Unit 16 - Classwork 3: The "Melian Dialogue" (by Thucydides)

~~*

In order to answer the following questions, read pages 14–18 in Unit 16.

1. The Melians faced a dilemma.

   (i) If the Melians were to *win* the debate, then what would happen to them?

   (ii) If the Melians were to *lose* the debate, then what would happen to them?

2. On what justice is, the Athenians agreed with one of the three definitions proposed in Book 1 of Plato's *Republic*. (See pages 5–7 in Unit 12.) On what justice is, the Athenians agreed with whom? Explain your answer.

3. According to the Athenians, both countries would benefit from the Athenians enslaving the Melians.

   (i) According to the Athenians, how would the Melians benefit from being enslaved by the Athenians? State *both of the two* ways.

   (ii) According to the Athenians, how would the Athenians benefit from enslaving the Melians? State *all of the three* ways.

4. According to the Athenians, what story do free countries (and free people) tell themselves to explain why they're free (rather than enslaved)?

5. According to the Athenians, how would their reputation be harmed if they were *not* to try conquering Melos?

6. According to the Melians, why would it be dangerous for the Athenians to *conquer* Melos?

7. Even though they were enemies with *belligerent* mainlanders (such as the Spartans), why didn't the Athenians worry about making enemies with *neutral* mainlanders?

8. According to the Athenians, their empire faced two main threats to its security.

   (i) According to the Athenians, what *internal* threat did their empire face?

   (ii) According to the Athenians, what *external* threat(s) did their empire face?

9. According to the Melians, if they were to make no attempt at preserving their freedom, then which cardinal virtue would they not have?

10. According to the Athenians, which cardinal virtue is necessary for justice? (Hint: Keep in mind what *they* thought justice is.)