

WAR, PEACE AND THE SOVEREIGN STATE: POLITICAL THOUGHT FROM MACHIAVELLI TO KANT

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Fall semester 2018/2019

Monday, 12:30-14:30

Location: 28, rue des Saints Pères. Room H 401

SEMINAR DESCRIPTION

The modern philosophers rejected the first aim of classical political philosophy which was the quest of a good life thanks to ethics which, in turn, could allow a good political regime to be established. The change of context from the 16th century until the 18th had for consequence a change in the minds of the most important political thinkers of this period. The State started to be understood as an independent entity which should no longer be at the service of one person or group of persons and, instead, should guarantee security and liberty for the people above which it stands. However, this political entity could also wage war with its counterparts. Thus, the state of nature which would help understand the establishment of a civic society thanks to the fiction of a social contract is reproduced at the international level. At this level, peace and war are trapped in a difficult dilemma. How can the State allow peace within its territory while it can wage war against its sovereign enemies? This question, among other lesser ones, will arise in our class thanks to the study of several extracts from the most important books of the modern philosophers.

Seminar evaluation and organization

Organization

This seminar is complementary to the weekly lecture by Dr. Sharkey, and provides students an opportunity to discuss and debate the readings and key themes in early modern political thought. We will thus use start our discussions from the themes that were presented in the lecture, and move beyond. Therefore, active participation is required and students may be called upon at any time to provide their views on or interpretation of a text.

READINGS for the seminar and lecture are COMPLEMENTARY but NOT THE SAME. Please check your Lecture Syllabus for an indication of the required readings there. The class will consist of:

- (i) a part devoted to the notes of last week's discussion.
- (ii) a part devoted to the oral presentations followed by a discussion about the readings and the short papers written about them by students of the seminar
- (iii) possible other group work, debates etc.

Office hours will be held directly following the class or by arrangement. For any matter concerning the class, please send an email to the above-mentioned email address.

Evaluation

Seminar sessions will emphasize class discussion and the development of students' analytical skills by means of oral presentations, debate, writing and other assignments. The seminar accounts for 2/3 of the final grade for the class, with specific assignments discussed below. The remaining 1/3 of overall grade is the final exam administered in conjunction with the lecture course.

Marks for the seminar itself are allocated as follows

1. Essay: 3000 words maximum (include word count), excluding references, to be handed in as stipulated below and sent simultaneously to pablo.barnierkhawam.scpo@analyse.urkund.com (50%)
2. Continuous assessment, comprising
 - a) Oral participation and preparation in class (10%)
 - b) Oral presentation and analysis of text(s) (40%)

By the end of the semester, students will have an enhanced grasp of some of the key texts and debates of early-modern political thought and improved presentation, argumentative and research skills.

Class Participation (10%): You should have prepared your required readings for each session at all times. Not having done so will affect your note. Be ready to be called on in class and are expected to volunteer to take part in collective class discussions, whether in relation to assigned readings or in response to oral presentations.

Critical assessment of discussion (10%): Each week, two students will prepare a 5-minute, 1-page, printed summary account of the previous week's discussion that they have presented and led. This will be read at the start of each class and the other students will be invited to comment on the accuracy or otherwise of its restitution of the previous week's discussion. A copy should be made available (online and/or on paper) to everyone. Copies should be online by Sunday night latest.

Oral Presentations (30%): The main part of the class will be devoted to two short papers (maximum length 2 sides A4) prepared individually by two other students, discussing the texts ("core readings") indicated for that week. These should last for no more than fifteen minutes each. They must be clear, well structured, original attempts to understand and critically assess the texts distributed. The remainder of the class will be devoted to *discussion* of these presentations, of which each student should have a (paper) copy (a copy should be handed to the instructor). A Power-Point presentation is not necessary. The important thing is to be well prepared (i.e. to have taken the time to read the text carefully and intelligently and to prepare a structured written explanation of its meaning).

The essay ("term-paper") (50%): The final essay is due during class in week 10 of the course (19th November 2018). Final essays must present an argument and attempt to engage with counter-positions to that argument. The topic chosen should be drawn from the list distributed. Final essays should not exceed 3000 words/19000 characters (spaces included) excluding references and bibliography). As well as a paper copy to be submitted directly to me, an electronic copy must be sent simultaneously to pablo.barnierkhawam.scpo@analyse.urkund.com. Paper and electronic copies should display your name at the top of the first page. Paper copies should be correctly stapled together. No title page or binding is necessary. The word count should be printed on the final page, before the bibliography. No particular referencing system is required,

but references should be consistent and should permit the reader to find the exact quotation, section (i.e. whole books/chapters should not be referenced, but rather page numbers in particular editions).

