

TEXT AND TRADITION: EARLY POLITICAL THOUGHT

Humanities 203C: Section 02, Fall 2008

Umrath 113, Tuesdays-Thursdays 2:30-4:00

Instructor and Office Hours

Professor Eric Brown

Wilson 213

eabrown@wustl.edu

935-4257

office hours: Tuesdays, 4:00-4:30, and by appointment

Description

In this course, we will examine some important attempts to understand how human beings should live together in society. We will focus on the work of two authors from each of four milieus in Western history: classical Athens, late republican Rome, medieval Europe, and renaissance Italy. Our preliminary goal—one that in itself requires a great deal of industry and ambition—is to reconstruct the central theses and arguments of what we read. Beyond this, however, we will critically evaluate their claims and reasoning.

This is one of the core courses for the Text and Tradition minor and one of the central entry paths to a major in the Interdisciplinary Project in the Humanities. The course can also serve toward a history major, and it is possible to petition for it to count toward a major in Philosophy, Political Science, or Social Thought and Analysis.

Texts

The following eleven required texts are available in the bookstore in Mallinckrodt:

Aquinas, On Law, Morality, and Politics, ed. Baumgarth and Regan (Hackett)

Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier, trans. Bull (Penguin)

Cicero, On Duties, ed. Griffin and Atkins (Cambridge)

Cicero, On the Commonwealth and On Laws, ed. Zetzel (Cambridge)

Dante, Monarchy, tr. Shaw (Cambridge)

Livy, The Early History of Rome: Books I-V of the History of Rome from its

Foundation, tr. Selincourt and Oakley (Penguin)

Machiavelli, Discourses on Livy, trans. Mansfield and Tarcov (Chicago)

Machiavelli, The Prince, trans. H. Mansfield, 2nd ed. (Chicago)

Plato, Republic, trans. Reeve (Hackett)

Sallust, The Jugurthine War / The Conspiracy of Catiline, tr. Handford (Penguin)

Thucydides, The Landmark Thucydides, ed. Strassler (Free Press)

There will also be a short selection available for downloading through E-Res, the on-line course reserve maintained by Olin library. To download this selection, go to <http://eres.wustl.edu/> and navigate to the reserve list for our course. You will need the password, which is 'Cicero' (exactly what is between the inverted commas).

Exactly these editions are required, as we want to keep worries about translation to a minimum and we want to refer readily to the same passages.

Requirements and Grades

1. Participation. This is a seminar, not a lecture course. No one will hold the floor for more than a few minutes at a time, and the success of the seminar will depend upon the involvement of its members. Everyone is expected to be present at every meeting, and everyone is expected to have digested the assigned reading and to be ready to discuss it. The grade for classroom participation will be a function of attentive attendance (attendance and attentiveness are required for a passing participation grade), regularity of participation (everyone should aim to make a comment or raise a question in every class session, and one comment or question per week is required for a good participation grade), and quality of participation (good participation shows engagement with the text and stimulates, or alters the course of, an ongoing dialogue in the class, and quality—not quantity—will make the difference between good and great participation grades). *100 points*
2. Four short essays. Each student is required to submit an essay of 1500 words or fewer on each of the four units of the course. Essays are due on Mondays at noon, and they must discuss texts read the previous week. (Note that you can choose when to write your essays, instead of simply submitting an essay at the last available Monday for each Unit. You are strongly encouraged to write when you have the time and interest.) Each student is responsible for his or her own thesis, but questions to consider when casting about for a thesis will be discussed in class and circulated by email. Every essay should be submitted as a "Rich Text Format [RTF]" file attached to an email. Marked papers will be returned by noon on the Monday after their due-date. Further expectations for the essays are noted on a separate handout. *50 points for each paper = 200 points total*
3. One revised essay. Each student is required to submit a revised version of one of his or her short papers, still limited to 1500 words. The choice of which essay to revise is up to the student, but because the revised essay is due exactly two weeks after its original, time will not permit revision of a Unit Four essay unless it was originally submitted by November 24. To be able to benefit from the experience before writing additional essays, every student is strongly encouraged to revise his or her first essay. Further expectations for the revised essay are noted on the writing handout. *100 points*

Tardiness on any assignment is subject to a penalty of 20 points per twenty-four hours or fraction thereof. No extensions will be granted except in the case of an extreme and unforeseeable emergency. (If you are in doubt about whether you are facing an extreme and unforeseeable emergency, you almost certainly are not.)

