



**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
FACULTY OF ART, MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
POL 324: History of Political Thought II**

Instructor: *Dr. Efanodor-Obeten Harriet*, email: efanodor.harriet@edouniversity.edu.ng

Lectures: Monday, 1pm – 3 pm, LT1, phone: (+234) 8039430181

Office hours: Tuesday, 12.00 to 2 pm, Office: 1st floor Administrative Building Rm 17.

Course description: this course provides a detailed examination of modern political theory/philosophy through the study of the ideas and tenets of important political theorist in the history of the development of political thought. The modern period, for the purpose of this course, covers thinkers from the time of the European reformation until the twentieth century. The European reformation which began in the early sixteenth century provide a considerable impetus to political thinking that differed from what had preceded it. We shall examine political philosophy of thinkers like; Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Charles de Montesquieu, Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, John Stuart Mill, James Madison, Albert Ven Dicey and Karl Marx

Prerequisites: Students should be familiar with selected classical, medieval, renaissance and age of enlightenment political thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, St Augustine of Hippo, St Thomas Aquinas, Marsilo of Padua, Nicollo Machiavelli, etc. with special emphasis on the germination and impacts of their ideas.

Course Objectives

Several objectives can be delineated from this course. In addition, each topic has specific objectives. However, the broad objectives of this course are;

- i. Provide introduction into the study of modern political doctrines in history of human civilization especially in the area of philosophy of the state.
- ii. To critically examine the ideas and tents of contemporary political thought
- iii. To examine the meaning and justification of important concepts such as natural law, utilitarianism, communitarianism liberalism and Marxism through analysis of text
- iv. Develop critical skills necessary to examine and assess theoretical and philosophical arguments.

Expected Outcome: at the end of the course, students should be able to;

- i. demonstrate a familiarity with main ideas of the modern political thinkers
- ii. provide an account of the main concepts used by the thinkers covered on the course
- iii. evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments employed in the theories studied
- iv. formulate your own interpretations of the thinkers covered.

Course Assessment Marking Scheme

Assessment	Marks
In class test	5 marks
Assignment	5 marks
Quizzes/presentation	5 marks
Mid semester test	15 marks
End of semester examination	70 marks
Total	100%

The end of semester examination will be assessed by a means of two hours written examination. Students are expected to answer three questions from a total of five questions. In answering question, you should have a clear structure.

Reading Lists

Students are expected to make wide consultations especially on the internet and the university library on the subject matter. However, they can consult some of the following recommended text.

Etchie, P. T () Introduction to Modern Political Thought. Delta State :Eregha Publisher

Hampshire-Monk, I. (1992) A History of Modern Political Thought. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing

Hegel, G.W.F.(1991) *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hobbes, Thomas (1996) *Leviathan*. (ed. R. Tuck) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Locke, John (1988) *Two Treatises on Government*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

Marx, Karl (2000) *Selected Writings*.(ed. David McLellan) (Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mill, John Stuart (1991) *On Liberty and Other Essays*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Okoh, A .O. (2005) History of Political Thought: Classical to Modern. Nigeria: AMFITOP Books

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1987) *The Basic Political Writings*. Indianapolis: Hackett.

Sabine, G.H and Thomson T L. (1973) A History of Political Theory. Oxford: IBH Publishing Co.

LECTURE ONE

TOPIC: BACKGROUND TO MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT

Topic Outline

1. Definition of political thought
2. History of political thought
3. Classical of political thought
4. Modern political thought

Expected outcome

At the end of the topic, students should be able to;

1. Define political thought
2. Trace the history of political thought from classical period to the modern period.

Readings

George, H. Sabine and Thomas L. Thorson, (1973). *A History of Political Theory*. Hinsdale, Illinois: Dryden Press.

Lewis, E. (1954). *Medieval Political Ideas*. New York:

Okoh, A.O. (2005) *History of Political Thought Classical to Modern: An Introduction*. Lagos: AMFITOP books.

What is Political Thought?

Political thought also called political philosophy or theory is concerned with the study of fundamental questions about the state government or governance, politics, liberty, justice, rights and law. Political philosophy is a rational enquiry into all that concerns man and his life in relationship with his fellow men in the state (Okoh, 2005:33).

Political thought seek to answer basic questions bothering on issues such as the enforcement of legal code by authority, what is right, what is the state and why should citizens obey the state etc. the study of political transverse between politics, philosophy and history in presenting it's subject matter. For while we look at the philosophical view point of each thinker we must also do so with great knowledge of the historical epochs in which such writer is viewing human phenomena and the

relevance of such thoughts to not only the prevailing political structure but also the future outcomes of such propositions.

