

METHODS IN POLITICAL THEORY

Political Science 7991/7990 — Fall 2013

January 13: INTRODUCTION – ON BEGINNINGS

January 20: RATIONAL & MYTHOPOEIC POLITICAL THEOLOGIES

An immutable facet of human existence seems to be the desire for metaphysical solace, or a sense of being beyond oneself, in short, of transcendence. We call it by many names, construct myths about it, tell stories of its power and presence, and construct symbols that evoke it. Equally inevitable, it appears, is that this desire includes a sense of the good, the ethical, which beckons us to a standard of conduct, both individual and social. As we construct our social institutions, we are motivated to shape them in a fashion that respects and resembles those ethical codes. Thus, our politics is shaped by a sense of transcendence, (a God, the Gods, the Good, or Justice are just some of the names we give it), and we are in this fashion the creators and possessors of a political theology.

Required Reading: *Aeschylus, *Oresteia*
Jeremiah, Ezekiel, & Isaiah

Prophets, Harper Modern Classics, 1962. (E-reserve)

M. Jardine, *The Political Implications of William Poterat* Philosophy
(E-reserve)

The

January 27-February 3: CAREFUL READING OF OLD BOOKS***

Men of Athens, I honor and love you; but I shall obey God rather than you, and while I have life and strength I shall never cease from the practice and teaching of philosophy, exhorting anyone whom I meet after my manner, and convincing him, saying: O my friend, why do you who are a citizen of the great and mighty and wise city of Athens, care so much about laying up the greatest amount of money and honor and reputation, and so little about wisdom and truth and the greatest improvement of the soul, which you never regard or heed at all? Are you not ashamed of this?

Socrates (as reported by Plato)

Required Reading: Plato, *Euthyphro, Apology, & Crito*

The Review of Politics, Vol. 67, No. 2 (Spring, 2005), pp. 201-228 (E-reserve)

Steven B. Smith, Introduction to *Reading Leo Strauss*

<http://www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/764028.html>

Leo Strauss, "On Classical Political Philosophy" from *The Rebirth of Classical Political Rationalism: Essays and Lectures by Leo Strauss*. Edited by Thomas L. Pangle.

Leo Strauss, "Persecution and the Art of Writing" from *Persecution and the Art of Writing*.

Leo Strauss, *Plato* in Strauss & Cropsey, *History of Political Philosophy* (E-reserve)

Plato, *The Republic*

February 10: Interpretation, Historical Context, and the Modern Perspective***

But, it being my intention to write a thing which shall be useful to him who apprehends it, it appears to me more appropriate to follow up the real truth of a matter than the imagination of it; for many have pictured republics and principalities which in fact have never been known or seen, because how one lives is so far distant from how one ought to live, that he who neglects what is done for what ought to be done, sooner effects his ruin than his preservation; for a man who wishes to act entirely up to his professions of virtue soon meets with what destroys him among so much that is evil.

Machia TJEes ***

February 24 & March 9: HEGELIAN RESPONSE TO THE MODERN PROJECT***

The Moral man is not he who merely wills and does that which is right not the merely innocent man but he who has the consciousness of what he is doing.

G. W. F. Hegel

Required Reading: *G. W. F. Hegel, *Preface to the Phenomenology of Spirit* (Trans. Y. Yovel)

of History (E-reserve)

Steven B. Smith, Hegel's Idea of a Critical Theory, *Political Theory*, Volume 15, Issue 1 (February 1987), 99-126. JSTOR

*G. W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*. Translated by A. Knox. C. L. Eubanks, Subject & Substance: Hegel on Modernity, *Loyola Journal of Public Interest Law*, Fall 2004, pp. 101-125).

March

March 23 & 30: NIETZSCHE'S PERSPECTIVE ON METHOD***

they already contain! Or must we go so far as to say: in themselves they contain nothing? To experience is to invent?

F. Nietzsche

Required Reading:

<http://www.handprint.com/SC/NIE/GotDamer.html>

- *F. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*. Translated by Walter Kaufmann.
- L. Strauss, "Note on the Plan of Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*. Originally published in *Interpretation: A Journal of Political Philosophy*, 3, nos. 2 and 3, 1973.
- *F. Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*. Translated by Clark and Swenson. (Alternative)

F. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, Translated by F. Hollingdale
M. Heidegger, Nietzsche's Fundamental Metaphysical Position, and Who was Nietzsche's Zarathustra, from *Nietzsche*, Volume 4. Translated by J. Stambaugh, David Krell, and Frank Capuzzi. San Francisco: Harper, 1991.

April 4: A BRIEF HUSSERLIAN INTERLUDE ON THE RECOVERY OF NAÏVETÉ

a reflection which raises above this naïveté is the only possible way to overcome the philosophical n but in

April 11: MARTIN HEIDEGGER AND THE FORGETTING OF BEING

This thinking is neither theoretical nor practical. It takes place before this differentiation. This thinking, insofar as it is, is the remembrance of Being and nothing else. . . . Such thinking has no result. It has no effect. It satisfies its nature simply by being. It lets Being be.

M. Heidegger

Required Reading: M. Heidegger, *Basic Writings* (Especially: *Being and Time: Introduction; What is Metaphysics; On the Essence of Truth; Letter on Humanism; Building Dwelling Thinking; What Calls for Thinking?; and The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking*)
A. Conque & C. L. Eubanks, (-Sein, Authenticity, and Care:
-Reserve)

April 18: THINKING – WILLING – JUDGING***

ning lies . . . in the moment when Ulysses, at the court of the king of the Phaeacians, listened to the story of his own deeds and sufferings, to the story of his life, now a thing

H. Arendt

Required Reading:
H. Arendt,
Excerpts from *The Human Condition*

April 25: AN EXPERIENTIAL MEDITATION ON TRANSCENDENCE***

God and man, world and society form a primordial community of being. The community . . . is a datum of experience in so far as it is known to man by virtue of his participation in the mystery of its being. It is not a datum of experience in so far as it is not given in the manner of an object of the external world but is knowable only for the perspective of participation in it.

E. Voegelin

Reading Assignments: Eric Voegelin, "Equivalences of Experience and Symbolization of History" from *Collected Works*, Volume 12. Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1990. (E-reserve)
Eric Voegelin, "Reason and the Classical Experience" from *Collected Works*, Volume 12. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990. (E-reserve)
*Eric Voegelin, *In Search of Order*, Volume Five, *Order and History*, U. of Missouri Press

Course Requirements:

In each seminar session, the focus of our attention will be a particular set of readings. **Emphasis will be placed, therefore, on a careful and thorough understanding, interpretation, and analysis of these readings**