

POLSCI 331: High stakes politics.

Winter term 2009.

Tuesday 2.15-5.05 pm. Bldg 240-110

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January 07, 2009

The seminar reunites normative political theory (centered on values) with positive political theory (centered on modeling behavior) in an attempt to better explain how major theoretical texts concerned with power, justice, and legitimacy responded to and may have influenced changes in formal and informal institutions. The emphasis is on historical periods in which institutional failure (power as naked force, lack of legitimate authority, systematic injustice) was a present fact of social life, a recent memory, or a realistic possibility. In a condition of “high stakes politics” the problem ultimately driving political theorizing and institution-building is quite literally “life and death,” that is, the survival (and then flourishing) of the individual and the state.

The first case study for 2008/9 will be the competing Greek city-states in the classical period (5th-4th centuries B.C.). The second case study will be the Northern Atlantic Community of the 17th and 18th centuries, including the upheavals of 17th century England and the American Revolutionary era. For each case, reading will focus on major texts and the institutional/historical context in which they were written. The case studies are linked, in that the early-modern theorists interested in republican/democratic regimes were well aware of the ancient precedents: the histories of the Greek city-states and of the Roman republic were very much of all early-modern “high stakes” theorists.

Central themes to be explored: Relationship between states being seriously at risk (from internal and external war, cooperative failure generally) and

- (1) the emergence/evolution of republican/democratic institutions
- (2) development of political theory to explain (positive theory) and correct (normative theory) the high-risk circumstances.
- (3) how high-stakes positive/normative theory accounts for emergence and working of republican/democratic institutions.

WEEK BY WEEK

1. January 6: Introduction and overview. Positive theory, normative theory, and how they are related. The value of case studies. Mistakes to be avoided: strong normative essentialism (normative ideas determine history), strong historical contextualism (history determines ideas).

- Background: Tully 1988 (*Quentin Skinner and his critics*). Ober 1996 ch 2 (Models and paradigms), 2007 (Athens as an experimental system = PSWPC 110512), 2008 (What Greeks can tell us about democracy: Literature review), 2009 (Why I study ancient history and why I suppose it matters).

2. January 13: Theoretical background: Institutions and norms 1. Rationality and institutional change.

- Read: **North, Wallis, and Weingast**, *Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History* (preface; ch 1-2; 4-5). **Ober**, *Democracy and Knowledge* (Chapters 1-3). **Ober and Weingast**, “Notes on the PPT-NPT Program.”

3. January 20: Theoretical background: Institutions and norms 2. Political ideas in context.

- Read: **Ober** 1998 ch 1 (*Political Dissent*), 2009 (Public action and rational choice), 2005 (Law and political theory), **Weingast** (1997; 2008); **Viroli** 2003 (Republic and democracy: early modern origins in Renaissance), **Rabb** 2003 (Institutions and ideas in early modern Europe to 1700).
- Background: Ober 2003 (Conditions for Greek democracy), Elster (1989: introduction and ch 3). Shepsle and Bonchek (1997).

Weeks 4-6: Ancient Greek city-states. General textbook: Morris and Powell, *The Greeks* (2005). Characteristics of Greek city-states: Hansen, *Polis* (2006). Conditions for democracy: Ober 2003.

4. January 27: State formation, intra-elite conflict and cooperation, emergence of republican/democratic institutions.

- Read: **Aristotle**, *Politics*, book 1. **Plato** *Protagoras*, first part TBA. **Plato** *Republic* books 1-3. **Snodgrass** 2006 (*Emergence of Greece* ch 13). **Murray** 1990 (“Cities of Reason”).
- Background: Snodgrass 2006 (chs 11, 15). Morris 1996 (archaic origins of democracy). Forsdyke 2000 (Ostracism and elite conflict). Raaflaub, Ober, Wallace 2008 (*Origins of Democracy*). Ober 1998 ch 4 (Plato), 2005 (Aristotle’s natural democracy), 2008 ch 4 (Council of 500 and knowledge aggregation).
- Key Institutions: citizen land army (hoplite phalanx), citizen navy, citizen deliberative Council, ostracism.

5. February 3: Legitimacy and power, one-few-many, civil conflict, law.

- Read: **Herodotus** 3.61-88: Persian constitutional debate. **Ps-Xenophon** *Constitution of Athens*. **Thucydides** books 1.1-24: Introduction, 1.68-71: speech of Corinthians, 2.34-65 (Pericles), 3.1-85 (Mytilene, Plataea, Corcyra), 5.84-6.41 (Melos, Sicily). **Ober** 2000 (Quasi-rights), 2006 (Thucydides and the invention of political science)
- Background: Ober 1998 ch 2 (Thucydides as critic of democracy), 2000 (Political conflicts), 2008 ch 5 (alignment and law), 2008b (Original meaning of democracy: capacity to do things not majority rule).
- Key Institutions: citizen Assembly, codes and courts of law.

6. February 10: Federalism, the mixed constitution, scale, empire.

- Read: **Aristotle** *Politics* 3, 6, 7. **Aristotle** *Constitution of Athens* 41-end. **Polybius** 1.1-5: Introduction, 2.37-70: federal league of Achaea, 3.1-7: second introduction,

- 6: Constitutions, esp Rome, 32.8-16: Scipio, 38.3-6: miseries of Greece. **Murray** 1993 (Polis and Politeia), **Mackil** forthcoming (Greek koinon)
- Background: Ober 1998 ch 6 (Aristotle), Mackil and van Alfen 2006 (Cooperative coinages), Champion 2004 (Polybius).
 - Key institutions: mixed constitution, federalism.

