

NO BLINDFOLD, NO SWORD: A NEW VISION OF JUSTICE FOR A CHANGING WORLD

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Abstract:

The idea of Lady Justice, symbolized through imagery that includes a blindfold, scales, and a sword, has its roots in historical civilizations, notably Egypt, Greece, and Rome. From the Egyptian goddess Ma'at, the embodiment of reality and stability, to the Roman Justitia, Lady Justice has come to symbolize equity, impartiality, and the enforcement of law. Over time, the *figure of Lady Justice* has *independent justice*, represented via the blindfold, and the weighing of proof through scales.¹⁵⁹⁴ Recently, in 2024, the Supreme Court of India unveiled a brand new, modern interpretation of Lady Justice, replacing the conventional sword with the Indian Constitution, symbolizing a shift toward justice grounded in constitutional values and inclusivity. This article strains the evolution of Lady Justice, analyzing her ancient origins and the significance of her converting symbols, culminating in the present-day edition that reflects India's revolutionary felony beliefs.¹⁵⁹⁵



¹⁵⁹⁴ Glenn, H. Patrick. *Legal Traditions of the World: Sustainable Diversity in Law*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

¹⁵⁹⁵ Abhinav Garg, *Law is not "blind": Lady Justice statue no longer unseeing, sword gone too*, The Times of India (2024), <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/major-transformation-of-lady-justice-stature-at-indias-supreme-court/articleshow/114325214.cms> (last visited Oct 24, 2024).

Introduction:

Justice in human history is regularly depicted as a figure balancing the scales of equity and wielding a sword to put into effect the regulation. The photograph of Lady Justice is an amalgamation of ancient figures representing truth, balance, and moral law. From the historic Egyptian goddess Ma'at to the Greek goddesses Themis and Dike, and the Roman Justitia, this parent has come to encompass the virtues that underpin the felony structures of civilizations around the sector.

In the middle of Lady Justice's imagery is the message of fairness, impartiality, and the rule of law. Over the centuries, the scales, sword, and blindfold became critical to her representation: the scales signified the careful weighing of proof, the sword symbolized the energy of punishment, and the blindfold highlighted the want for objectivity without outside bias. This depiction has not remained static. Societal shifts and prison reforms have led to trendy reinterpretations of Lady Justice, reflecting new ideals of equity, inclusivity, and social awareness.

In a groundbreaking moment, the Supreme Court of India, in 2024, brought a new statue of Lady Justice that departs from her traditional representation. This reimagined figure embodies the evolving nature of justice in India, maintaining the Indian Constitution in preference to a sword, and is not blindfolded, signifying a justice device that actively engages with societal realities in preference to finally detached from them. The new statue symbolizes a dedication to constitutional values, fairness, and inclusivity in a modern, diverse kingdom. This article delves into the wealthy historic roots of Lady Justice and explores how her representation has been transformed to satisfy contemporary needs for justice.

The Historical Roots of Lady Justice: From Ancient Goddesses to Modern Symbolism

Lady Justice, an image of fairness and the guideline of law, stands at the coronary heart of prison structures globally, embellished with her scales, sword, and blindfold. The iconography related to Lady Justice—frequently depicted as a sturdy, blindfolded female maintaining scales in one hand and a sword in the other—reflects the ideals of stability, impartiality, and ethical authority that form the inspiration of justice structures. However, this image did not emerge suddenly or in isolation. The roots of Lady Justice trace back lots of years, drawing from ancient mythologies, religious ideals, and philosophical ideals, journey through time, fashioned through diverse cultural perspectives, starting with the goddesses of historic civilizations.

The Dawn of Justice: Ancient Egyptian Influence of Ma'at

The adventure to understanding Lady Justice begins in ancient Egypt, wherein Ma'at, the goddess of truth, stability, and cosmic order, reigned best. Ma'at was not merely a deity but also an overarching precept guiding both realms. Central to the Egyptian idea of justice, Ma'at symbolized the balance between right and incorrect, concord, and fact. Her impact became profound in governance, spirituality, and society at large.

Ma'at's symbolic representation often featured a woman with an ostrich feather on her head, a reference to the feather of reality. In Egyptian mythology, the heart is in opposition to Ma'at's feather inside the Weighing of the Heart ceremony. If the coronary heart changed into lighter than a feather, the soul could continue to the afterlife. If it turned heavier, it indicated an existence harassed with the aid of sin and wrongdoing, denying entry to paradise. This idea of weighing the heart towards reality and stability can be seen as a precursor to the scales of justice in later depictions of Lady Justice. The very idea of weighing the proof,

metaphorically balancing fact and deceit, echoes Ma'at's historic symbolism.

