

PHILOSOPHY 166, Spring 2019

Georgios Anagnostopoulos

Office: HSS 8034; Email: [ganagnostopoulos@ucsd.edu](mailto:ganagnostopoulos@ucsd.edu) Lectures: Tue. & Th. 5:00-6:20, WLH 2206.  
Office Hours: Tue. & Th., 3:30-4:30 pm, and by appointment.

Philosophy 166 will be devoted to a critical study of Aristotle's political theory as presented in his *Politics*. This major Aristotelian treatise and his ethical treatises comprise Aristotle's practical philosophy. The two types of inquiry, political and ethical, are strongly connected; the political inquiry—i.e., the study of the nature, aims, various structures, etc., of the political community—presupposes the findings of the ethical inquiries—e.g., the nature of (a) happiness and the best life; (b) excellences (virtues) and vices of individuals; (c) other ends that contribute to the happiness of individuals. The plan is to read the whole of the *Politics* and critically examine Aristotle's views on the nature of the political community, political rule, natural slavery, correct/incorrect constitutions, justice, ideal constitution and polis, etc.

**Primary Text**

Aristotle, *Politics* (UCSD Bookstore); in addition, some articles on the TritonEd site for the class

**Reading Assignments:**

**4/2** Course Preliminaries: Course Objectives; Reading Assignments; Course Requirements (lectures, in-class discussion, writing assignments); Brief Overview of Aristotle's *Politics*.

**4/4** Read *Politics* Book I, chs. 1-2; a short excerpt from Aristotle's *Historia Animalium* (TritonEd) Humans as political animals; Nature of the polis; Humans as political animals; Elementary communities and their respective ends; Naturalness and priority of the polis

**4/9** Read Book I, chs. 3-7; R. Mayhew, "Rulers and Ruled"; D. Frede, "Equal but not Equal: Plato and Aristotle on Women as Citizens". Differences between the elementary communities and rule in them and the political community and rule; Natural Inequalities; Defense of natural slavery and rule of male over female; Aristotle's response to natural inequalities.

**4/11** Read Book I, chs. 8-13. Material & non-material needs of a polis: Resources/ Property and wealth acquisition; natural/nonnatural wealth, virtues & education of non-citizens

**4/16** Read Book II, chs. 1-6. R. Stalley, "Aristotle's Criticisms of Plato's *Republic*". Criticisms of Plato's ideal (*Republic*) and second-best (*Laws*) constitutions, especially his proposals for the highest level of civic unity possible, abolition of private family, and communal possession of spouses, children, and property.

**4/18** Read Book II, chs. 7-8. Criticisms of the ideal constitutions of Phaleas and Hippodamus

**4/23** Read Book II, chs. 9-12. Criticisms of the best existing constitutions—Sparta, Crete, and Carthage

- 4/25** Read Book III, chs. 1-8. What is a polis and what constitutes its identity; definition of citizen; virtues of an individual and virtues of a citizen; correct and incorrect constitutions.
- 4/30** Read Book III, ch. 9. D. Keyt, “Aristotle’s Theory of Distributive Justice”: Distributive justice as proportional equality; conceptions of distributive justice and disagreements about its basis (merit); the correct basis of distributive justice determined by the correct end of the polis; merit as fitness for performing a political task.
- 5/2** Read Book III, chs. 10-17; J. Waldron, “The Wisdom of the Multitude”. Who should have authority—the many, the wealthy, the virtuous, a tyrant, or the one who is best of all? A possible defense of democracy based on the wisdom of the multitude; Perfect kinship.
- 5/7** Read Book IV, chs. 1-4. The tasks of the political scientist; reasons for differences in constitutions; democracy and its parts; kinds of democracy
- 5/9** Read Book IV, chs. 11-16. The importance of the middle class; parts of the political structure
- 5/14** Read Book V, chs. 1-4. Causes, general and particular, of changes in constitutions.
- 5/16** Read Book V, chs. 5-11. Changes in particular kinds of constitution and ways of preserving the various kinds of constitution.
- 5/21** Read Book VI, chs. 1-3. Mixed constitutions and features of democracy; democratic equality
- 5/23** Read Book VII, chs. 1-3; F. D. Miller, “Aristotle on the Ideal Constitution”. The ideal constitution and the most choiceworthy life.
- 5/28** Read Book VII, chs. 4-7, 11. Ideal assumptions regarding various aspects of the best city and its constitution
- 5/30** Read Book VII, chs. 8-10. Necessary parts of the city-state, distribution of territory and offices
- 6/4** Read Book VII, chs. 13-15; D. Depew, “Politics, Music, and Contemplation in Aristotle’s Ideal State”. Leisure, happiness, and education of citizens
- 6/6** Read Book VII, chs. 16-17 and Book VIII. Constitutional regulations of marriage and procreation, physical and psychic education of children, the role of music and tragedy in education.

**Writing Requirements:** In addition to the readings and lectures, there will be three writing requirements: first paper (3-4 pages long), due in class on Thursday of fourth week (20 points); second paper (3-4 pages long), due in class on Thursday of eighth week (20 points); final paper (8 pages long and worth 50 points), due by Wednesday, June 12, 4:00 pm, in my mailbox, H&SS 7<sup>th</sup> Floor. The remaining 10 points will be assigned on the basis of a student’s participation in and contribution to class discussion.