2017

Hi everyone, and welcome to today's lecture. Now, you might be thinking that today's readings were something of a random grab bag, and it's true that there's a lot going on in them, so let me start by saying a few of things about that. First, one of the reasons for these selections is that people often think that all of Greek philosophy was just Plato and Aristotle: and that's just not true! There were important philosophers before them, like the Pythagoreans, and also after them and at the same time as them. (Next week when we look at Epictetus, that’s another school of philosophy as well: the Stoicism).

Second, people tend to think that women didn't do philosophy until the modern age. But again, that's also totally false. Now, let me begin by saying that it is very, very, VERY hard to do ancient history. Think about it: the works that we’re studying were written more than 2000 years ago – on *papyrus*, in other words: leaves. Leaves do not last for two thousand years! The only surviving library from antiquity that we know of was preserved by the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, because the papyrus scrolls were carbonized by extremely hot gases and sealed away from oxygen by volcanic lava and ash. They were discovered in 1752, but unfortunately, here’s the state they were in. SLIDE So for a long time, every attempt to unroll and read any of the scrolls would also destroy it, including up to the 1970s when two of them exploded. As we speak, scholars are still working on it – two years ago, one team managed to read two of them without unrolling them using X-rays.

So, aside from going back to the original scrolls, which requires a volcano and cutting-edge x-ray technology, how else are we even able to read ancient Greek texts? Well, the old-fashioned way: Medieval scholars copied them by hand onto paper, eventually the printing press was invented, and now you all are reading them on your laptops as PDFs. But what that means is that we have only got a very small, very selective subset of all the texts that were written at the time. It’s estimated that what we have of Aristotle is less than 1/3 of what he actually wrote. We only get the things that people were willing to copy out by hand, what they deemed to be important – and, unsurprisingly, that means it’s mostly stuff written by men. Given how hard it is to get information, we really have very, very little knowledge about women in ancient Greece. But what we do know for sure is women in ancient Greece and Rome wrote poetry SLIDE (this is Sappho, whom Plato called the "Tenth Muse"), they were famous orators SLIDE (this is Aspasia, the painting is called "The Debate of Socrates and Aspasia"), they wrote on history, medicine, and alchemy, they were mathematicians, astronomers, and philosophers (in fact SLIDE this is Hypatia, who was all three, and well-renowned for being a brilliant scholar and teacher). Well, this is at least an imagined depiction of Hypatia, because we don’t have any real images of her from her own time.

SLIDE Here’s another imagined depiction of Hypatia, and it’s taken from SLIDE this painting which you are all now very familiar with, *The School of Athens* (I think you’re seeing it for the third time). SLIDE SLIDE And the story goes that Raphael – who didn’t actually label who any of these philosophers are – had put Hypatia in the middle of the front right beneath Plato and Aristotle, but was commanded by a bishop of the Vatican to remove her, so he sneaked her back into the left, removed the veil that marked her as a woman, and disguised her as the nephew of the Pope. Cool story, right?

The only problem is that it SLIDE appears to be fake news. It’s all over the internet, but there are no expert or scholarly sources to corroborate the theory. This kind of interpretive dispute, though, isn’t unique to Hypatia, because even back in 1531, about two decades after the painting was finished, Giorgio Vasari identified this guy SLIDE as St. Matthew, whereas in 1695 he was re-identified SLIDE SLIDE by Giovanni Bellori as Pythagoras: that’s right, the leader of the Pythagorean school whose fragments you read for today. Like I said, Raphael didn’t actually label anybody, and so different interpretations of the painting continue to be a reflection of the times.

Speaking of the Pythagoreans, and how we came by these texts – well, it turns out that fake news has a long history. The thing is, there was a proliferation of Pythagorean *pseudepigrapha* (basically, forgeries) that were created between 100 B.C.E. and 100 C.E. Some of them were sold for profit to collectors of Pythagorean books, some of them may have been homework assignments given to students, and some of them were likely produced in order to support the Neopythagorean view that Plato and Aristotle actually got their ideas from Pythagoras, or to support a particular interpretation of Plato. We actually have many more pseudepigrapha than confirmed Pythagorean fragments. So I bring up these two stories to highlight that when it comes to the history of women in philosophy, there’s a lot that’s been tragically lost. But even as far back as 100 B.C.E., we know they were there. The women we’re reading today – and we still don’t know yet (if we ever will) whether these are authentic – were well-known for doing philosophy, which is corroborated by other historical accounts. We know that even if these are forgeries, because that’s why their names were even used at all.

