

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

HISTORY & POLITICAL THOUGHT IN CLASSICAL GREECE - 39292

Last update 14-10-2015

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: history

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Matthias Schmidt

Coordinator Email: matthias.schmidt@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Mondays 14:30 - 16:00

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Matthias Schmidt

Course/Module description:

The exercise will give an introduction into the political world of classical Greece in the 5th century BCE stressing the connection between political thought, history and historiography towards the creation of a distinctive identity in a society deeply concerned with power and freedom between democracy and oligarchy. The analysis of relevant literary sources will contribute to the understanding of the birth of history at a point where the new democratic rule is established. Political identity comes to its structure by the construction of and the confrontation with "the internal and external Other". The development of political thinking will be traced from the Homeric Epos through the historiography of Herodotus and Thucydides and the dramatic genres of the 5th century, till the philosophical thinkers of the 4th century.

Course/Module aims:

The student should get familiar with the main lines of development of political thought from the dark ages till the end of the classical period and their connection to the historical events during this time. He/she should understand the creation of different political systems in ancient Greek and their main institutions as a results of historical, military, social and economic needs and circumstances. The interdependence of political praxis, historiography, philosophy and political thought (praxis and theory) in the specific historical context should be put into focus. The student should learn the methods of interpretation of historical sources (texts, archaeology, maps etc.) in their literary and historical contexts, and should train the intellectual instruments to give a critical evaluation of historiographical judgements. Students should be aware of the importance of history, historiography and memory as well as of national identity as social constructs made in the context of a specific historical milieu for actual political use.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- describe major stages in the development of Greek political thought from the dark ages till the end of the classical period
- identify the historical, military and social reasons that caused these developments
- explain the impact that certain historical events had on the development of political systems and the creation of a political identity in Greece
- distinguish between a variety of political systems in the Greek world
- follow the interdependence of political praxis and theory
- analyse and interpret primary sources of the 5th and 4th century

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- assess the accuracy, credibility and tendencies of primary sources as well as of ancient and modern historiographical statements towards the subject matter
 - display awareness of the historical and cultural contexts for the creation of different literary genres as tools for political criticism
 - select and synthesize material from the lectures as well as from the recommended primary and secondary literature to use in oral and written discussion of set topics

Attendance requirements(%):

95

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Lecture, power point presentations (incl. film material), analysis of different source material (textual, visual, maps), discussions on methodological problems.

Course/Module Content:

Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the course

1.1.1 Principle questions concerning the work in class

1.1.2 Aims of the course: aspects of contents and methodology

1.1.3 History and Historiography - the problems of sources, or: the historical event in historiographical interpretation

1.2 Introduction into the Greek world

1.2.1 Periodization of Greek history

1.2.3 The research problem: the democratic system, political thought and the invention of history as historiography

Homer's World - Political thought without politics

2.1 Authority and social order: Homer, Iliad, Book 1

The discussion about the best form of government: monarchy - aristocracy - democracy

3.1 Herodotus, Histories III 80-83

3.2 Polybios, Histories VI 3-9

Athens and Sparta - Democracy versus Oligarchy

4.1 The Athenian System

4.1.1 The democratic system in Athens - development, principles, institutions, procedures

4.1.2 The internal discourse on democracy - pro and contra

4.1.2.1 Why democracy?: Euripides, Suppliant Women 382-510

4.1.2.2 The triumph of freedom: Aischylos, Persae 231-243

4.1.2.3 Positive criticism in comedy: Aristophanes, Ekklesiazusae

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- 4.1.2.4 The opposition against democracy: Pseudo-Xenophon, *The Athenian Constitution* ("The Old Oligarch")
 - 4.1.2.5 The glory of democracy: Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War II* 35-46: Pericles' epitaphios
 - 4.1.2.6 The Athenian democracy according to Aristotle I: *Pol.* VI 6, p. 1317a 39ff
 - 4.1.2.7 The Athenian democracy according to Aristotle II: *The Athenian Constitution*

4.2 The Spartan System

- 4.2.1 Xenophon, *The Spartan Constitution*
- 4.2.2 The Spartan system according to Aristotle: *Pol.* II 6, p. 1269a 39 - 1271b19
- 4.2.3 The Spartan Sonderweg - a historiographical evaluation

The political task of history and historiography in the 5th century BCE - source for further studies

- 5.1 Plutarch, *Themistocles* 3.5-4.6: The building of the Athenian fleet
- 5.2 Meiggs-Lewis, *GH2 No. 23*: The decree on the evacuation of Attica
- 5.3 Herodotus, *Histories VII* 175-177 and VII 201-230: The battle at Thermopylai
- 5.4 Herodotus, *Histories VII* 138-139: The Athenian Contribution
- 5.5 Herodotus, *Histories VIII* 140-144: The unity of Hellas as a national myth
- 5.6 Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War V* 85-113: The Melian Dialogue
- 5.7 Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War III* 37-50: The discussion about Mytilene
- 5.8 Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War II* 65: Thucydides' evaluation of Pericles
- 5.9 Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War VII* 81 - VIII 1: Thucydides' epilogue to the Sicilian expedition 415-413 BCE

Required Reading:

Simon Hornblower, *The Greek World 479-323 BC*, London - New York: Methuen, 1983.

