**Aesop Revisited**

**OLLI 4-Week Course**

**October 10, 17, 24, 31 – 2022**

**11:30 AM – 1 PM**

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Recommended: Laura Gibbs, *Aesop’s Fables* (Oxford World’s Classics), $10.95.

The text is available free on Gibbs’ Web site, *Aesopica*:

<http://www.mythfolklore.net/aesopica/index.htm>

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**Week 1:** Who was Aesop? History and legend.

Introduction to the Aesop corpus.

Fables this week (as numbered in Gibbs’ *Aesop’s Fables*)

Aesop and the Bow, 537

Aesop and the Writer, 556

The Delphians and Their Ancestors, 504

The Dog and His Reflection, 263

The Donkey on the Cliff, 486

The Donkey in a Lion’s Skin, 322

The Eagle and the Beetle, 153

The Eagle and the Tortoise, 331

The Fox, Hedgehog, and Ticks, 29

The Hare and the Tortoise, 237

Prometheus and the Two Roads, 535

The Rooster and the Pearl, 403

The Two Roosters and the Hawk, 177

The Wolf and the Lamb, 130

The Wolves, Sheep, and Dogs, 32

Don’t fret about the length of the list! The fables are short! You can likely read all of them in an hour, or wait for class, when most will be told aloud.

**Week 2:** Imperial Aesop

The fables are a survival guide for the dangers of city and rural life. They recall a time of wolves and lions, a wilderness of tyrants and accomplices. Fables often end in death.

Fables seldom take place in a city but they bear the signs of empires: Rome, Byzantium, and Britain. Mastery of the British Aesop was contested by English clergy.  Eleven ambitious translators put Aesop into English.

William Caxton - 1484  
John Ogilby - 1668  
Roger L’Estrange - 1692  
Samuel Croxall - 1722

Thomas James - 1848

George Fyler Townsend - 1867

Joseph Jacobs - 1894

V. S. Jones – 1912

Lloyd Daly – 1961

Olivia and Robert Temple - 1998

Laura Gibbs - 2002

Their translations differ greatly: choice of sources, number of fables, morals.

Fables this week:

The Ant and the Cricket, 126

The Body and Its Members, 66

The City Mouse and the Country Mouse, 408

The Frog and the Mouse, 139 & 140

The Frog and the Ox, 349

The Goose and the Golden Eggs, 434

Jupiter and the Frogs (= King Log = Frogs Desiring a King), 27

The Lion’s Share, 14

The North Wind and the Sun, 183

The Oak and the Reeds, 202

The Snake and the Countryman, 74 & 75

The Two Pots, 52

The Wolf and the Lamb, 130

The Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing, 321

**Week 3:** Aesop for Children

Why has Aesop been relegated to children’s reading? When did this happen? What is Aesop’s current reputation? What fables continue to be told?

Fables this week:

**The Core of Nine:**

The Ant and the Grasshopper [Cricket], 126

Belling the Cat, 250

The City Mouse and the Country Mouse, 408

The Crow and the Pitcher, 453

The Fox and the Crow, 104

The Fox and the Grapes, 255-256

The Golden Goose, 434

The Hare and the Tortoise, 237

The Lion and the Mouse, 70

**Parents and children in Aesop**:

The Ape and Her children, 497

The Boy and the Tripe, 539

The Children and the Mirror, 495

The Crab and His Mother, 369

The Eagle and the Fox, 154-155

The Farmer and His Sons, 494

The Father, the Son, and the Lion, 466

The Lark and Her Children, 273

The Leopard and the Fox, 191

The Man and His Daughter, 136

The Monkey and Her Two Children, 497

The Mother and Her Two Daughters, 548

The Mother, the Child, and the Crow, 467

The Old Bull and the Young Bull, 492

The Old Man and His Sons, 493

The Sick Kite, 370

The Thief and His Mother, 496

**Week 4:** Aesop Illustrated

Fables this week:

Wolf and Crane, 46

Fox and Stork, 156

Ant and Cricket, 126

Vain Jackdaw ( = Crow with Borrowed Feathers), 329

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**Reading materials and sources**

**Editions**

*Aesopi Fabulae*, by Émile Chambry, 2 vols. Paris: Société d’Édition «Les Belles Lettres,» 1925, 1926.

*Aesopica*, edited by Benjamin Perry. University of Illinois Press, 1952.

*Corpus Fabularum Aesopicarum*, by August Hausrath. Vol. 1, fascicle 1, edited by Herbert Hunger. Leipzig: Teubner, 1970 [1940]; vol. 1, fascicle 2, completed by Hans Haas. Leipzig: Teubner, 1956).

*Les fabulistes latins depuis le siècle d'Auguste jusqu'à la fin du moyen âge*, by Léopold Hervieux. 5 vols. Paris: Firmin-Didot & cie, 1884-1899.

*Phaedrus and Babrius*, edited by Benjamin Perry. Cambridge: Loeb Library, 1965.

**On Aesop in history and legend**

Kurke, Leslie. *Aesopic Conversations: Popular Tradition, Cultural Dialogue, and the Invention of Greek Prose*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011.

Perry, Benjamin. *Studies in the Text History of the Life and Fables of Aesop*. New York: [American Philological Association Philological Monographs](http://www.bookdepository.com/search/advanced?searchTerm=&searchSeries=7477), 1936.

**On Fables**

Holzberg, Niklas. *The Ancient Fable: An Introduction*. Indiana University Press, 2002.

Rodríguez Adrados,Francisco. *History of the Graeco-Latin Fable*, 3 volumes. Leiden: Brill, 1999, 2000, and 2003.

van Dijk, Gert-Jan. *AΙNΟΙ, ΛOΓOI, ΜΥΘOI: Fables in Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic Greek Literature: With a Study of the Theory and Terminology of the Genre*, by Brill, 1997.

**On Aesop’s Animals**

Barker, K. Brandon and Daniel J. Povinelli, editors. *The Aesop’s Fable Paradigm: An Unlikely Intersection of Folklore and Science*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2021.

Wimpenny, Jo. *Aesop’s Animals: The Science Behind the Fables*. London: Bloomsbury Sigma, 2021.

**Web Sites**

Thanks to Laura Gibbs we have reliable Web sites for texts, translations, and illustrations of Aesop’s fables:

• in English: <http://www.mythfolklore.net/aesopica/oxford/index.htm>

• in Latin: <http://millefabulae.blogspot.com/>

To my knowledge the Carlson Fable Collection at Creighton University is the single best collection of Aesopica in North America. It collects Aesop books, stamps, comics, tobacco cards, menus, matchboxes, playing cards, postcards, games, puzzles, advertisements, ceramics, buttons, tins, prints, paintings, castings, and carvings. Much of the collection can be viewed on the Collection’s Web site:

• <https://www.creighton.edu/aesop/>