GS/HIST 5033 3.0 SLAVERY IN ANCIENT GREECE AND ROME

Course Director: Professor Jeremy Trevett

COURSE OUTLINE
This course explores the phenomenon of slavery in Greek and Roman antiquity. Three main areas are covered: ancient attitudes to and theories of slavery from Aristotle to Augustine, the role of slaves in the ancient economy, and the position of slaves in Greek and Roman society. Throughout the course we examine both the continuities within the Greco-Roman world and the ways in which beliefs and practices varied from place to place and over time.

It meets on Wednesdays, 2:30-5:30 p.m., in Farquharson Life Sciences 045.

Grade Breakdown
Review of scholarly article or book chapter: 25%
Major paper: 50%
Participation: 25%

Books
The following books will be used extensively, and you may wish to buy or otherwise get hold of a copy:
K. R. Bradley, Slavery and Society at Rome (1994)
N. Fisher, Slavery in Classical Greece (1993)
P. Garnsey, Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine (1996)

Outline of Topics
5 September Introductory meeting
12 September The Origins of Greek slavery
19 September The Demography of Greco-Roman slavery and the slave trade
26 September Slavery and the law
3 October The Ideology of slavery
10 October The Economic role of slaves
24 October The Economic role of slaves (continued)
31 October The Treatment of slaves
7 November The Manumission of slaves
14 November Slave resistance and revolt
21 November Justifications and criticisms of slavery
28 November Early Christianity and Slavery
12 September  The Origins of Greek slavery
How far back can slavery be traced in Greek history? What forms did it take? How far can we tell the precise status of agricultural workers and domestic servants in the Homeric poems? How far can we understand and explain the abolition of debt-bondage and slavery for debt in Athens? How and when did chattel slavery develop? Are these two phenomena connected? Was Moses Finley right to write of ‘The advance, hand in hand, of freedom and slavery’?

M. I. Finley, *The World of Odysseus* (1977) ch. 3

19 September The Demography of Greco-Roman Slavery and the Slave Trade
How many slaves were there in Greece and Rome? How were they acquired, and from where?

GRS ch. 6

K. R. Bradley, *Slavery and Society at Rome* (1994) 31-56
W. Scheidel, ‘Quantifying the Sources of Slaves in the Early Roman Empire’ *Journal of Roman Studies* 87 (1997) 156-169 (JSTOR)
W. V. Harris, ‘Demography, geography and the sources of Roman slaves’ *Journal of Roman Studies* 89 (1999) 62-75 (JSTOR)

26 September Slavery and the law
How were slaves treated under Athenian and Roman law? What were the rights and duties of slaves and masters?

GRS ch. 1

J. A. Crook, *Law and Life of Rome*, 90 BC-AD 212 (1967) index s.v. ‘slaves, slavery’
3 October The Ideology of slavery
How did Greco-Roman slavery relate to Greek and Roman beliefs about citizenship, freedom, gender, and ethnicity? (How far) did ideology and reality conflict?

GRS ch. 4

O. Patterson, *Freedom* vol. 1: Freedom in the Making of Western Culture (1991) 64-105
A. Watson, ‘Roman slave law and Romanist ideology’ *Phoenix* 37 (1983) 53-65

10 and 24 October The Economic role of slaves
Was slave-ownership always a matter of economic calculation? In what ways did slaves contribute to the ancient economy? What was the relationship between free and servile labour? Could Athens’ democracy have functioned without slave labour? What impact did the influx of slaves in the 2nd century BC have on the economy of Italy?

GRS chs 5 and 7

K. Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves* (1978) 1-132
K. R. Bradley, *Slavery and Society at Rome* (1994) 57-80

Relevant to this topic is the heated debate over R. Fogel and S. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery*. There is a useful review article online at: http://eh.net/bookreviews/library/weiss.
31 October  The Treatment of slaves in the Greco-Roman world
How were Greek and Roman slaves treated? To what degree was the treatment of slaves a matter of calculation on the part of their masters?

GRS ch. 9


*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* has much to say about the treatment of slaves: see esp. chs 2-4 on the harshness of plantation life; ch. 6 on Baltimore.

7 November  The Manumission of slaves
By what means could slaves be given their freedom? How widespread was manumission? What was the status (juridical, social, economic) of freedmen? How did Greek and Roman manumission practices differ, and why?

GRS 28-50, 69-71

Susan Treggiari, *Roman Freedmen during the Late Republic* (1969) chs 1-3
T. E. J. Wiedemann ‘The Regularity of manumission at Rome’ *Classical Quarterly* 35 (1985) 162-75
14 November Slave resistance and revolt
In what ways did slaves resist their masters? Under what circumstances did resistance turn into revolt? Why were revolts concentrated in the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C.? What did slaves hope to achieve by revolting?

GRS chs 10 and 11, docs. 80.265c-266f (pp.84-6) and 80.272e-f (p.90).

J. Vogt, Ancient Slavery and the Ideal of Man (1975) 39-92
K. R. Bradley, Slavery and Society at Rome (1994) 107-131

21 November Justifications and criticisms of slavery
How far were the Greeks and Romans under pressure to justify slavery to themselves? How did they seek to do so?

W. K. C. Guthrie, The Sophists (1971) ch. 6, esp. 155-60
P. A. Brunt, ‘Aristotle and slavery’ in his Studies in Greek History and Thought (1993) ch. 11

28 November Slavery and Christianity
What attitudes did early Christians hold towards slavery? Did Christians differ from pagans in their attitudes towards slaves? Was there a discrepancy between their beliefs and their practices? How did the institution of slavery change in the Later Roman Empire?

GRS 52, 54, 213, 241-2
‘Slavery’ in Anchor Bible Dictionary (1992)
D. B. Martin, Slavery as Salvation: the Metaphor of Slavery in Pauline Christianity (1990)
P. Garnsey, Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine (1996) chs 11-14
C. R. Whittaker, ‘Circe’s pigs: from slavery to serfdom in the Later Roman Empire’ Slavery and Abolition 8 (1987) 88-122