History political thought can be classified under the classical and modern epoch. The classical period can be broken down into the medieval, the renaissance, and the revolutionary/industrial period. The modern period can be broken down into the modern and postmodern period. Plato and Aristotle are probably the origins of political thought as their writings informed the development of early scholarship in the subject matter of politics, political thought and governance. The duo which constitute the school of anthems has influenced political progress in human society. Ancient Greeks has experimented on several political system such as monarchy, tyranny, olicharchy and even democracy. The writings of Plato in his popular work titled “Republic” and his contemporary Aristotle in his popular work titled “politics” present initial documentary impetus upon which classical, modern political thought developed. In Ancient Rome writings where influenced by Stoics (followers of great Roman philosophy) who studied in Anthems and created a group of legal historians in Rome. China and India civilization in Asia had similar political thought to that of Greece’s in that there was a unified culture divided into rival states. Here philosophy had to confront social and political breakdown to seek solutions to the crisis that confronted their civilization.

Medieval and Islamic Europe

Early Christian philosophy id traced to St Augustine of Hippo whose work, “the city of God” was a mere or less a rewrite of Plato’s work in a Christian context. The major change is that it provided the theory of justices of the Roman world and emphasized the role of the state in employing not a mercy as a moral example. His work emphasizes that one is not a member of the city but of God. In combination with St Thomas Aquinas contribution to political theory in the medieval period, theological supremacy and the doctrine of divine right of kings put forward by writers such as Robert Filner’s) help to consolidate papal supremacy and entrenched naturalism, orthodoxy and authoritarianism into medieval Europe.

With the rise and development of Islam in this period also based on Korean and prophet Mohammed which strongly altered power balance and perception of the origins of power in Mediterranean region. Islamic philosophy also influenced political thought in the epoch. A 14th century Arab scholar Ibn Khdoun is considered one of the greatest Islamic political theorist of all time. A British anthropologist

Ernest Galners considered Ibn Khaldun's definition of state as one of the best in political history. Ibn Khaldun defined government as an institution which prevent injustices other than such as it commit itself.

In the renaissance secular political philosophy began to emerge after about a century of theological political thought. The middle age did see secular politics in practice under the rule of the Holy Roman Empire. Academic field was only scholastic and therefore Christian in nature. One of the most influential works during this period was Nicholo Machiavelli "the prince" written between 1511-1512 and published in 1532 after Machiavelli's death. That work together with the "discourse" a rigors analysis of the classical period, did much to influence modern political thought in the west only minority including Jean Jacque Rousseau could interpret the prince as a satire meant to give the De Medici ruling family in Italy a form of recognition. The Medici had recaptured Florence and Machiavelli was exiled. He supported the "republic of Florence" rather than the Oligarchy of the de Medici. Machiavelli in the Prince represented a pragmatic and somewhat consequential view of politics whereby good and evil are mere means use to bring about an end.

Another writer of this period was Thomas Hobbes who is well known for its theory of social contract between the government and the governed. The other notable writers include Baron De Montesquieu and John Locke. In the industrialization and revolutionary Europe, urbanization and capitalism created a new set of political thinking as new groups of urban socialist grew. The industrial revolution produced a parallel revolution in political thought. Karl Marx and his theory of communism developed along with Fredrick Engel in the book titled the Manifesto of the communist party proved to be one of the most influential political ideology in the 20th century. In the 19th century Marxism was developed and socialism in general gained increasing popularity. The French revolution had given the middle class in Europe a knowledge and a consciousness about their power potentials in changing their social order. As the Napoleonic wars in the early 19th century has created a new group of middle and lower classes who now found no favour with autocracy, orthodox and naturalism with the monarchy and the revolutions in Europe had created modern states controlled by middle class. World War I was a watershed event in human history. The Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and similar less successful revolution in Europe brought communism and Leninism. The peace settlement that followed WWI and the issues of reparations led to economic upheavals and the great depression of 1929-32 which set in motion social movement in Europe with

the introduction of adult suffrage thus in the 20th century we have new political thought and ideas like liberalism, utilitarianism, Nazism, Fascism, Republicanism, Feminism etc.