Every assignment must be the student's own work for this particular class. If ideas or words are borrowed without attribution from another person or are borrowed from work done for another class, or if there is any other violation of the academic integrity policy printed in the course listings, the student will automatically fail the course and be referred to the committee on academic integrity.

There are *400 possible points*, and to convert to quality grades, the instructor will probably use the standard scale (97% A+, 93% A, 90% A-, 87% B+, etc.). He reserves the right to substitute a more generous than standard scale in determining the final grades, but as with any right reserved, its exercise is not guaranteed.

Syllabus

I have asterisked (*) Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. If you will be absent, please email me in advance, and be sure to keep up with the reading. You might also want to talk with your classmates about what we discussed in class. If anyone needs to be absent for another day for religious reasons or otherwise, the same procedures apply.

Thurs Aug 28 Introduction

UNIT ONE: CLASSICAL ATHENS

Tues Sept 2 Thucydides 1.1, 1.20-45, 1.66-88, 1.139-146

Thurs Sept 4 Thucydides 2.1-78

Tues Sept 9 Thucydides 3.1-88, 4.47-48, 4.84-88

Thurs Sept 11 Thucydides 5.1-26, 5.84-116

Tues Sept 16 Thucydides 6.1, 6.8-29, 6.32-41, 6.53-61, 6.72-73, 6.88-93, 7.10-15, 7.87, 8.1

Thurs Sept 18 Plato, Republic I

Tues Sept 23 Plato, Republic II-IV

Thurs Sept 25 Plato, Republic V-VII

Tues Sept 30 * Plato, Republic VIII-IX

Thurs Oct 2 Plato, Republic X

Mon Oct 1 last due date for Unit One

UNIT TWO: LATE REPUBLICAN ROME

Tues Oct 7 Livy, Early History of Rome I 1-22 and II 1-41

Thurs Oct 9 * Sallust, The Conspiracy of Catiline

Tues Oct 14 Cicero, First and Fourth Catilinarian Orations (E-Res)

Thurs Oct 16 Cicero, On Duties I

Tues Oct 21 Cicero, On Duties II-III

Thurs Oct 23 Cicero, On Laws I and II 1-13,
and On the Commonwealth III 8-41

Mon Oct 27 last due date for Unit Two

UNIT THREE: MEDIEVAL EUROPE

Tues Oct 28 Aquinas, pp. 11-55

Thurs Oct 30 Aquinas, pp. 56-83 and 233-246

Tues Nov 4 Aquinas, pp. 136-163 and 176-198

Thurs Nov 6 Dante, Monarchy I and II 1-7

Tues Nov 11 Dante, Monarchy II 8-11 and III

UNIT FOUR: RENAISSANCE ITALY

Thurs Nov 13 Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier I

Mon Nov 17 last due date for Unit Three

Tues Nov 18 Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier IV

Thurs Nov 20 Machiavelli, The Prince Dedicatory Letter
and Chps. 1-13

Tues Nov 25 Machiavelli, The Prince Chps. 14-26

Thurs Nov 27 NO CLASS — Thanksgiving

Tues Dec 2 Livy, Early History of Rome III 1-55
Machiavelli, Discourses Dedicatory Letter,
Preface to Book I, and I 1-24

Thurs Dec 4 Machiavelli, Discourses I 25-60

Mon Dec 8 last due date for Unit Four