

COURSE: *Social Bonds. Practical Philosophy and the Problem of Living Together in Early Modernity.*

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Centre for the History of Renaissance Knowledge

HOURS: Winter Semester, 30 hours

FREQUENCY: 4x45 every week

THE COURSE CORRESPONDS TO TOPICS: Renaissance and Early Modern Intellectual History, History of Social, Moral and Political Theories

TIME AND VENUE:

Monday (2.30 p. m. – 4 p. m.), Wednesday (2.30 p. m. – 4 p. m.)

Starting date: November 7th, 2022

IFiS PAN, Staszic Palace, room to be defined.

The course will be held on-site, in compliance with all Covid-19 restrictions and regulations.

The course is available to all interested, and it is mandatory for students enrolled in the Early Modern European intellectual history programme.

Active participation is required. Each lesson will be interactive. Students could be required to comment on short texts or to deliver brief presentations.

COURSE AIMS AND CONTENT

The course aims to inquire into, and highlight the role of, a set of ‘social’ notions that profoundly shaped early modern conceptions of social bonds. By focusing on various philosophical texts, each lesson will work on retracing patterns of cooperation and conflict management in social relationships within the fields of politics, education and cultural production.

The students are invited to consider how crucial notions such as those of community, friendship, trust and communication changed over the course of the early modern period, thus leading to new and distinctive models of interpretation.

The lectures will touch upon the following guiding questions:

- What key-notions shaped early modern conceptions of social relationships? Where did they come from, and how did they change over time?
- Did they translate into specific practices, or rather reflect existing ones?
- How do these notions help us understand the complex interplay between individual, social, and political dimensions of living together?

The students will be especially invited to consider the possible relevance of historical studies to present debates in fields such as those of ethics and sociology. The influence of contemporary issues on Renaissance studies, and, in turn, the possible specific contribution of Renaissance studies to exploring topical matters will be an object of discussion.

Module 1 addresses the relationship between the notion of “political community” as presented in ancient philosophy and the modern one of “state”.

Module 2 focuses on the idea of virtue, which profoundly shaped the Renaissance conceptions of social bonds, by touching upon the basic features of early modern virtue theory and especially the early modern notion of friendship.

Module 3 addresses the notion of trust (*fides, fidelitas, fiducia*) in the political thought of 16th and 17th century – a well-debated topic in present sociological and philosophical studies – by illustrating its main meanings and modifications.

Module 4 focuses on the revival of rhetoric in the early modern era, which led to intense discussion around the relationship between language, knowledge and social life.

Module 5 addresses the influence of some ancient authors on early modern examinations of the methods and objectives of state governance. By taking into account neo-stoic philosophy, the political education of early modern citizens will be especially analyzed.

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Knowledge:

- Enriched historical knowledge regarding social and political issues
- Understanding of social bonds and their conceptualization in early modern European intellectual thought
- Increased understanding of the relevance of Intellectual History to the interpretation of present sociological and philosophical issues.

Skills:

- Analysing philosophical texts with appropriate research tools;
- Selecting and analysing secondary literature and bibliography;
- Raising critical questions when reading philosophical texts;
- Presenting critical issues and debating over them with the rest of the group (groundwork towards taking part in conferences and symposia);
- Relying on various disciplines when conducting research.

Social competencies:

- Sharing and exchanging ideas, engaging in conversations on academic matters;
- Common problem solving, providing feedbacks.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CLASSES AND SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY (NOT MANDATORY)

Module 1 (Danilo Facca, 4x45): *From Political Community to the Modern State. Two Models Compared*

Norberto Bobbio, *Thomas Hobbes and the Natural Law Tradition*, translated by Daniela Gobetti, Chicago – London, The University of Chicago Press, 1993

Jacques Maritain, *Man and the State*, Chicago – London, The University of Chicago Press, 1966

Module 2 (Matthias Roick, 10x45): *Virtue Ethics, Sociability, and Friendship*

Hartmut Rosa, *Resonance. A Sociology of Our Relationship to the World*, trans. James C. Wagner (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2019), Chapter 1: Sociology, Modernity, and the Good Life

James Hankins, *Virtue Politics. Soulcraft and Statecraft in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, Ma: Harvard University Press 2018). (Extracts.)

Aristotle, *Ethics VIII-XI* (extracts), with commentaries and disputations (extracts in translation)

Module 3 (Luisa Brotto, 8x45): *What was Trust in Early Modernity? European Patterns and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth*

László Kontler and Mark Somos (eds.), *Trust and Happiness in the History of European Political Thought*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2018 (extracts)

Andrea Rizzi, Brigit Lang and Anthony Pym, *What is Translation History? A Trust-Based Approach*, Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019 (extracts)

Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *The Political Discourse of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Concepts and Ideas*, translated by D. J. Sax, New York-London, Routledge, 2021 (extracts)

Module 4 (Valentina Lepri, 4x45): *Language as Social Bond in Early Modernity. The Case of Juan Vives*

Mack, Peter, *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric 1380–1620*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011 (introduction only)

Vives, Juan Luis, *On Education. A translation of the De tradendis disciplinis of Juan Luis Vives*. Foster Watson (Ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913

Module 5 (Alicja Bielak, 4x45): *Moral Notions and Social Order in Early Modern Political Thought*

Barry Hindess, *Discourses of Power: From Hobbes to Foucault*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1996

Gerhard Oestreich, *Neostoicism and the Early Modern State*, eds. Brigitta Oestreich – Helmut Koenigsberger, Cambridge - London - New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982