

**Hendrik Lorenz, Fall 2017-18**

**PHI 501/CLA 519/HLS 508: The Philosophy of Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics V***

### **Aristotle's Theory of Justice**

We will study and discuss Aristotle's theory of justice as he presents it in Book V of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (which has also come down to us as Book IV of the *Eudemian Ethics*). We will try to resolve the main interpretive issues that Aristotle's text raises so as to reconstruct his theory of justice; and we will evaluate the philosophical theory that emerges from our reconstruction. In the introductory meeting I will place *NE V* in the context of Aristotle's ethical and political writings. After that, we will focus on *NE V* itself, bringing in other texts only when doing so seems needed for making sense of details in *NE V*. Knowledge of ancient Greek is not a requirement for taking the course, but will be helpful. The course will provide students with opportunities for in-seminar presentations, and Philosophy students may get units by passing an examination on the seminar's subject matter.

### **Syllabus**

Meeting 1 (9/15). Introduction: Aristotle's *NE* and *EE*; Aristotle's theory of character-virtue

Meeting 2 (9/22). *NE V* 1: Aristotle's introduction to the topic; the conception of general justice

Meeting 3 (9/29). *NE V* 2: general justice and special justice

Meeting 4 (10/6). *NE V* 3: The distributive kind of special justice

(10/13) No meeting

Meeting 5 (10/20). *NE V* 4: The rectificatory kind of special justice

Meeting 6 (10/27). *NE V* 5: Justice in exchange (the need for currency) - economic theory

Fall recess

Meeting 7 (11/10). *NE V* 6: Political justice

Meeting 8 (11/17). *NE V* 7: Natural justice and justice by law

Thanksgiving recess

Meeting 9 (12/1). *NE V* 8: Justice, injustice, and the voluntary

Meeting 10 (12/8). *NE V 9*: Puzzles. Is it possible to suffer injustice voluntarily? Can one do injustice to oneself?

Meeting 11 (12/15). *NE V 10*: "Decency"

Meeting 12 (to be determined). *NE V 11*: Return to puzzles. Can one do injustice to oneself?

## **Bibliography**

### **Primary text**

Bywater's *Oxford Classical Text* (1894)

### **Translation**

Terence Irwin, *Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics* (Second Edition), Hackett (1999)

### **Commentary**

Sarah Broadie and Christopher Rowe: *Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics*, OUP (2002)

### **Articles, monographs**

P. Aubenque, "The Twofold Natural Foundation of Justice According to Aristotle," in R. Heinaman (ed.), *Aristotle and Moral Realism* (1995), 35-47

J. Brunschwig, "Rule and Exception: On the Aristotelian Theory of Equity," in M. Frede and G. Striker (edd.), *Rationality in Greek Thought* (1996), 115-155

H. Curzer, "Aristotle's Account of the Virtue of Justice," *Apeiron* 28:3 (1995), 207-238

S. Meikle, *Aristotle's Economic Thought* (1995)

R. Shiner, "Aristotle's Theory of Equity," in S. Panagiotou (ed.), *Justice, Law, and Method in Plato and Aristotle* (1987), 173-191

B. Williams, "Justice as a Virtue," in A. O. Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics* (1980), 189-199

C. Young, "Aristotle on Justice," in *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 27 supplement (1988), 233-257