So I propose that, in any case, we should think of these texts as part of a lively philosophical conversation across centuries – which is, after all, exactly what we do here, in the academy, and which you all are a part of. No matter what, they do reflect the thinking of people at that time, who were combining their study of Plato and Aristotle with whatever knowledge they had of the Pythagoreans. There are a number of important themes that are common across all the texts for this week, which I'll try to draw out today (and which also link back to the Chinese philosophers we studied on human nature, and look forward to Indian philosophers on cosmic order).

But before I get started with that, here’s a (sort of) straightforward historical timeline just to orient you to the texts, if we take them at face value, given the tiny bit that we know about these people’s lives. SLIDE

So first, going back even before Plato, we have Pythagoras: yes, Pythagoras of the Pythagorean theorem (although it's disputed whether he actually discovered it or whether it was just named for him). He was born on the Greek island of Samos in the 6th century as a son of a gem-engraver, or maybe a wealthy merchant, and he moved to Croton in southern Italy and founded his own school of philosophy. There was political conflict between Croton and a neighboring city called Sybaris, and he either seems to have gotten out in time and lived out the rest of his life in Metapontum - or maybe, he died in along with his disciples in an attack on their temple, or maybe they were chased from city to city. SLIDE SLIDE SLIDE Again, nobody really knows. The thing to know is that the Pythagorean school – like many of the other schools – was more than just learning philosophical theory, it was actually a whole way of life that many people have described as a secret cult. More on that later.

Now, Pythagoras' wife was named Theano, who on some accounts was one of his students. It's most likely that our Theano ("Theano II" as she's labelled in your text) is named after her.

Ok, so then we have Plato, and then Aristotle.

And now, judging from the texts Phintys of Sparta and Perictione were most likely contemporaries of Aristotle, though Phintys might have actually been an earlier contemporary of Plato. And Perictione might have been named after the mother of Plato, who was also named Perictione.

A bit later we have Aesara from Lucania (southern Italy), who possibly was named after Aresa, daughter of Pythagoras and Theano. And Theano II – this is where we started seeing a lot of pseudepigrapha, so it’s possible that they were real or fake.

So that's just to give you a very basic historical timeline. Now, bringing it back to our syllabus, I'm going to start by talking about the *Politics* - well, actually, by talking about the *Nicomachean Ethics*, because it helps set up what's going on in the Politics. So remember that back in Book I, SLIDE in the very first chapter of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle said that the most authoritative and master art is politics - political science aims at the chief good.

Why is that? Because: SLIDE "[S]ince politics uses the rest of the sciences, and since, again, it legislates as to what we are to do and what we are to abstain from, the end of this science must include those of the others, so that this end must be the human good." And of course we all remember that for Aristotle the human good is *eudaimonia*, and that eudaimonia consists in virtuous activity. Now, at the very end of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle returns to the subject of politics and why it's so important. He has an interesting discussion here about the limitations of philosophical argument. SLIDE While [arguments] seem to have power to encourage and stimulate the generous-minded among our youth, and to make a character which is gently born, and a true lover of what is noble, ready to be possessed by virtue, they are not able to encourage the many to nobility and goodness.

In fact he says: SLIDE For these do not by nature obey the sense of shame, but only fear, and do not abstain from bad acts because of their baseness but through fear of punishment…What argument would remold such people? It is hard, if not impossible, to remove by argument the traits that have long since been incorporated in the character.

And this is where laws come in, because Aristotle thinks that: SLIDE It is difficult to get from youth up a right training for virtue if one has not been brought up under right laws; for to live temperately and hardily is not pleasant to most people, especially when they are young. For this reason their nurture and occupations should be fixed by law.