Weeks 7-9. Atlantic world. Background readings: ** Bailyn, *Atlantic History* (2005)
Kishlansky, *Britain 1603-1714* (1996)

7. February 17: First steps toward theories of mixed government in early modern Europe.

- Read:
 - **Harrington**, *Oceana*, (Pocock's intro, pp xi-xxi; pp 1-31,47-57);
 - **Hobbes**, *Leviathan* (chapter #s [pages]: X.41 [62-63]; XIII [86-90]; XIV.64-66 [91-94]; XV.71 [100-01]; XVII-XVIII.97 [117-32]; XXI-XXII.116 [145-56]; XXIII.124-26 [166-69]; XXVI.137-39 [183-86]; XXIX.167-71 [221-26]; XXX.175 [231-32].
 - **Pocock**, *Machiavellian Moment* (pp. 3-9; 114-29, 156-61, 183-90; 194-201; 208-11; 219-28; 253-56; 308-14; 333-43; 354-60; 361-73; 401-12; 423-36; 462-67; 506-31).
- Background: Skinner (2008) on Hobbes vs republicans;
- Key institutions: Monarchy, mixed government.

8. February 24. Theories of Constitution and Constitutionalism.

- Read:
 - **Locke** *Second Treatise* (chs 4-5; 7; 8.95-8.102, 9-12, 18-19),
 - **Montesquieu**, *Spirit of the Laws* (3 [21-30]; 5.4-5 [44-47]; 9.1-6 [131-35]; 11.1-6 [154-66]; 11.14-18 [173-84] 12.1-4 [187-89]; 13.1 [213]; 13.11-14 [220-23])¹
 - **Hume**, *Treatise of Human Nature* (3.2.2; 3.2.4-3.2.6.1; 3.2.6.11-3.2.8.4; 3.2.9.1)²
 - Hardin (1989);
 - Hardin (2007, chs 4-5)
 - North and Weingast (1989);
 - Schultz and Weingast (2003);
- Key institutions: separation of powers, credible commitments

9. March 3: American Constitutionalism

- Read:
 - **Hamilton, Jay, Madison**, *Federalist Papers* (Paper #: 2, 10, 18, 30-31, 37-39, 45-48, 51, 57, 62-64, 66-67, 78-81, 85);
 - **Madison**, "Vices of the Political System of the United States" (1787).
 - Weingast 2008.
 - Wallis (2006)
 - Wood (1969: 197-218).
- Recommended: Elster (2000, ch2);
- Key institutions: federalism, credible commitments, perpetuity

10. March 10: Summing Up. What have we learned? Where do we go from here?

¹ Book.chapter [page # in Cambridge edition].

² book, part, section, and para, so that 3.2.8.4 is book 3, part II, section 8, para 4. When no para is indicated, it means the whole section should be read).

Main texts with recommended editions (also available online; see below):

ANCIENT (available online from Classics Archive, Perseus, Project Gutenberg. NB ancient texts are cited by book, chapter, section not by page).

Aristotle *Constitution of Athens*. Penguin (Rhodes), Cambridge, Loeb. Commentary by P.J. Rhodes

Aristotle, *Politics*: Cambridge, Chicago (Lord), Loeb.

Herodotus *Histories*. Landmark, Penguin (de Sélincourt)

Plato, *Protagoras, Republic*: Hackett (Cooper), and many others.

Polybius. Penguin (Walbank), Loeb. Commentary by F.W. Walbank

Ps-Xenophon (aka "The Old Oligarch). Loeb (Bowersock), Aris and Philips (Marr and Rhodes), Cambridge (*Early Greek Political Thought*: Gagarin and Woodruff).

Online: <http://www6.tlct.ttu.edu/forsythe/oo.htm>

Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* Landmark (Strassler), Penguin (Warner). Commentaries by S. Hornbower, A.W. Gomme.

EARLY MODERN (Cambridge for all of these)

Harrington, James. *Oceana*.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*.

Locke, John. *Second Treatise*.

Montesquieu. *Spirit of the Laws*.

Hamilton, Jay, Madison, *Federalist Papers*.

Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*.

Some useful web sites with texts and other materials:

Classics archive (texts): <http://classics.mit.edu/index.html>

Project Gutenberg (texts): <http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/>

Perseus Digital Library (texts and much else):

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/collection.jsp?collection=Perseus:collection:Greco-Roman>

Ancient history sourcebook: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook.html>

Stoa Digital Classicist: <http://www.stoa.org/>

Princeton-Stanford Working Papers in Classics: <http://www.princeton.edu/~pswpc/>

Ober personal website (with downloadable texts): www.stanford.edu/~jober

All of the early modern texts are available at the liberty fund's site:

http://oll.libertyfund.org/index.php?option=com_staticxt&Itemid=28 (the Federalist Papers are under Hamilton). The Federalist papers are also available at:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/help/constRedir.html>.

Another useful source for English historical documents is:

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/collections/languages/english/> (see, e.g., [Past Masters® Philosophy Databases](#))

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