MODERN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

The modern period according to historians began roughly at about 1453AD, a date that marked the final collapse of the Roman Empire, which dominated Europe for many centuries. The major consequence of the break-up of the Roman Empire was the growth of nation-states with powerful and absolute kings in Europe (Okoh). Modern political philosophy grew in the womb of feudalism. In this period, the feudal lords always justified their control of the land by alluding to the divine rights of kings to rule, that God has made them the custodians of the land on behalf of the entire society. One of the proponents of the divine right of kings was Charles the 1st of England, who put forward the same theory as answer to those who contested his authority, that things are greatly images of God upon earth. Another supporter of the above theory was Robert Filmer (1958) in his book (Patricia) where he argued that kings are the heir of Adam on earth, these kings

According to Okoh many factors have been advanced to support the rise of absolute Monarchy in Europe at the beginning of Modern period. These are

1. The effect of the renaissance.
2. The maritime discoveries during the age of discoveries.
3. The discovery of gunpowder in the 14th century.
4. The effect of the reformation

Reference

- George, H. Sabine and Thomas L. Thorson, (1973). *A History of Political Theory*. Hinsdale, Illinois: Dryden Press.
- Okoh, A.O. (2005) *History of Political Thought Classical to Modern: An Introduction*. Lagos: AMFITOP books.



COURSE CODE: POL 324

COURSE TITLE: HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT II

CREDIT UNIT: 2

COURSE DURATION: 2 HOURS PER WEEK

LECTURE TWO

TOPIC: Marxism

Expected outcome

At the end of the topic, students should be able to

Readings

George, H. Sabine and Thomas L. Thorson, (1973). *A History of Political Theory*. Hinsdale, Illinois: Dryden Press.

Lewis, E. (1954). *Medieval Political Ideas*. New York:

Okoh, A.O. (2005) *History of Political Thought Classical to Modern: An Introduction*. Lagos: AMFITOP books.

Marxism

Karl Marx is generally regarded as the father of socialism. German by birth, he spent his early life in Bonn and Berlin. Marxism refers to the ideas, the theory and practice derived from the work of Karl Marx and Fredrich Engel. Marxism is a social theory which tend to look at the ownership of mode production. As a historian and a social theorist Marx was concerned to demonstrate the fit of his model to the transition between the epochs of feudalism and capitalism. Thus he was concerned to demonstrate in advance, how the epoch of capitalism must give way to socialism (Hampsher-Monk 1992:508). Karl Marx was born in 1818 at Trier in Prussia, Rhineland and died in 1893 in London. Karl Marx grew up to be a union leader. He lived at a time that coincided with modern urbanization and exploitation of labour got to its highest peak at that time because a new classy capitalist such as industrialist, manufacturer and other grew or developed during this period. In 1844

Karl Marx met his friend Fredrich Engel (1820-1895) and both man work together and wrote several books. The most popular is the Manifesto of the communist party published in 1948.

In the original texts the authors clearly identified two opposing classes. The two major classes are the Bourgeoisie and proletariat. The proletariat according to Marx are individuals who sell their labour power and therefore add value to the product of their labour yet they do not own the means of production. They receive a wage in return for their labour. This wage is often not commensurate with the output of their labour.

The second class is the bourgeoisie. This is the class that owns the means of production and buy labour power from the proletariat. This class are those who exploit the proletariat. They dictate the mode of production.

Tenants of Marixism

Means of production is a combination of the means of labour and the subject of labour. Means of labour constitute the machines, the tools, the equipment, infrastructure and all the things with the aid of which man act upon the subject of labour such as raw materials.

Mode of production refers to a combination of productive force such as the mean of labour and social technical relations of production

Base and superstructure: a base structure metaphor explaining the totality of relations among people with regard to the social production of their existence which forms the economic bases on which arises a superstructure of political and legal institutions to the bases corresponding to the social consciousness which include religion, philosophy and other idea. Conflict between the development of material production and the relations of production causes social revolution and the resulting change in economic bases will lead to the transformation of the super structure. The base structure relation is “dialectical” and not a distinction between actual entities in the world.

There are variance of Marxism. However, there are key areas of agreement amongst them

All school agreed that attention must be given to the material condition of people’s lives and the social relations.

All schools agreed that people consciousness of the conditions of their lives reflect these material conditions and relations.

There is a class terms deferring relations of production and particular positions of individuals within such relations.

There is an understanding of the material conditions and social relations as historically malleable a view of history according to class struggle.

There is a sympathy for the working class

Areas in which they differ

They disagree on the degree to which they are committed to a workers revolution as the mean of achieving human emancipation or enlightenment.

They disagree on the actual mechanism through which a revolution might occur or succeed.

Dialectical Materialism

According to Okoh (2005) Marx developed a theory of history where he argued that a revolution of the working class was not only appropriate but inevitable. He used the dialectic theory to show that all through history, there has always been a dominate class over the res

Reference

George, H. Sabine and Thomas L. Thorson, (1973). *A History of Political Theory*. Hinsdale, Illinois: Dryden Press.

Okoh, A.O. (2005) *History of Political Thought Classical to Modern: An Introduction*. Lagos: AMFITOP books.