

“A social science that cannot speak of tyranny with the same confidence with which medicine speaks, for example, of cancer, cannot understand social phenomena as what they are. It is therefore not scientific. Present day social science finds itself in this condition. If it is true that present-day social science is the inevitable result of modern social science and of modern philosophy, one is forced to think of the restoration of classical social science.”

—Leo Strauss, “Restatement on Xenophon’s *Hiero*”

Political Science 7991

Seminar: Tyranny, Nationalism, and Totalitarianism

Fall 2019

Tyranny and totalitarianism are the great enemies of constitutional government, the former since the ancient world, the latter specifically in modern times. Nationalism, by contrast, has been interpreted sometimes as a political evil, sometimes as the basis of constitutional government itself. This course will explore what political theorists, classical and contemporary, have to say about tyranny, nationalism, and totalitarianism, with the aim of understanding more clearly the relation of one-man or one-party rule to political evil and political good.

Instructor: James Stoner, poston@lsu.edu
Stubbs 214
(225) 578-2538 [office] or (504) 232-4399 [cell]

Office Hours: Mondays, 10:00-11:00 am;
Wednesdays, 1:30-2:30 pm; and by appointment

Books available for purchase:

- Leo Strauss, *On Tyranny*, ed. Gourevitch & Roth (Chicago) [ISBN 9780226030135]
- Aristotle, *Politics*, tr. Lord, 2d ed. (Chicago) [ISBN 9780226921846]
- Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, tr. Ambler (Cornell) [ISBN 9780801487507]
- Aquinas, *On Kingship* (Pontifical Institute for Mediaeval Studies) [ISBN 9780888442512]
- Dante, *Monarchy*, tr. Shaw (Cambridge) [ISBN 9780521567817]
- Machiavelli, *The Prince*, tr. Mansfield (Chicago) [ISBN 9780226500447]
- Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, tr. Cohler, Miller & Stone (Cambridge) [ISBN 9780521369749]
- Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, tr. Masters (St. Martin) [ISBN 9780312694463]
- Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, tr. Sibree (Dover) [ISBN 9780486437552]
- Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich) [ISBN 9780156701532]
- Voegelin, *Hitler and the Germans* (Missouri) [ISBN 9780826214669]
- Manent, *Metamorphoses of the City* (Harvard) [ISBN 9780674072947]
- Hazony, *The Virtue of Nationalism* (Basic) [ISBN 9781541645370]

Course requirements:

- Attendance at all class sessions and participation in discussions [absence penalized]
- Five 500-word papers on the assigned reading, due before class (& read aloud), as follows: 9/11 or 18; 9/25 or 10/2; 10/9 or 16; 10/23 or 30; and 11/6 or 13 [40%]
- Presentation of research (11/20, 11/27, or 12/4) [10%]
- Research paper, 15-18 pages, on an approved topic (topic due 11/8; paper due 12/12) [50%]

Grading scale: A+ (98%-100%), A (93%-97%), A- (90%-92%)
 B+ (88%-90%), B (83%-87%), B- (80%-82%), etc.

SYLLABUS:**I. The Problem of Tyranny in the Modern World**

Wed., 8/28 Xenophon, *Hiero*, in Leo Strauss, *On Tyranny*, pp. 3-21
 Leo Strauss, *On Tyranny*, ch. 1-3, pp. 22-65

Wed., 9/4 Leo Strauss, *On Tyranny*, ch. 4-7, pp. 66-105
 Alexander Kojève, "Tyranny and Wisdom," in *On Tyranny*, pp. 135-176
 Eric Voegelin, review of *On Tyranny*, *Review of Politics*, 11 (1949): 241-244
 Leo Strauss, "Restatement on Xenophon's *Hiero*," in *On Tyranny*, pp. 177-212

II. Monarchy in Classical Political Philosophy

Wed., 9/11 Aristotle, *Politics*, I.1-7, II.7, III.4-8, 14-18, V
 Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, I-II, VII-VIII

Wed., 9/18 Thomas Aquinas, *On Kingship*
 Dante Alighieri, *On Monarchy*

III. Monarchy, Democracy, and the Nation in Modern Political Philosophy

Wed., 9/25 Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*

Wed., 10/2 Montesquieu, *On the Spirit of the Laws*, Author's foreword, Preface, Books I-VIII, XI, XIV-XIX

Wed., 10/9 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*

Wed., 10/16 G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, pp. 1-115, 223-224, 278-282, 341-346; and an additional section of the text as chosen

IV. The Political Science of Monarchy and Democracy

Wed., 10/23 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, prefaces, ch. 1, 9-13

Wed., 10/30 Eric Voegelin, *Hitler and the Germans*

Wed., 11/6 Pierre Manent, *Metamorphoses of the City*, ch. 1, 3-4, 7-9

Wed., 11/13 Yoram Hazony, *The Virtue of Nationalism*

V. Workshop: Presentation of Research

Wed., 11/20 Presenting:

Wed., 11/27 Presenting:

Wed., 12/4 Presenting:

Thurs., 12/12 **PAPERS DUE**