

HERTOG 2019 SUMMER COURSES NATIONALISM & LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

Diana Schaub, professor, Loyola University Maryland

By the end of the twentieth century, liberal democracy seemed not only triumphant but, to some, inevitable. Yet today, the liberal democracies of the West are in crisis, grappling with lost confidence in government, fraying social fabrics, and intense political divides. Citizens, especially millennials, have less faith in the democratic system, and are more willing to express support for authoritarian alternatives. What has brought on this crisis? In this course, students will reflect on the meaning and practice of liberal democracy—with a view toward understanding the prospects for democracy today and in the future.

Books:

- Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, trans. Harvey Mansfield and Delba Winthrop (University of Chicago Press, 2000)
- Course Reader

Resources

To learn more about the ideas and figures discussed in this course, we encourage you to explore a project supported by the Hertog Foundation: **The Great Thinkers** (<http://thegreatthinkers.org/>) and **Contemporary Thinkers** (<http://contemporarythinkers.org/>) websites. These sites are aimed at introducing important thinkers in Western thought, with a particular emphasis on politics and philosophy.

Relevant pages include John Locke, Tocqueville, and J. S. Mill (on The Great Thinkers) and Michael Oakeshott and Leo Strauss (on Contemporary Thinkers).

Monday, June 8, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

American Liberalism

Readings:

- Declaration of Independence
- Constitution of the United States of America
- Alexis de Tocqueville, Introduction, *Democracy in America*, pp. 3–7 and Ch. 2, “On the Point of Departure and Its Importance for the Future of the Anglo-Americans,” pp. 27–44
- Abraham Lincoln, “Gettysburg Address” (1863)
- Joseph Cropsey, “The United States as Regime and the Sources of the American Way of Life,” *Political Philosophy and the Issues of Politics*

Questions:

1. What is the source of the distinctive character of the American regime? And how is its distinctive character related to its founding?
2. How is the founding of America differently described by Tocqueville and by Lincoln?
3. According to Cropsey, in what ways is our regime imperfect or incomplete? How does thought or self-reflection function in relation to that imperfection?
4. How is the Founding an ongoing responsibility of future Americans and not just of the Founding generation?

Tuesday, July 9, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Liberalism & Individualism

Readings:

- Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*
 - Vol. II, Part 1, Ch. 1, "On the Philosophic Method of the Americans," pp. 403–4
 - Vol. II, Part 1, Ch. 2, "On the Principal Source of Beliefs among Democratic Peoples," pp. 409–10
 - Vol. II, Part 2, Ch. 2, "On Individualism in Democratic Countries," pp. 482–84
- John Stuart Mill, Ch. III, "Of Individuality, as One of the Elements of Well-Being," *On Liberty*
- Patrick Deneen, "Chapter 2: Uniting Individualism and Statism," *Why Liberalism Failed*
- Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Earth's Holocaust" (1844)

Questions:

1. What, according to Tocqueville, are the attendant dangers of individualism? What are the conditions for this development? Do these dangers fit with the intimations of Hawthorne's story?
2. What, according to Mill, are the goods secured or made available by promoting individuality?
3. What are individualism's implicit presuppositions about the nature of human beings? Are those presuppositions accurate?

4. In what ways is liberalism, with its roots in Enlightenment thought, blind to mediating structures? In what ways is it disposed to abstract approaches to social policy where the individual and the State are the principal social actors?

Wednesday, July 10, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

The Democratic Family & Community

Readings:

- John Locke, Ch. VI, "Of Paternal Power," *Second Treatise on Government*
- Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*
 - Vol. II, Part 2, Ch. 4, "How the Americans Combat Individualism with Free Institutions," pp. 485–88

- Vol. II, Part 2, Ch. 5, “On the Use that the Americans Make of Association in Civil Life,” pp. 489–92
- Vol. II, Part 2, Ch. 7, “Relations between Civil Associations and Political Associations,” pp. 496–500
- Vol. II, Part 2, Ch. 8, “How the Americans Combat Individualism by the Doctrine of Self-Interest Well Understood,” pp. 500–03
- Vol. II, Part 3, Chs. 8–12, “Influence of Democracy on the Family,” “Education of Girls in the United States,” “How the Girl is found beneath the Features of the Wife,” “How Equality of Conditions Contributes to Maintaining Good Mores in America,” “How the Americans Understand the Equality of Man and Woman,” pp. 558–76
- David Azerrad, “The Promises and Perils of Identity Politics,” *First Principles*, 2019

Questions:

1. Tocqueville compares a radically individualist (or androgynous) conception of sexual equality with what he believes is a better understanding the Americans have. What are the elements of the American understanding of relations between the sexes? What does Tocqueville mean when he speaks of “the superiority of [America’s] women”? Has the ideal that he describes and endorses been refuted or decisively overturned by contemporary feminism or can one still make a case for the desirability or possibility of sexual difference as the foundation of family and community?
2. How does an emphasis on individual liberty accommodate the involuntary *associations* of birth—i.e., one’s parents, hometown, nation, etc.? How does an emphasis on individual liberty accommodate one’s involuntary *characteristics*—i.e., sex/gender, race, intelligence, etc.?
3. How does a commitment to equality of conditions contend with natural inequality or with the residue of a history of inequality?
4. As much as equality of conditions demands the elevation of the low, does it also demand the leveling of the high?

