

**PS 116w. Ancient Greek Politics and Political Thought
Spring 2022**

Lectures: Lewis 100, Tu/Th 12.30-2pm
Sections: Fri and Mon (2 hours)

This course explores the varieties of political experience and ideas in the ancient Greek world, focusing on the Classical era. We'll consider different regime types (kingship, tyranny, democracy, oligarchy), places (Athens, Sparta, Crete, Syracuse, and beyond Hellas, Persia, Carthage, and Egypt), political forms (city-state, nation, alliance, empire), institutions (assembly, council, courts, offices) and persons (political leader or "demagogue," citizen, woman, foreign resident, slave). The readings are broadly chronological and include a wide variety of sources: epic and elegiac poetry, tragic and comic drama, history, inscriptions, speeches, pamphlets, and philosophy. Throughout, we'll keep an eye on the similarities and differences between ancient Greek and modern political ideas and practices, particularly with respect to three themes: political agency, democracy, and justice.

Course objectives: Familiarity with a wide variety of interesting and important examples of ancient Greek political ideas and practices; a sense of their similarities to and differences from related aspects of modern political thought and practice; ability to analyze some ancient Greek texts closely and to discuss how they fit into the bigger intellectual and historical picture.

Prerequisites: None. Anyone with an appetite for wide reading and reflection on politics is welcome, including those new to political theory and/or to the classical world.

Requirements: attendance/participation (20%); twelve 100-150 word online discussion posts, submitted weekly before section (20%); three one-page, single-spaced memos (30%, grade calculated from two highest scoring memos); a final c. 3000-word paper (30%).

Module 1. Introduction and Early Greece

Jan 18. *Excitement, expectations, overview.*

What do we know about Mycenaean politics? (c. 1400-1200 BC)

1. Linear B tablets from Pylos and Knossos: PY Un 718, Ep 704, Eb 297, Ta 711, KN As 1516

Jan 20. *Homeric Kings and Peoples (c8/7)*

2a. Homer, *Iliad* 2.1-493

2b. Homer, *Iliad* 18.483-515

2c. Homer, *Odyssey* 24.412-548

2d. Hesiod, *Works and Days* 202-319, 405-410

2e. Aristotle, *Politics* 3.1284b-86a

Module 2. From Archaic to Classical Greece

Jan 25. *Polis, Demos, Boule, Nomos*

- 3a. Law of the city of Dreros (Crete), 650-600 (Fornara 11)
- 3b. Tyrtaeus, the Messenian War, and the Great Rhetra (Fornara 12)
- 3c. Drakon's law on homicide (Fornara 15)
- 3d. Law from Chios, 575-550 (Fornara 19)
- 3e. Law from a Lokrian community, 525-500 (Fornara 33)

Jan 27. *Archaic Athens and Solon (c. 590 BC)*

- 4a. [Aristotle], *Constitution of the Athenians* fragments—ch. 12
- 4b. Herodotus 1.28-33 (Solon's encounter with Croesus)
- 4c. Aristotle, *Politics* 2.1273b-74a

Feb 1. *Tyranny! (c6)*

- 5a. Orthagoras, tyant of Sikyon (Fornara 13)
- 5b. [Aristotle], *Constitution of the Athenians* chs. 13-19
- 5c. The nature of Peisistratos's rule (Fornara 31)
- 5d. Polykrates, tyrant of Samos (Fornara 32)

Feb 3. *Overcoming Tyranny / Cleisthenes' Revolution (c. 510-507)*

- 6a. The liberation of Athens (Fornara 39)
- 6b. Herodotus, 5.55-56, 62-78, 91-94, 6.131
- 6c. [Aristotle], *Constitution of the Athenians* chs. 20-22
- 6d. Aristotle, *Politics* 3.1275b

Memo 1 due 11.59pm Feb 7.

Question: Discuss how any **two** sources enrich our understanding of any **one** of the following: the ancient Greek *demos*; ancient Greek kingship; ancient Greek tyranny; ancient Greek law; Solon; or Cleisthenes.