He goes on: SLIDE Since [children] must, even when they are grown up, practice and be habituated to them, we shall need laws for this as well, and generally speaking to cover the whole of life; for most people obey necessity rather than argument, and punishments rather than the sense of what is noble.

So for Aristotle, the reason we need laws is that *they are a necessary condition* for people to live virtuously. (This might remind you a bit of Mengzi, who you'll remember believed that you needed benevolent government so that the people would have enough to eat, so that they could be ready to receive moral education.) This is why we need cities and constitutions, and the goal of the *Politics* is to understand this.

So let's turn to Book I of the *Politics*. Now, what I'm going to claim in this lecture is that for Aristotle, the idea of what's *natural* is hugely important for determining the social order. As you'll remember from last time, Aristotle is all about going out and observing and examining things empirically - all these animals and plants and things - and learning about their natures. And so he applies this methodology to what he observes of human beings as well.

Recall from Prof. Walker’s lecture time that a central concept for Aristotle is SLIDE *telos*, which is usually translated "end": the purpose for which something exists. For Aristotle everything has a telos, including human beings. How do we know what a thing's telos is? Well, we just look at its SLIDE ergon, or function/characteristic activity. And so hopefully you all remember from the *Nicomachean Ethics* that Aristotle thinks human beings have the ergon of rational activity, so our telos is living virtuously in accordance with reason. The telos of a thing, its end, is performing its ergon *well*.

And so at the time of the *Politics*, Aristotle is reacting against the Sophists, who are going around arguing that city is just a human artifact, and indeed that all laws and norms, in fact, even norms of morality and justice itself - are just a matter of human convention and agreement. Now both Plato and Aristotle are totally against this idea, because if norms of morality and justice are just a matter of human convention, then they don't have any genuine *authority* over us. So Aristotle is really concerned to demonstrate that actually, the city belongs among the things that exist by nature, and that human beings are political animals. SLIDE And so he tries to show this by arguing that the city is the result of a natural process of development; it is, as it were, the *telos* of the basic human relationships, SLIDE of *koinonia,* translated in our text as “community” but which you can also think of as “relationship.” Here's how that works: SLIDE the first natural relationship is between man and woman, for the purposes of SLIDE *reproduction*, and the second natural relationship is between master and slave SLIDE, for the purpose of *production* (of goods), and when you put those together SLIDE you get a household. And then you put a few households together to get a village, SLIDE which he says is really just an extension of the household, and then once you put a few villages you get a SLIDE city! So again, the idea is that the city is the ultimate telos of human relationships: SLIDE Every city, therefore, exists by nature, if such also are the first communities. For the city is their end, and nature is an end: what each thing is—for example, a human being, a horse, or a household—when its coming into being is complete is, we assert, the nature of that thing.

So the city as we said is composed of households, and the household is also composed of smaller elements. So let's look at this more closely. SLIDE What I want to emphasize is that what we have here is a *naturalization of social hierarchy* based on a taxonomy of essentially different *natural types of human beings:* what Aristotle calls the smallest elements of "master" and "slave" SLIDE (whose relationship is mastery), "man" and "woman" SLIDE (whose relationship he calls "marital rule"), and "father" and (male) "child" SLIDE (whose relationship is "procreative" or "parental" rule). And Aristotle is really thinking that there are wholly *different types* of human beings SLIDE, as we can see in his discussion in Chapter 13 of whether slaves, women, and children have different virtues.

So Aristotle, as he does, considers arguments on both sides of this question. On the one hand, it seems like they have to have different virtues, because otherwise that hierarchy would be unjustified SLIDE: For if both should partake in gentlemanliness, why should the one rule and the other be ruled once and for all? For it is not possible for them to differ by greater and less, since being ruled and ruling differ in kind, not by greater and less. This is a reference to Plato’s argument in the *Republic* that you read, which I’ll get to after this. That’s an argument that they have different virtues. On the other hand, since we know there are better and worse masters and better and worse slaves, it seems like there *is* such a thing as slaves having virtue: SLIDE For unless the ruler is moderate and just, how will he rule finely? And unless the ruled is, how will be ruled finely?