In Egypt, Ma'at became more than an ethical compass; she became the embodiment of order inside the cosmos, preserving the stability between chaos and concord. Her role in upholding justice prolonged each element of Egyptian life, reflecting the interconnectedness of regulation, morality, and cosmic order. This principle might be conveyed through to later civilizations, turning into the inspiration of their very own justice structures.¹⁵⁹⁶

The Greek Tradition: Themis and Dike

Moving forward in history, the legacy of justice transitioned to the Greeks, who constructed upon the Egyptian ideals of balance and equity but integrated those principles into their mythological framework. The Greeks introduced two key figures who personified justice: Themis and her daughter Dike.

Themis: The Titaness of Divine Law

Themis, one of the Titans in Greek mythology, became a determine representing divine law, natural order, and justice. As a goddess, she played a vital function in preserving the balance of the cosmos and turned into frequently depicted with a couple of scales, symbolizing the unbiased weighing of proper and incorrect. However, in contrast to the contemporary depiction of Lady Justice, Themis is now not blindfolded. In Greek mythology, her information and fairness had been concept to be inherently clear-sighted, representing herbal law, which required no obstruction in its judgment.¹⁵⁹⁷

Themis additionally served as the oracle of Delphi, imparting wisdom based on her deep knowledge of divine justice and cosmic stability. Her connection to herbal law, which ruled all beings, and her function as the interpreter of divine will, highlight the Greek perception that

justice becomes no longer just a human construct but an accepted precept that transcends man or woman societies and legal guidelines. This divine thing of Themis symbolized the notion that justice changed into eternal, independent, and above-human manipulation.

Dike: The Guardian of Human Justice

Dike, the daughter of Themis, embodied the human issue of justice. While Themis treated divine law, Dike changed into worried about ethical order and justice in human affairs. She is regularly depicted keeping a sword, symbolizing the enforcement of justice and the protection of moral order. The sword in her palms signified the electricity of the regulation to implement judgments and punish wrongdoers, much like the sword carried through Lady Justice today.

In Greek society, Dike become appeared as the mum or dad of human justice, punishing folks who violated societal laws and ensuring that fairness prevailed in human interactions. Her position changed into vital in setting up ethical order, and he/she was frequently invoked within the context of judicial decisions, where her steering turned into believed to be integral in maintaining societal stability.

Together, Themis and Dike laid the principles for the concept of justice in Greek society, blending divine wisdom with the practicalities of human regulation. The concept of balancing opposing sides, as represented by the aid of the scales, and the enforcement of justice, as symbolized by the aid of the sword, would later be handed directly to Roman society, where those attributes would evolve further.

Roman Influence: Justitia and the Rise of Legal Personification

The Romans inherited much of their legal and philosophical traditions from the Greeks, but they brought their wonderful interpretation of the idea of justice. It was in Roman civilization that the discernment of Justitia, the direct

¹⁵⁹⁶ Assmann, Jan. *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt*. Cornell University Press, 2001.

¹⁵⁹⁷ Buxton, Richard. *The Complete World of Greek Mythology*. Thames & Hudson, 2004.

forerunner of today's Lady Justice, emerged as a personification of the prison order.¹⁵⁹⁸

Justitia was a Roman advent, representing the ethical force in legal and judicial structures. She changed into regularly depicted keeping both scales and a sword, combining the Greek ideas of equity in weighing arguments (from Themis) and the electricity to implement decisions (from Dike). In early Roman depictions, Justitia is shown without a blindfold, emphasizing the concept that justice needs to be clean-sighted and clever, much like her Greek opposite numbers. This model of Justitia symbolized no longer the fairness and electricity of law but additionally its transparency.

Justitia became a powerful symbol in the Roman prison gadget, which sought to standardize justice and create a code of legal guidelines that applied universally to all citizens of the Roman Empire. This becomes an enormous step inside the records of law, as Roman criminal ideas might cross on to influence contemporary criminal systems in Europe and the past. The scales, sword, and the eventual addition of the blindfold would emerge as well-known features of the iconography of justice, thanks to Justitia's enduring impact.

