

# SEMINARIO DE FILOSOFÍA MODERNA – 801321

## SEMINAR OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY - 801321

### Curso Académico 2024-25 / Academic year 2024-25

Profesor/teacher: Dr. José Luis Egío García

E-mail: [jegio@ucm.es](mailto:jegio@ucm.es)

Horario de tutoría: Jueves, de 11.00 a 12.00 horas en el despacho 0.1 (previa cita)

Office hour: Thursday, 11-12 AM, Office 0.1, Building A, Faculty of Philosophy (by appointment)

#### **DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE.**

##### **Kill the tyrant! Defining and fighting tyranny in Western political and juridical thought.**

The course is conceived as an introduction to some of the most important keystones of Early Modern political and legal philosophy concerning tyranny. After some initial sessions dedicated to the way in which Ancient and Medieval philosophers and jurists such as Plato (*Laws, Republic*), Aristotle (*Politics*), Aquinas (*On Kingship to the King of Cyprus*), Giles of Rome (*De regimine principum libri III*) and Bartolus de Saxoferrato (*De tyranno*) defined tyranny and tried to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate forms of resistance against a tyrannical ruler, we will focus on a selection of Early Modern writings.

Taking into account the confessional division of Europe in 16th century, we will include in our readings, treatises coming from both the Catholic and Protestant tradition. The goal is, on the one hand, to analyze if confessional differences between Early Modern scholars had some degree of influence in their political thought, especially when reflecting about tyranny. Could we say, in this sense –as we usually found in the traditional historiography of Baron, Kelley, Skinner, etc.- that Protestantism and, especially, Calvinism, had some philosophical roots making it prone to republicanism, to the contrary of an ideal type of Catholic absolutism? On the other hand, it is important to focus on the specific elements that distinguish Ancient and Modern reflections on tyranny. Reading 16th century Catholic treatises such as *De rege et regis institutione*, written by the Jesuit theologian Juan de Mariana, and also Calvinist books such as the famous and anonymous *Vindiciae, contra tyrannos* or Theodore de Bèze's *De iure magistratum*, we can find innovative appeals to a right of fighting tyrannical religious persecutors. New religiously shaped discourses on tyranny would also speak of a concomitant obligation of defending divine laws –differently understood by Catholic and Protestant- against their tyrannical violation or abrogation.

Far from presenting the above-mentioned sources in a kind of museographic and mummified approach, the secondary readings proposed during the course would foster the debate on contemporary implications. In fact, even if usually forgotten and misunderstood, Early Modern writings are precious philosophical tools to reflect

about and on such contemporary topics as civil disobedience, Holy War and international intervention against tyrannical rulers.

### **Main objectives**

- Study the important ancient and medieval background in Early modern debates on tyranny.
- Approach the problematic and changing concept of tyranny from the methodology of conceptual history.
- Understand how the emergence of the concept of sovereignty in Early Modern Period made even more problematic denunciations and fight against tyranny.
- Determine to what extent the religious schism in 16th century contributed to a revival of the debates about tyranny, transferring them to the theological sphere.
- Know the main Ancient, medieval and Early modern philosophical sources about tyranny and the most relevant and current specific literature on the matter.

### **Contents**

1. Tyranny in Classical Greece: the Platonic Disease and the Aristotelian Universal Criteria.
2. The Middle Ages. Classical Echoes and Christian Submission in Thomas Aquinas and Gilles of Rome.
3. Tyranny in 14<sup>th</sup> century *ius commune*. Bartolus de Saxoferrato on tyranny and tyrannicide.
4. Spanish Thomism in 16th century. Francisco de Vitoria's relativization of tyranny in *De potestate civili*.
5. The loss of meaning of the classical concept of tyranny in Machiavelli and the pioneers of sovereignty (Bodin, Hobbes).
6. The new American dimension: was Moctezuma a tyrant? The perspectives of Alonso de la Vera Cruz and Montaigne.
7. The schism that changed everything. The Huguenot Monarchomach triumvirs: Hotman, Beza and Mornay.
8. Are we all to blame for the advent of tyranny? Étienne de la Boétie's *Discourse on Voluntary Servitude*.
9. Does tyranny have a gender? John Knox's *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstruous Regiment of Women* and Henri Estienne's fake anonymous biography of French Queen Mother Cathérine de Médicis.
10. The Jesuit doctrine of tyrannicide and the king-killing friars. Juan de Mariana's *The King and the Education of the King*.