So Aristotle's solution to was to use his theory of the soul, which you’ll recall in Greek is SLIDE "psyche" or “psuche” from which we get the word "psychology." So this is kind of Aristotelian psychology. He says: SLIDE The parts of the soul are present in all, but they are present in a different way. The slave is wholly lacking the deliberative element; the female has it but lacks authority; the child has it but it is incomplete…All must share in [the virtues of character], but not in the same way, but to each in relation to his own function.

Now, you'll remember from the *Nicomachean Ethics* that a thing's virtue, its arete, SLIDE depends on its function (its ergon). Sharpness is an excellence of a knife because their function is to cut things, swiftness is an excellence of a horse because they run, and humans' excellence consists in moral and intellectual virtue. Now, because Aristotle thinks that slaves’ function is to perform physical labor, he also thinks that they SLIDE wholly lack the rational, deliberative part of the soul.

No doubt many of you noticed that Aristotle has an argument justifying the morality of slavery for what he calls “natural slaves” – again, those whose biology and psychology make them *naturally* inferior. I want to briefly draw your attention to this particular line: Nature indeed wishes to make the bodies of free persons and slaves different as well as their souls…yet the opposite often results, some having the bodies of free persons while others have the souls.

In other words, he thinks it’s too bad that we don’t have physical markers of these slaves’ inferior souls. Now, I know you all just learned about race yesterday in CSI: so you know how this ones turns out. Once Europeans started colonizing people in Asia, Africa, and the Americas, once they saw these clear biological differences at the same time that they needed natural resources to expand their markets, we see the rise of racial ideology along exactly these Aristotelian lines: the idea of a “White Man’s Burden,” that it’s actually *good* for the slave (“advantageous and just”) to be ruled, which justified slavery and colonialism for centuries. This is the dark side of philosophy, which is actually the origin of all the sciences: psychology, biology, physics – all of those things you learn in CSI used to be known as “natural philosophy” because it was people like Aristotle who first studied them.

Ok, so now let’s talk about women, who are very clearly biologically different from men. Aristotle thinks that women do have a deliberative part, but it doesn’t have “authority” (kuron). Now, this is speaking metaphorically: what does it mean for their deliberative part to lack authority?

This is a subject of considerable debate. And there’s two main theories: one is that this is an *interpersonal* claim: the woman’s deliberations lack authority relative to the man’s, because her role in decision-making is restricted to the household, while he has a role in decision-making for the city, and the household exists, after all, for the sake of the city. Some have argued that Aristotle thinks men and women are really equal, but they just occupy different roles, because of this story SLIDE – just briefly mentioned in your text– of the footpan of Amasis. Now Amasis was an Egyptian king who came from humble origins, and was not respected by his people for that reason. So he melted down a golden footpan that he used to wash his feet and made it into a statue, which people began to revere. And then he told them that this was just like his own case: he was of lowly birth, but he had been made into a king, and so deserves respect. So some commentators think that Aristotle thinks that men and women may be substantively equal, just like the gold in the footpan and the statue is the same gold, but that equality gets outweighed by the differentiation in function.

But of course, that doesn’t really answer the question: *why* do men have the function of ruling in the city, while women only rule in the household?

And here we might look at something Aristotle himself says: SLIDE Now the female is distinguished by nature [my emphasis] from the slave. For nature makes nothing in an economizing spirit, as smiths make the Delphic knife, but one thing with a view to one thing; and each instrument would perform most finely if it served one task rather than many.

Different function🡪 therefore, different nature.

SLIDE So other commentators have read Aristotle as saying that women’s deliberative capacity lacks authority *intrapersonally*, as a matter of psychology. Some have thought that he thinks women do not have control over the irrational parts of their soul, because he says elsewhere: Woman is more compassionate than man, more easily moved to tears,…more jealous, more querulous, more apt to scold and to strike…more shameless and more given to falsehood, more easily deceived and of more retentive memory.