Module 3. Greeks and Barbarians, Athenians and Others

Feb 8. *Looking beyond Hellas I: Herodotus on the Near East and Egypt*

- 7a. Herodotus 1.1-28, 85-140 (Persians, Phoenicians, Lydians, Medians, Scythians)
- 7b. Herodotus, Book 2 excerpts (Egypt)
- 7c. Greek mercenaries in Egyptian service (Fornara 24)

Feb 10. *Looking beyond Hellas II: Views of Persia and India*

- 8a. Herodotus 3.1-3, 61-117 (Persians, India, Arabia, Ethiopia, Europe)
- 8b. Herodotus 7.1-107 (Persians)
- 8c. List of Dareios's subjects (Fornara 34)
- 8d. Letter of Dareios (Fornara 35)
- 8e. Aeschylus, *Persians* (472)

Feb 15. *Looking beyond Hellas III: Aristotle on “Barbarians”—and Carthage*

- 9a. Aristotle, *Politics* 1.1252a-53a (barbarians)
- 9b. Aristotle, *Politics* 2.1272b-73b (Carthage)
- 9c = 2e. Aristotle, *Politics* 3.1284a-86a (barbarian kingship)

Feb 17. *Discovering Sparta (c7?-4)*

- 10a = 3b. Tyrtaeus, the Messenian War, and the Great Rhetra (Fornara 12)
- 10b. Herodotus, 1.65-71; 6.51-60; 7.101-105, 207-212, 226-228
- 10c. Critias fragments 19, 20, 21 (Gagarin and Woodruff)
- 10d. Sayings of Spartan Women (Talbert)
- 10e. (?) Xenophon, “Spartan Society” (Talbert)
- 10f. Spartan treatment of helots (Fornara 13)
- 10g. Aristotle, *Politics* 2.1269a-72b (Sparta and Crete)

Feb 22. *Alliance, Empire and War (c5)*

- 11a. Herodotus, 7.138-163; 8.136-144
- 11b. Thucydides, 1.1-23, 66-146; 2.1-9; 3.81-84
- 11c. Thucydides 5.84-116 (the Melian Dialogue)
- 11d. [Aristotle], *Constitution of the Athenians* chs. 23-28
- 11e. Athenian tribute payment decree, 448/7 or 430s or 426/5 (Fornara 98)
- 11f. Athenian regulations for Chalkis, 446-5 (Fornara 103)
- 11g. Athenian reassessment of tribute, 425/4 (Fornara 136)

Module 4. *Demokratia* and its Interruptions

Feb 24. *Democratic Ideology I*

- 12a. Aeschylus, *Suppliants* [= *Refugee Women*] (463)
- 12b. [Aeschylus], *Prometheus Bound* 1-87 (430)
- 12c. Herodotus, 3.80-3, 6.43

Memo 2 due 11.59pm Feb 28

- Question: How did Herodotus, Aeschylus and/or Aristotle represent non-Greeks?
 or What image do the works we have studied give of the Spartans?
 or Explain and assess the claim that the Athenians had an “empire.”
 Please use **at least three** sources to support your answer.

Mar 1. *Democratic Ideology II*

- 13a = 11d. [Aristotle], *Constitution of the Athenians* chs. 23-28
- 13b. Thucydides, 2.21-22, 34-46, 59-65
- 13c. Protagoras (Gagarin and Woodruff)
- 13d. Democritus (Gagarin and Woodruff)

Mar 3. *Ruling through the Assembly*

- 14a. Thucydides 3.25-50 (Mytilenaeon Revolt and Second Debate on the Mytilenaeans)

- 14b. Thucydides 6.32-41 (about Syracuse)
- 14c. [Xenophon], *Constitution of the Athenians* chs. 1-2 (c. 424?)
- 14d. Aristophanes, *Knights* (424)
- 14e. Euripides, *Suppliants*, 399-461 (423) (Gagarin and Woodruff)

Mar 8. *Ruling through the Courts*

- 15a. Herodotus 1.95-101 (c. 425)
- 15b. [Xenophon], *Constitution of the Athenians* ch. 3 (c. 424?)
- 15c. Aristophanes, *Wasps* (422)
- 15d. Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1.1-3

Mar 10. *Aristophanes's Women*

- 16a. Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* 1025-4, 980-1188
- 16b. Aristophanes, *Women at the Thesmophoria* 1-654
- 16c. Aristophanes, *Assemblywomen* (c. 392)

Mar 15. *An Oligarchical Revolution (411/10)*

- 17a. [Aristotle], *Constitution of the Athenians* chs. 29-33
- 17b. Thucydides, 8.45-54, 63-77, 86, 89-98
- 17c. Antiphon's self-defence (Gagarin and MacDowell)
- 17d. Trial of Antiphon (Fornara 151)
- 17e. Phrynichos' assassins honoured, 409 (Fornara 155)

Mar 17. *Another Oligarchical Revolution (404/3)*

- 18a. [Aristotle], *Constitution of the Athenians* chs. 34-41
- 18b. Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 2.3-4
- 18c. Lysias, "Against Eratosthenes" (403/2?)
- 18d. Rewards for liberators of Athens, c. 403 (Harding 3)

Memo 3 due 11.59pm Mar 20

Questions: How did **at least two** fifth-century authors represent *demokratia*?
 or How did **at least two** fifth-century authors represent *oligarchia*?
 or How did Aristophanes represent women?
 or Discuss the role of *either* the assembly *or* the courts within *demokratia*.

