεῖστοι, μὴ μετέχειν. [...] [15] [...] **πάσχοντες δὲ ἢ πεπονθότες ἢ πεισόμενοι τὰ τοιαῦτα αἰσχύνονται ὅσα εἰς ἀτιμίαν φέρει καὶ ὀνειδίη· ταῦτα δ' ἐστὶ τὰ εἰς ὑπηρετήσεις ἢ σώματος ἢ ἔργων αἰσχροῦ, ὧν ἐστὶ τὸ ὑβρίζεσθαι. καὶ τὰ μὲν εἰς ἀκολασίαν καὶ ἐκόντα καὶ ἄκοντα (τὰ δ' εἰς βίαν ἄκοντα)· ἀπὸ [20] ἀνανδρίας γάρ ἢ δειλίας ἢ ὑπομονῆ καὶ τὸ μὴ ἀμύνεσθαι.**

[...] [1384^a] [6] Similarly, in regard to each of all the other vices of character, the acts resulting from them, their signs, and the things which resemble them, all these are disgraceful, and should make us ashamed. It is also shameful not to have a share in the honourable things which all men, or all who resemble us, or the majority of them, have a share in. [...] [15] [...] **And we are ashamed when we suffer or have suffered or are likely to suffer things which tend to ignominy and reproach;** such are prostituting one's person or performing disgraceful actions, including unnatural lust. And of these actions those that promote licentiousness are disgraceful, whether voluntary or involuntary (the latter being those that are done under compulsion), since [20] meek endurance and the absence of resistance are the result of unmanliness or cowardice.

"Ἄ μὲν οὖν αἰσχύνονται, ταῦτ' ἐστὶ καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα· ἐπεὶ δὲ περὶ ἀδοξίας φαντασία ἐστὶν ἡ αἰσχύνη, καὶ ταύτης αὐτῆς χάριν ἀλλὰ μὴ τῶν ἀποβαινόντων, οὐδεὶς δὲ τῆς δόξης φροντίζει ἀλλ' ἢ διὰ τοὺς δοξάζοντας, ἀνάγκη τοῦτους [25] αἰσχύνεσθαι ὧν λόγον ἔχει.

These and similar things are those of which men are ashamed. And since **shame is an impression about dishonour, and that for its own sake and not for its results; and since no one heeds the opinion of others except on account of those who hold it, it follows that men [25] feel shame before those whom they esteem.**

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