Late submissions will be graded only with acceptable excuses, and always with a grading penalty: one point is deducted for submission the day after the deadline and two points are deducted for each subsequent day.

Class Schedule (using European dating day/month)

Week 1 (10/09/18): Introduction to the course

- A. The introductory class will be, first, dedicated to the organization of the course, allocation of the presentations, as well as explications about the midterm essay, and, second, to a discussion on the texts mentioned below.
- B. Machiavelli I
Texts for reading:
- Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Introduction & Dedication
 - Machiavelli, *The Prince*, chapters 6-10

Further reading: Skinner's "Introduction" to his "Cambridge Texts" edition and/or Viroli's introduction to the Bondanella edition (Oxford World Classics); Skinner, *Machiavelli: A very short introduction* (2001)

Week 2 (17/09/18): Machiavelli II

Texts for reading and presentation:

- Machiavelli, *The Prince*, chapters 12-14
- Machiavelli, *The Prince*, chapters 15-18

Week 3 (24/09/18): Machiavelli III

Texts for reading and presentation:

- Machiavelli, *The Prince*, chapters 19 and 21
- Machiavelli, *The Prince*, chapters 23-26

Week 4 (01/10/18): Hobbes I

Texts for reading and presentation:

- Hobbes, *Leviathan*, I, xi-xii
- Hobbes, *Leviathan*, I, xiii

Further reading: Tuck's introduction to his "Cambridge Texts" edition of *Leviathan*; also Tuck, *Hobbes. A very Short Introduction* (excellent, specially on the background to Hobbes's political thought)

Week 5 (08/10/18): Hobbes II

Texts for reading and presentation:

- Hobbes, *Leviathan*, I, xiv
- Hobbes, *Leviathan*, I, xv

Week 6 (15/10/18): Hobbes III

Texts for reading and presentation:

- Hobbes, *Leviathan*, I, xvii-xviii
- Hobbes, *Leviathan*, I, xxi

Week 7 (22/10/18): Locke I

Texts for reading and presentation:

- Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chapters II-IV
- Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chap. V

Further reading: Laslett's introduction to his "Cambridge Texts" edition; Goldie's introduction to the Oxford World's classics edition; Dunn, Locke (1984)

NB: 31/10/18 no class ("All Saints" holiday)

Week 8 (05/11/18): Locke II

Texts for reading and presentation:

- Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chapter VII, VIII (§§ 95-104, 113-122)
- Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chapters IX and XI

Week 9 (12/11/18): Rousseau I

Texts for reading and presentation:

- Rousseau, *Origins of Inequality*, ed. Dunn, "First Part", pp. 89-113
- Rousseau, *Origins of Inequality*, ed. Dunn, "Second Part", pp. 113-138

Further reading: Gourevitch, "Introduction" to the "Cambridge Texts" edition of *The Discourses and other Early Political Writings*

Week 10 (19/11/18): Rousseau II

Texts for reading and presentation:

- Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Book I, §1-8; Book III, §4
- Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Book II, §1-4, 6-7; Book IV, §1

Further reading: Gourevitch, "Introduction"; A. Cobban, *Rousseau and the Modern State*

Week 11 (26/11/18): Kant I

Texts for reading and presentation:

- Kant, *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose* (Reiss, pp. 41- 53)
- Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* (Reiss, pp. 93-115)

Further reading: Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace* (1999), chapter 7 ("Rousseau and Kant"); Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy (online): "Kant's Social and Political Philosophy"

Week 12 (03/12/18): Kant II

Texts for reading and presentation:

- Kant, *Perpetual Peace, Appendix I*: "On the Disagreement between Morals and Politics in Relation to Perpetual Peace" (Reiss, pp. 116-130)
- Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*: "The Theory of Right, Part II: Public Right" (Reiss, pp. 136-175)

EDITIONS OF RELEVANT TEXTS

- Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Bondanella, intro. M. Viroli, "Oxford World's Classics" (2005). Also in Bondanella and Musa, eds., *The Portable Machiavelli*, Penguin (1979)
- Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Price, intro. Skinner, "Cambridge Texts" (1988)
- Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Tuck, "Cambridge Texts" (1996) or any other reputable edition in English (e.g. MacPherson, Oakeshott, Brooke, Curley, Pogson-Smith, Gaskin)
- Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Goldie, "Oxford World's Classics" (2016) or Laslett, "Cambridge Texts" (1960)
- Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, trans. F. Philip, Oxford "World's Classics", 1994
- Rousseau, *The Social Contract* in *The Social Contract and other Later Political Writings*, ed. and trans. V. Gourevitch, Cambridge, 1997
- Kant, *Political Writings*, 2nd ed. H. Reiss, Cambridge, 1991