Robin Osborne, *Greece in the Making, 1200-479 BC*, London New York: Routledge, 1996.

Anton Powell, *Athens and Sparta. Constructing Greek Political and Social History from 478 BC*, London New York: Routledge, 2nd ed. 2001.

P. J. Rhodes, *A History of the Classical Greek World 478-323 BC*, Malden Oxford Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.

Joseph M. Bryant, *Moral Codes and Social Structure in Ancient Greece. A Sociology of Greek Ethics from Homer to the Epicureans and Stoics*, Albany, N.Y.: The State University of New York Press, 1996, chapters 1 and 2, pp. 9-39.

Dean Hammer, "Homer and Political Thought", in: Stephen Salkever (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Greek Political Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2009, pp. 15-41.

Additional Reading Material:

1.2.2 General Items

Ryan K. Balot, *Greek Political Thought*, Malden Oxford Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.

Joseph M. Bryant, *Moral Codes and Social Structure in Ancient Greece. A Sociology of Greek Ethics from Homer to the Epicureans and Stoics*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996.

Moses I. Finley, *The Ancient Greeks. An Introduction to their Life and Thought*, New York: The Viking Press, 1966.

Emily Greenwood, *Thucydides and the Shaping of History*, London: Duckworth, 2006.

Edith Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian. Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1989.

Donald Kagan, *The Great Dialogue. History of Greek Political Thought from Homer to Polybius*, West Port, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1965.

Christopher Rowe, Malcolm Schofield (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Stephen Salkever (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Greek Political Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2009.

2. Athens and Athenian Democracy

Moses I. Finley, *Democracy - Ancient and Modern*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996.

Christian Meier, *Athens. A Portrait of the City in its Golden Age*, New York: Metropolitan Books - Henry Holt and Company, 1998.

Josiah Ober, *The Athenian Revolution: essays on ancient Greek democracy and political theory*, Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Josiah Ober, Charles Hedrick (eds.), *Demokratia - A Conversation on Democracies, Ancient and Modern*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996 (collection of relevant articles).

Josiah Ober, *Political Dissent in Democratic Athens. Intellectual Critics of Popular*

Rule, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1998.

Kurt Raaflaub, Josiah Ober, Robert W. Wallace (eds.), *Origins of Democracy in Ancient Greece*, Berkeley Los Angeles London: University of California Press, 2007.

J.W. Roberts *City of Sokrates. An Introduction to Classical Athens*, London New York: Routledge, 1984.

John Thorley, *Athenian Democracy*, London New York: Routledge, 1996.

3. Sparta and its Constitution

Paul Cartledge, *The Spartans. The World of the Warrior-Heroes of Ancient Greece, from Utopia to Crisis and Collapse*, New York: Vintage Books, 2002.

Thomas J. Figueira (ed.), *Spartan Society*, Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2004.

Moses I. Finley, "Sparta", in: idem, *The Use and Abuse of History*, London: Chatto & Windus 1975, pp. 161-177.

Stephen Hodkins, Ian Macgregor Morris (ed.), *Sparta in modern Thought: Politics, History and Culture*, Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2012.

Anton Powell, Stephen Hodkinson (eds), *Sparta - Beyond the Mirage*, London: Duckworth and the Classical Press of Wales, 2002.

Antona Powell, Stephen Hodkinson, *The Shadow of Sparta*, London New York: Routledge for the Classical Press of Wales, 1994.

Michael Whitby (ed.), *Sparta*, Edinburgh: Edingburgh University Press, 2002

4. Selected Articles

Dean Hammer, "Homer and Political Thought", in: Stephen Salkever (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Greek Political Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2009, pp. 15-41.

Christopher Pelling, "Aeschylus' Persae and History", in: idem. (ed.), *Greek Tragedy and the Historians*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1997, 1-19.

Frank W. Walbank, "History and Tragedy", in: idem., *Selected Papers. Studies in Greek and Roman History and Historiography*, Cambridge-London: Cambridge University Press, 1985, 224-241.

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 85 %

Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 5 %
Project work 0 %
Assignments 10 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information:

In this subject Classical literature and sources are studied in translation. No knowledge of Greek or Latin is required.