Please use **at least three sources** to support your answer—
 more if the question invites it.

Module 5. Fourth-century Politics and Philosophy

Mar 29. *The Restored Democracy*

- 19a. Andocides, *On the Mysteries* (400)
- 19b. [Aristotle], *Constitution of the Athenians* chs. 42-66
- 19c. Oath of the Athenian epebes (Harding 109)
- 19d. Lysias, "For the Disabled Man" (403-380)
- 19e. Lysias, "Funeral Oration" (c. 392)

Mar 31. *Representations of Socrates*

20a. Aristophanes' *Clouds*, 1-509 (423)

20b. Xenophon, *Memories of Socrates*, Book I

20c. Plato, *Apology* (i.e. Socrates' self-defence: dramatic date 399, written later)

Apr 5. *The Republic*

21a. Plato, *Republic* I-IV

Apr 7. *The Republic*

22a. Plato, *Republic* V-VII

Apr 12. *The Republic*

23a. Plato, VIII-X

Apr 14. *Aristotle's Athens (349-322)*

24a. Alliance between Athens and Olynthus, 349/8 (Harding 80)

24b. Foundation of the League for defence against Philip II (Harding 93)

24c. Immediate causes of war between Athens and Philip II (Harding 95)

24d. Epigram in honour of Athenian dead at Chaeronea, 338 (Harding 98)

24e. Philip II's settlement in Greece, 338/7 (Harding 99)

24f. Athenian law against tyranny, 337/6 (Harding 101)

24g. Demosthenes, *On the Crown*, 330

Apr 19. *Aristotle's Politics*

25a. Aristotle, *Politics* I (all), II.1-5

Apr 21. *Aristotle's Politics cont.*

26a. Aristotle, *Politics* III-IV

Apr 26. *Aristotle's Politics cont.*

27a. Aristotle, *Politics* V-VI

Apr 28. *Aristotle's Politics cont. and Conclusion*

28a. Aristotle, *Politics* VII-VIII

Final paper (3 single-spaced pages / c. 3000 words) due 11.59pm May 13
Question: In what way(s) and to what extent do you detect *either* Plato *or*
Aristotle responding to the political norms and struggles of classical Greece?
Please use **at least six** sources to support your argument.

Expectations

- Attendance at all lectures and sections is preferable, if possible.
- I prefer no laptops or other electronic devices in class, if possible.

- I'd like everyone to see your GSI for a 15 minute get-to-know-you meeting at some point in the first 3 weeks of the semester. Please speak with them about how they're organising their office hours.
- If you have a quick question for me, I'm always happy to speak after lecture, so feel free to catch me then. I also welcome office hour visits. If you want to see me, please sign up for a 15-minute slot on the Google doc available under "Collaborations" on the bCourses website. My office is SSB 750, or I can also do zoom if that's easier on your schedules.

Texts

All readings except Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Politics* are available on the course website and in a hard copy / digital reader. The *Republic* and *Politics* are available in lots of excellent editions. I'll be using the Loeb bilingual volumes so I have the Greek on hand, but you are welcome to purchase other translations. I particularly recommend the 2nd edition of Reeve's translation of the *Politics* (Hackett 2017), which you can buy new for about \$20, used about \$10. You might also try Reeve's revised version of Grube's translation of the *Republic* (Hackett 1992), \$13 new / \$1.50 and up used.

If you'd like to buy or borrow your own copies of Herodotus and/or Thucydides, the Oxford, Penguin and (for Thucydides) Cambridge editions are all good.

I have drawn on the following edited volumes:

Charles Fornara, ed. and trans. *From Archaic Times to the Peloponnesian War* (2nd edition, Cambridge, 1983).

Phillip Harding, ed. and trans. *From the Peloponnesian War to the Battle of Ipsus* (Cambridge, 1985).

Michael Gagarin and Paul Woodruff, ed. and trans. *Early Greek Political Thought from Homer to the Sophists* (Cambridge, 1995).

Richard Talbert, ed. and trans. *Plutarch on Sparta* (Penguin, 1988).

Michael Gagarin and Douglas MacDowell, *Antiphon and Andocides* (UT Austin, 1998)

Plagiarism / Academic integrity

I take my responsibilities and integrity as a teacher and researcher very seriously, and I will hold you to the same standard. Passing off others' work as your own, even inadvertently, is a betrayal of your position as a member of the scholarly community and moreover inhibits you from developing and refining your own views of the material we study, which I take to be the point of your education. The university's policy on plagiarism is clear; if you have any doubts or queries about it or about how to make appropriate use of others' ideas, ask me, and see <https://writing.berkeley.edu/students/academic-honesty>.