And others have thought he means that women have cleverness, but not practical wisdom. A clever person figures out the means to both good ends and bad ends, whereas the deliberative person only reasons about good ends – in other words, women can figure things out instrumentally, but they don’t have a grasp of the underlying rational principles of goodness.

And before you just write this all off as ancient history (see what I did there?), I want you to just reflect a moment on the fact that even now, SLIDE people argue that men and women are different natural types: that men are rational and women are emotional. Only now, they're much more likely to appeal to SLIDE neuroscience than they are to the soul (but that’s just modern as opposed to ancient psychology). And so there are still people around SLIDE arguing that the differences in the brain are not natural, but instead created by differences in socialization and environment.

But, arguably, the origins of that view can be traced all the way back…to Plato. So let's talk a little bit about the *Republic*. The *Republic* is more or less Plato's *magnum opus* - across ten books, our reading is from book 5 - Plato discusses (among other things) the nature of justice, using an analogy between the city and the soul. And in typical Platonic fashion, his method (unlike Aristotle) is to imagine an *ideal city*, which is governed by a philosopher-king, and divided into three classes of people corresponding to the three parts of the soul: SLIDE the guardians, who will be trained to rule (they're the rational part), SLIDE the warriors who protect the city under the command of the guardians (they're the irrational part that listens to reason), SLIDE and the laborers who perform the physical labor (they're the irrational part that doesn't listen to reason, the appetitive part that we share with animals).

And one of the imaginative ideas that Plato has Socrates propose - which you'll remember he repeatedly acknowledges that others will think he is ridiculous - that (some) women and men should be brought up together and in the same way. And he considers an objection that someone might make: SLIDE that people should be assigned different work according their different natures.

Indeed, we could imagine Aristotle making this argument - SLIDE he proposes a conception of justice in *Politics* Book 9 that justice consists in treating equals equally, and treating unequals unequally.

But Plato gets around this by arguing that the difference has to be *relevant* to the task we're considering. After all, you don’t keep female watchdogs SLIDE at home and prevent them from watching sheep just because they give birth to babies, right? No, you let them work just like the males do! Plus, otherwise, Socrates says: SLIDE

S: [W]e might just as well, it seems, ask ourselves whether the natures of bad and long-haired men are the same or opposite. And, when we agree that they are opposite, then, if the bald ones are cobblers, we ought to forbid the long-hairs ones to be cobblers, and if the long-haired ones are cobblers, we ought to forbid this to the bald ones.

G: That would indeed be ridiculous.

SLIDE

Just for your reference, this is called a reductio ad absurdum, where you argue against something by showing that it leads to absurd consequences.

So anyway, we have to go on to consider the *relevant* ways of being different, and for Plato these differences mostly come down to differences in *learning*. SLIDE One is naturally suited or unsuited to a task depending on how easily one learns, how quickly and independently one learns, and whether one's body "adequately serves one's thought." And when comparing men and women, Plato says: SLIDE

Do you know of anything practiced by human beings in which the male sex isn’t superior to the female in all these ways? Or must we make a long story of it by mentioning weaving, baking cakes, and cooking vegetables, in which the female sex is believed to excel and in which it is most ridiculous at all for it to be inferior?

So, let’s not be too hasty here in declaring Plato to be a feminist – he clearly wasn’t, because he still thinks men are superior to women in learning. But he does still recognize women are capable of learning: they excel at the things they're taught, like weaving and cooking. And ironically Plato *uses* the argument that men are superior learners to show that men and women are NOT different types of people: in order for them to be superior at it, they have to be doing the *same thing* as women. In other words, women and men do not differ in *kind*, they only differ in *degree*. So on Plato's view, we shouldn't expect that women and men have different virtues, because they're not different in kind: some women have guardian natures and some don't, just like some men do and some don't. And that’s why Aristotle *had* to argue against Plato that there really are these innate natural differences between men and women: that they really are ontologically different. Again: the *naturalization of social hierarchy* based on *naturally different types of beings*.