Thursday, July 11, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Liberalism & the Fate of Liberty

Readings:

- Alexis de Tocqueville, Vol. II, Part 4, Ch. 6, "What Kind of Despotism Democratic Nations Have to Fear," pp. 661–65
- Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, excerpts from Sections 3 and 5
- Harvey Mansfield, "Constitutional Government: The Soul of Modern Democracy," *America's Constitutional Soul*
- Patrick Deneen, "Chapter 7: The Degradation of Citizenship," *Why Liberalism Failed*
- Martha Nussbaum, "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," *Boston Review*, October 1994
- Wilfred M. McClay, "The Mixed Nature of American Patriotism," *Society*, November/December 2003
- Carl Eric Scott, "The Five Conceptions of American Liberty," *National Affairs*, Summer 2014

Questions:

1. How might a liberal regime sustain a robust notion of soul and virtue? How might it resist the flattening of these into identity and interest?
2. Does liberalism exacerbate the tendency among human beings to gravitate to the lowest common denominator? Can liberalism allow for and inspire human excellence?
3. How might liberalism be in tension with other values? Can it negotiate or must it abolish hierarchical/exclusive claims on one's values?
4. Is it possible to maintain a robust love of one's own (patriotism)? Or must the logical and moral trajectory of the premises of liberal democracy tend toward cosmopolitanism?
5. Our liberal democracy contains competing conceptions of liberty itself. How might we manage these competing conceptions? Is it possible to remain pluralistic about these conceptions or must we establish an order among them?

Friday, July 12, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Liberal Democracy & Liberal Education

Readings:

- Leo Strauss, "What is Liberal Education?," *Liberalism, Ancient and Modern*
- Jacques Maritain, Ch. 1, "The Aims of Education," *Education at the Crossroads*
- Michael Oakeshott, "The Idea of a University," *The Voice of Liberal Learning*
- Philippe Bénéton, excerpt from *Equality by Default*, pp. 178–82

Questions:

1. What is the relationship between a liberal democratic regime and the education of its citizens? Whose responsibility is it to educate the next generation of citizens?
2. What is the difference between educating a human being and educating a citizen?
3. Are there different senses of the word "liberal" at work in "liberal democracy" and "liberal education"? If so, what is the source of the difference?
4. What sense does it make to be educated in liberty if liberty is a given or natural right?

5. Is the conception of a human being as a bearer of equal rights sufficient to ground a robust education? What does the structure of our institutions of higher education owe to this conception of a human being?

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NATIONALISM

Richard Reinsch, editor, *Law and Liberty*

Nationalism has been enjoying a striking revival—from the Brexit vote in Great Britain, to the election of Donald Trump in the United States, to the appearance of populist anti-EU movements and governments in the nations of the European perimeter.

This seminar will introduce students to nationalism in its full political dimensions. The first session considers nationalism at its most foundational level of political order. The second session moves to the social and collective nature of nationalism. The third and fourth sessions explore how nationalism can incorporate democracy and liberalism through selections on the European Union's foundations and recent criticisms that have been made of its political authority. A final session will consider nationalism in the American constitutional experience with readings from the *Federalist Papers* and speeches from George Washington, John Quincy Adams, and Abraham Lincoln.

Books:

- Course Reader

Resources

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Monday, July 15, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Nationalism: An Introduction

Readings:

- Ernest Renan, "What Is a Nation?" Lecture delivered at the Sorbonne, March 11, 1862
- Lord Acton, "Nationality," in *Essays in the History of Liberty*, Vol I (1862)
- Pierre Manent, "La Raison des Nations," in *Democracy Without Nations: The Fate of Self-Government in Europe* (2007)

Questions:

1. What is nationalism?
2. What are its origins?
3. What political goods does it foster?

4. What are potential problems for freedom and political responsibility?

Tuesday, July 16, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Nationalism and a First-Person Plural

Readings:

- David Hume, "On National Characters," in *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary* (1748)
- Roger Scruton, "The Social Contract," in *The West and The Rest* (2002)
- Yoram Hazony, "Does the Bible have a Political Teaching?" in *Hebraic Political Studies*, Vol. 1, Issue 2 (Winter 2006)

Questions:

1. What does nationalism provide politically to a people?
2. What are pre-political loyalties? Does nationalism foster and preserve these? Should it? Does it bind disparate families, groups, and peoples together in a manner superior to other political forms?

Wednesday, July 17, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Nationalism and Liberalism

Readings:

- John Stuart Mill, "Of Nationality," in *Considerations of Representative Government* (1861)
- Konrad Adenauer, "Our Epoch of World Perspective" and "End of Nationalism," in *World Indivisible with Liberty and Justice for All* (1955)
- Viktor Orbán, "Illiberal Democracy," Speech at the XXV Bálványos Free Summer University and Youth Camp, July 26, 2014
- Roger Scruton, "Enlightenment, Citizenship, and Loyalty," in *The West and The Rest* (2002)

Questions:

1. Is nationalism a fundamental threat to political and individual liberty?
2. Can nationalism and liberalism be conjugated politically with mutual benefit?

Thursday, July 18, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Nationalism and Democracy

Readings:

- Pierre Manent, “What is a Nation?” in *Democracy Without Nations* (2007)
- Pierre Manent, “History of Political Forms,” in *Seeing Things Politically: Interviews with Bénédicte Delorme-Montini* (2015)

Questions:

1. Can we have democracy without nations and nationalism?
2. Is the European Union arguing that we can?
3. Does the nation provide the mediation point between empire and polis? If so, is that desirable?

Friday, July 19, 2019

9:00 a.m. to Noon

Nationalism and the American Constitutional Experience

Readings:

- *The Federalist*, Nos. 1, 2, 9, 11
- George Washington, “Farewell Address,” September 19, 1796
- John Quincy Adams, “Independence Day Address,” July 4, 1821
- Abraham Lincoln, “The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions,” January 27, 1838

Questions:

1. What is nationalism in the American experience? Is it a political good or an unwelcome intrusion?