The Blindfold: Impartiality in Justice

The introduction of the blindfold throughout the Renaissance was a pivotal addition to Lady Justice's iconography. Before this, neither Themis nor Dike nor even Justitia had been depicted as blindfolded, for they had been believed to possess divine understanding and readability. However, with the arrival of current criminal systems, the blindfold became a crucial image of judicial impartiality—the idea that justice needs to be administered without regard to popularity, identity, or personal circumstances.¹⁵⁹⁹

By the 16th century, the blindfold had become synonymous with Lady Justice's dedication to

equity, reinforcing the perception that justice ought to be ignorant of strength, privilege, and outside impact. This illustration, along with her scales of equity and sword of enforcement, has been cemented as a criminal symbol across the globe, standing atop courthouses and felony institutions.

A Shift in Symbolism: The Supreme Court of India's New Statue of Justice

In 2024, the Supreme Court of India made a formidable choice to reimagine the statue of Lady Justice, reflecting the converting beliefs of justice in a current, various, and inclusive society. This new statue actions away from the traditional Western imagery of Lady Justice—a blindfolded figure retaining scales and a sword—and as a substitute presents a more inclusive and innovative vision of justice.

One of the maximum incredible adjustments on this new statue is the absence of the sword, which historically symbolizes the enforcement of punishment. Instead, the discernment in this modern statue holds the Indian Constitution in a single hand, representing the guiding standards of the Indian justice device. This shift highlights the importance of law as a supply of justice and places a stronger emphasis on the concept that justice has to be rooted in constitutional values in preference to force or punishment. By changing the sword with the Constitution, the Supreme Court of India has emphasized the need for justice to be primarily based on felony reasoning, democratic standards, and the protection of fundamental rights.

Additionally, the determination is not blindfolded, signifying that justice, in this reimaged form, isn't about being ignorant of social realities. Rather, it's far about being completely aware of the complexities, nuances, and diverse needs of the human beings it serves. The open eyes of the new parent represent a greater aware, thoughtful approach to justice, one which seeks to actively cope with issues of inequality, marginalization, and social justice.

¹⁵⁹⁸ Stein, Peter. *Roman Law in European History*. Cambridge University Press, 1999.

¹⁵⁹⁹ Ginsburg, Ruth Bader. In *Pursuit of Justice*. Harvard University Press, 2009.

The scales of justice stay in the parent's different hands, signifying the ongoing significance of fairness and balance in prison decision-making. However, the overall imagery of the new statute suggests a shift toward a justice gadget that is more inclusive, touchy, and conscious of the wishes of cutting-edge India, where justice must be proactive, instead of merely reactive.

Modernizing Justice: Inclusivity and Diversity

The new statute on the Supreme Court of India stands as an image of an evolving criminal machine, one whose goals are to mirror the values of inclusivity, fairness, and diversity.¹⁶⁰⁰ It is a visual representation of a justice gadget that is now not unaware of the social inequalities that exist but is fully conscious and committed to addressing them. By protecting the Constitution on one hand, the new parent reinforces the idea that justice must continually be rooted in the guidelines of law, democracy, and equality, even as the open eyes of the determined suggest a justice system that is awake to the realities of society and committed to equity for all.

This modernization of Lady Justice symbolizes India's evolving technique to regulation and equity within the 21st century. In a country as numerous as India, justice can not continue to be static; it needs to adapt to the wishes of its humans, making sure that all people, regardless of caste, gender, faith, or background, are treated fairly and equitably under the law.

Conclusion: A Journey from Tradition to Modernity

The transformation of Lady Justice from ancient goddesses like Ma'at, Themis, and Justitia, to the modern-day reimagining of the discern in India's Supreme Court, represents the evolution of our collective expertise of justice. While her scales of fairness and her connection to the law remain steady, her changing attributes—whether or not the absence of a blindfold or a

sword—monitor the transferring priorities of contemporary justice systems.

In India, the new Statue of Justice displays the country's commitment to uphold the Constitution, and inclusivity, and administer justice with a deeper recognition of social realities. As the sector continues to grapple with issues of inequality and fairness, this reimagined parent stands as a powerful symbol of a legal system that needs to evolve to serve the needs of all its residents, making sure that justice is not the most effective fair however additionally responsive, inclusive, and grounded in the maximum democratic beliefs.

¹⁶⁰⁰ Rawls, John. *A Theory of Justice*. Harvard University Press, 1971.