All right, so speaking of weaving and cooking, let me finish up now with the Pythagorean fragments. First, we need to know a little about Pythagorean philosophy. As I said, it was an entire way of life, which included all sorts of religious rituals and strictures like not eating meat and wearing simple linen clothes, shunning luxury. As to their philosophy, well, I think this is the best introduction I can give:

Donald Duck to 3:55

So, fundamentally, the Pythagoreans believed that there was a mathematical *order* to the universe that was reflected not just in physical laws, and laws of nature, but also in *moral* law. This is captured in the idea of *harmonia,* SLIDE

"fitting together" or "harmony". So this is how Julie K. Ward explains it:

The fundamental principle underlying the order of nature according to the Pythagoreans is referred to as harmonia (harmony, concord)…Since the world is mathematically ordered, that is, based on numerical proportions, harmonia is considered not only a principle of music and of mathematics, but of moral conduct. For, when one understands the order of the cosmos to extend to all natural things, including persons, one takes as axiomatic a principle of unity that makes all things into a community (koinonia). So, Pythagoreans maintain there exists a concord (harmonia) in the sense of a right moral ordering between human beings which is consistent with that of the natural world.

So in this light, we can now see the very Pythagorean flavor of Aesara's arguments: SLIDE that there is a lining up of laws within the human soul, the home, and the city. She writes: Human nature seems to me to provide a standard of law and justice both for the home and for the city. By following the tracks within himself whoever seeks will make a discovery: law is in him and justice, which is the orderly arrangement of the soul.

And: SLIDE

Nor could such a unity come from several dissimilar things at random, but rather, from parts formed in accordance with the completion and organization and fitting together of the entire composite whole…[T]hese are not arranged haphazardly and at random, but in accordance with rational attention.

And so here we get a slightly different argument from Aristotle's, about how to justify hierarchy: For if they had an equal share of power and honor, though being themselves unequal — some inferior, some better, some in between — the association of parts throughout the soul could not have been fitted together…When each one is arranged in accordance with the suitable proportion, this sort of arrangement I assert to be justice.

The reason that there is a ruling part and a ruled part is due to the principle of *harmonia* requiring *fitting things together*.

Similarly, Perictione also thinks of women's role in terms of relating different parts to the whole: SLIDE

But I think a woman is harmonious in the following way: if she becomes full of wisdom and self-control. For this benefits not only her husband, but also the children, relatives, slaves; the whole house, including possessions and friends, both fellow-citizens and foreign guest friends. Artlessly, she will keep their house…lest she be out of tune with relation to the whole.

And this leads to certain *ethical* implications. In Sarah Pomeroy's words: SLIDE

The harmonious order of the cosmos is regarded as beautiful and good; it is the finest thing. It is something that one should try to emulate by the discipline of living an orderly life. Ideally, one’s every enterprise should be in tune with the order of the harmonious whole. Thus, an ethical implication of accepting the Pythagorean way of life would be that one ought to accept limitations for oneself in the interest of the harmonious order of the whole.

And so we get Phintys arguing (with an Aristotelian-style functional argument) that the virtue most appropriate for a woman is moderation because of how she needs to relate to her husband. SLIDE

The excellence appropriate to each thing makes superior that which is receptive of it: the excellence appropriate to the eyes makes the eyes so, that appropriate to hearing, the faculty of hearing, that appropriate to a horse, a horse, that appropriate to a man, a man. So too the excellence appropriate to a woman makes a woman excellent. The excellence most appropriate to a woman is moderation. For, on account of this virtue, she will be able to honor and love her husband.

But *unlike* Aristotle, Phintys thinks that men and women share in the same virtues, even if they have them to different degrees: [S]ome things are peculiar to a man, some to a woman, some are common to both, some belong more to a man than a woman, some more to a woman than a man…[C]ourage and justice and wisdom are common to both…For courage and wisdom are more appropriate for a man, both because of the constitution of his body and because of his strength of soul, while moderation is more appropriate for a woman.

And much of what we get in the other fragments are *practical ways* in which women can exercise virtues in a way that promotes *harmonia*. Perictione urges against luxurious food, drink, and clothing as "excessive" and immoderate. Theano warns Euboule against raising her children in luxury, for this reason.

