It [is] possible to speak of the classical solutions to the problem of political philosophy because there is a fundamental and at the same time specific agreement among all classical political philosophers: the goal of political life is virtue, and the order most conducive to virtue is the aristocratic republic, or else the mixed regime. But in modern times, we find a great variety of fundamentally different political philosophies. Nevertheless, all modern political philosophies belong together because they have a fundamental principle in common. This principle can best be stated negatively: rejection of the classical scheme as unrealistic...The founder of modern political philosophy is Machiavelli...[And the] last epoch [of modernity] was inaugurated by Nietzsche.

—Leo Strauss, “What is Political Philosophy?”

We cannot know ourselves without first understanding our situation. And we cannot achieve either without first recognizing ourselves as “moderns.” We must affirm the “modern difference” in order to identify ourselves: it is part of our self-understanding...In what way and to what extent does being a “modern” man differ from simply being a “man”? In a certain way all of modern philosophy is a commentary on this difference. But where did this difference originate? It seems that it came first from philosophy itself.

—Pierre Manent, “The Truth, Perhaps”

Political Science 4082:
History of Political Theory, From Machiavelli to Nietzsche
Louisiana State University, Spring 2012

Instructor:
Trevor Shelley
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Stubbs 216

Office Hours:
T & TH, 12:00-1:00
And by appointment

Class Time, and Location:
T & TH 10:40-12:00
220 Stubbs Hall

Assignments:
Weekly Quizzes (25%) ** Spontaneous [no make-ups without official documentation]
Midterm Exam (20%) ** March 8
Paper Proposal (5%) ** Due March 20
Term Paper, 8-10 pages (25%) ** Due April 19 [in class submission only]
Final Exam (25%)
Required Texts:


Reading & Lecture Schedule:

Jan. 17 – Introduction

Jan. 19 – Constant, “Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns” (on Moodle)

Jan. 24 – Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Dedication & Ch. 1-14 (pp. 3-60)

Jan. 26 – Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Ch. 15-26 (pp. 61-105)

Jan. 30 – Machiavelli, *Discourses*, Epistle; Bk. I: Preface, Disc. 1-20 (pp. 3-54)


Feb. 14 – Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Author’s Intro & Ch. 1-12 (pp. 3-73)

Feb. 16 – Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Ch. 13-21 (pp. 74-145)

Feb. 21 – Mardi Gras Break
Feb. 23 – Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Ch. 26, 29-31, 46 (pp. 172-189, 210-244, 453-468)

Feb. 28 – Locke, *Second Treatise*, Ch. 1-7 (pp. 267-330)

Mar. 1 – Locke, *Second Treatise*, Ch. 8-15 (pp. 330-384)

Mar. 6 – Locke, *Second Treatise*, Ch. 16-19 (pp. 384-428)

Mar. 8 – **MIDTERM EXAM**


Apr. 3 – Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Vol. II: Pt. 2, Ch. 1-11; Pt. 3, Ch. 8-12; Pt. 4, Ch. 6-8 (pp. 479-509, 558-576, 661-676)


Apr. 6 – 15: Spring Break

Apr. 17 – Karl Marx, “On the Jewish Question,” & “Theses on Feuerbach” (pp. 26-52, 143-145)

Apr. 19 – Karl Marx, “The German Ideology” (pp. 146-200)  **TERM PAPER DUE**

Apr. 24 – Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part I

Apr. 26 – Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part II

May 1 – Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part III

May 3 – Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part IV

**Final Exam Week: May 5 – 12**