### **Methodology**

We will hold interactive sessions, combining working methods (teacher's introduction to authors and sources, lecture and group discussion of selected works, short students' presentations).

The sources and bibliography will be provided directly to the students on the Virtual Campus.

A previous reading of the materials suggested by the teacher in each session of the course is indispensable for a good dialogical functioning of the course, in which both teacher and students play an important role.

## **Evaluation**

1) In some sessions of the course, the professor will ask the students to hand in short papers to be used as a basis for the discussion that will take place during the corresponding session.

At the beginning of the class, each student will hand in a handwritten copy of the requested paper to the teacher and will keep a copy for his use during the session. The delivery of these little essays (two pages), together with the interventions of the student in the corresponding session, corresponds to 25% of the total qualifications.

2) Ordinary exam: Written test in the form of an exam consisting in directed questions on the contents of the course with the help of some textual support. The exam corresponds to 75% of the total qualifications.

The exam will begin punctually at the time indicated in the official exam timetable approved by the faculty. Access to the exam once it has begun will not be permitted. In this case, the student will receive a "Not present at the exam".

3) Extraordinary call: Written test in the form of an exam consisting in directed questions on the contents of the course with the help of some textual support. The exam corresponds to 75% of the total qualifications.

The exam will begin punctually at the time indicated in the official exam timetable approved by the faculty. Access to the exam once it has begun will not be permitted. In this case, the student will receive a "Not present at the exam".

## **Sources**

AQUINAS, Thomas, *On Kingship to the King of Cyprus*, Toronto, The Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1949.

ARISTOTLE, *Politics*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1995-2000, 4 volumes.

BARTOLUS OF SASSOFERRATO, *On the Tyrant*, in: COCHRANE, Eric, *Readings in Western Civilization, Volume 5, The Renaissance*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1986.

BÈZE, Theodore de, *Concerning the rights of rulers over their subjects and the duty of subjects towards their rulers*, Cape Town, H.A.V.M, 1956.

BODIN, Jean, *On sovereignty: four chapters from the six books of the commonwealth*, Cambridge/New York, CUP, 1992.

BOÉTIE, Étienne de la, *The politics of obedience : the discourse of voluntary servitude*, Auburn, Ludwig von Mises Institute, 1975.

ESTIENNE, Henri, *A mervaylous discourse vpon the lyfe, deedes, and behaviours of Katherine de Medicis: Queene mother*, London, Middleton, 1575.

GILES OF ROME, *On the Rule of Princes (selections)*, in: McGRADE, Arthur Stephen (ed.), *The Cambridge Translations of Medieval Philosophical Texts, Vol. 2: Ethics and Political Philosophy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011.

HOTMAN, François, *Francogallia*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1972.

KNOX, John, *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstruous Regiment of Women*, Westminster, Archibald Constable, 1895.

MARIANA, Juan de, *The King and the Education of the King*, Washington, The Country Dollar Press, 1948.

MACHIAVELLI, Niccolo, *The Prince*, Oxford, OUP, 2010.

PLATO, *Laws*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016.

PLATO, *The Republic*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2006.

VITORIA, Francisco de, *Relectiones On Dietary Laws, or Self-Restraint; On the American Indians, On the Law of War*, in: PAGDEN, Anthony; LAWRENCE, Jeremy (eds.), *Vitoria Political Writings*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991.

STEPHANUS JUNIUS BRUTUS, the CELT [DUPLESSIS MORNAY, Philippe?], *Vindiciae, contra tyrannos: or, concerning the legitimate power of a prince over the people, and of the people over a prince*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Secondary literature related to the source list and to contemporary debates on tyranny will be provided during the course.