And if we think back to what was so important to Aristotle, SLIDE

that children be raised in the right way and trained into the right habits from an early age, we should be struck by this fact - who was supposed to be doing that child-raising and training? Well, *women*. So women actually had an important role to play, they are the ones enforcing the laws of the household, and they were trying to understand how best to play that role in accordance with philosophical theory. Take, for example, Theano's advice on managing servants, SLIDE on not being too lax or too harsh on them. She uses the classic Pythagorean comparison with music: But my dear, likening yourself to musical instruments, know what sounds they make when they are loosened too much, but that they are snapped asunder when stretched too tight. It is the same way for your servants. Too much license creates dissonance in the matter of obedience, but the stretching of forceful necessity causes the dissolution of nature itself. One must meditate upon this: "Right measure is best in everything."

So even women must *meditate* on this philosophical principle.

But I'm guessing that the one piece of advice that's most controversial to us today is the advice that Perictione and Theano both give about unfaithful husbands. And what's particularly interesting here is that both of them give multiple arguments that are both *moral* and *pragmatic*. So Perictione makes one appeal based on *harmonia*: SLIDE

A woman must bear everything on the part of her husband, even if he should be unfortunate, or fail on account of ignorance or illness or drink, or cohabit with other women…Being discreet, she must handle all of his characteristics in a way pleasing to him. When a woman is loving towards her husband, and acts agreeably to him, harmony reigns; she loves the entire household and makes outsiders well-disposed towards the house.

And Theano makes another appeal to virtue: SLIDE For the moral excellence of a wife is not surveillance of her husband but comparable accommodation; it is the spirit of accommodation to bear his folly.

Yet both of them also include pragmatic or prudential arguments alongside the moral. Theano considers the likely bad consequences of different courses of action: SLIDE

If you divorce yourself from him and move on…you will abide alone without any husband like a spinster…Do you intend to be negligent of the house and to destroy your husbands? Then you will share in the spoils of an anguished life.

And Phintys points out: SLIDE

For error is forgiven in the case of men; for women, never. Rather, retribution is imposed. Therefore she must keep the law and not be envious.

And what this makes clear is that these women that these women are trying to live virtuous lives within a system that *they know* is stacked against them, that they know is unfair. They're trying to lay claim to virtues that *they know* people thought they weren't capable of. So one way to think of it is that these women are prisoners of sexist social structures: they don’t really have any other option *but* to put up with their husbands. But another way of seeing it, which is not incompatible with that, is that these women are – by defending these traditional values – still enacting a kind of resistance by showing that they *are* full moral agents, and that they’re *capable* of possessing virtues like moderation just as men are. They’re demanding recognition as valuable social actors in accordance with the accepted norms of the time – in fact, they’re urging one another to be even more virtuous than those unfaithful men.

 So I think this raises some interesting questions for us about the idea of natural social hierarchies and natural social types. First off we have some surface-level evidence against some of Aristotle’s claims – we have evidence from Theano of slaves trying to run away, of even killing themselves, which seems odd if slavery really benefits both the ruling and the ruled. And we also have evidence against Aristotle that women really are able to use the rational parts of their souls to control their irrational part, SLIDE “Woman is harmonious if she becomes full of wisdom and self-control”, and that they *do* have an understanding of the good, of the underlying rational principles of virtuous behavior. We see that they’re using philosophy to shape and cultivate their emotions in a system of unfair rules – in that passage where Theano encourages says not to be cruel to your servants, SLIDE , where she says “Right measure is best in everything,” she points out that women are cruel because they are “brutalized by jealously and anger” and “bitterness” – those husbands! (fist).

So how should we understand these arguments? Are we looking at the workings of Lukes’ 3rd dimension of power, where women have internalized sexist norms to the point where they don’t even want to fight them? Or are these women standing up to sexist beliefs around them by asserting themselves as virtuous persons and philosophers? And what is the role of philosophy in all of this – is it just to comfort you in doing something that you must? Is it just an ideology that rationalizes social hierarchy? At the very least, we know that people throughout the ages have treated it as a way of life…speaking of which, I’ll just leave you with a reminder that Stephen Angle is coming to talk to us about Confucianism as a way of life.