

LDST 101- Leadership and the Humanities-- Spring 2023

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Jan/Feb-- office hours (Jepson rm 242) -- Wed 5-6:30 and Fri 2:30-4

FROM QUOTES TO QUESTIONS:

Caroline Walker Bynum: “Surely our job as teachers is to puzzle, confuse, and amaze. We must rear a new generation of students who will gaze in wonder at texts and artifacts . . . slow to project . . . quick to assume there is a significance, slow to generalize about it. For a flat, generalizing, presentist view of the past . . . makes it boring, whereas amazement yearns toward an understanding, a significance always a little beyond both our theories and our fears. Every view of things that is not wonderful is false.”

Seriously? Aren't you here to solve puzzles rather than to be puzzled? What is presentism? Can we avoid it? And, if we're not trained to generalize from particulars, that is, to come up with statements that make sense of particulars, how can we predict and control what happens? Accurate predictions and comprehensive control-- shouldn't those be aims of higher education? Amazement is extracurricular; isn't it?

William Butler Yeats: “The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity.”

What might Yeats have meant by “best” and by “worst”? What would those terms have to signify for you to subscribe to the truth packed into this line?

Otto von Bismarck: Not through speeches and majority decisions will the great questions of the day be decided . . . but by iron and blood.”

Is Bismarck simply being realistic? Does might make right or power trump persuasion?

Thucydides: “Pericles . . . was their leader rather than being led by them [the Athenians], because he did not speak to please them.”

Shouldn't we expect leaders to be led by followers' preferences when, in a democracy --and ancient Athens purportedly was “the cradle of democracy”-- leaders are elected to implement what citizens want done?

George Bernard Shaw: “Democracy reads well, but it doesn't act well.”

What does it mean “to read well”? Do you agree that democracy doesn’t act well? Give me examples. What might make it act better?

Martha Nussbaum: “Nations all over the world will soon be producing generations of useful, docile, technically trained machines rather than complete citizens who can think for themselves, criticize tradition, and understand the significance of another person’s sufferings and achievements.”

Nussbaum thinks the humanities could and should serve as an antidote. Do you share her distress? If docile citizens are useful and well-trained, why should we object that, somehow, they are docile and therefore incomplete citizens? Is it fair to compare them with machines? How important is it for leaders to criticize tradition?

Aurelius Augustine: “Justice having been removed, what are kingdoms but gangs of thieves on a large scale? And what are criminal gangs but miniature kingdoms? A gang is a group of persons under the command of a leader, bound by the agreements or covenant governing the association in which plunder is divided according to a constitution of sorts. To illustrate, take the answer given by a captured pirate to Emperor Alexander the Great. When great Alexander asked why the pirate terrorized seafarers, the latter boldly replied, suggesting that his purpose and Alexander’s were identical. When I do what I do with a small ship, he said, I’m called a pirate. Because you do the same with a mighty navy, you’re called an emperor.”

If you were Alexander how would you respond to the pirate’s equation?

In this section of LDST 101, we’re going to revisit these quotes at different times and raise these questions as well as others that you’ll find in the schedule portion of the syllabus in bold print. We don’t ask such questions because the answers to them lay at the foundation of leadership studies; the asking does. And conversations generated by our asking ought to problematize some ideas we take for granted and prompt confrontations with the problems and wannabe problem-solvers whom we’ll find in our assigned texts as well as in our class.

This semester we’ll use some classics and some recent literature and film to assess whether and how nationalists store up trouble for citizens and leaders. It seems timely to do so, and

that issue will draw us into discussions of racism, xenophobia, and authoritarianism--as well as the viability of democracy in an age of hypocrisy. All of this constitutes a set of challenges for the leaders you choose and/or become.

Welcome!!! *BUT... before you decide whether all this might be a good way to spend parts of your semester and strap yourselves into this course, check the next section on . . .*

REQUIREMENTS & GRADES

Lively, informed encounters with our questions, obviously, require lively and informed participation in class discussions. I expect it; the class participation grades (see below) reflect your success in meeting that expectation as well as, alas, recurring absences and unfamiliarity with assignments.

2 Papers (maximum 1,500 words) 25 pts. Each--Feb 20 and April 3. You'll find the paper prompts beneath the assignments in the syllabus. You must submit papers, as word doc or PDF email attachments, no later than 3 PM the Sunday before class. Double space. At the end of your paper place a word count and the student ID #s (no names please) of all those responsible for the submission. YES, You may collaborate and submit a single paper that reflects the contributions of as many as 4 students.

4 quizzes: Jan 23; Feb 13; Mar 20; April 17----- 5 points. If you're absent the day of a quiz, submit a 500-word essay responding to that class's prompt by 5PM the day of class. There will be one question on each quiz in the form of 3 terms. You'll be asked to write no more than 2 legible, coherent, cogent sentences relating each term to the others and all 3 to a significant theme in that day's assignments.

For example, let's say you're assigned the quotes at the front of the syllabus. Your quiz would list three terms: democracy, Shaw, and Pericles. And a reasonable response: "Perhaps one reason Shaw believes democracy acts badly is too many admire leaders who, as Pericles, prefer not to be led or swayed by their constituents. Yet

democracies might “act” better if more leaders were candid and less concerned with consoling or comforting or pleasing their people.

Final Exam: scheduled by the registrar: 20 points. 5 quiz-like sets of phrases. You’ll be expected to respond only to 4. OR a paper (1,500 words) responding to a new prompt.

Classes will normally meet for discussion of the week’s assignment and related issues for the first hour--or after the quiz, when one is scheduled. At 4PM or thereabouts, breakout groups will be asked to tackle issues related either to the first session or to the next week’s assignments. After breaking for coffee or somesuch, the class reassembles to harvest what the breakout groups questioned or concluded. Usually, class will adjourn by 5:15 allowing you to note down what you found useful or memorable from discussions or from the instructor’s presentations. Instead of previewing assigned reading for the next week in class, I will post a panopto--20 or 30 minutes; hence an early release. BUT be sure to check blackboard for the panopto to assist you to prepare to discuss in the following week’s first hour.

Several taboos: late arrivals, early departures, multi-tasking.

TEXTS *You’re advised to purchase (or kindle or E-book) the following:*

William Chafe, **CIVILITIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS**, ebook on library site

Thomas More, **UTOPIA**. (available on-line and in most used book stores as well as campus bookstore and Amazon, and . . .)

Hannah Arendt, **EICHMANN IN JERUSALEM**.

Anne Applebaum, **TWILIGHT OF DEMOCRACY: THE SEDUCTIVE LURE OF AUTHORITARIANISM**.

William Shakespeare, **CORIOLANUS** (available on-line, of course--it's William Shakespeare, after all !!), but you may want to mark it up. I'll ask you to read the first three of the play's five acts.

Robert Penn Warren, **ALL THE KING'S MEN**. Beware: do not use the restored edition (burgundy and gold cover). That would be his first not his final, prize-winning draft. I like the Harcourt edition, but Scribner's also has one.

SO-- What do we do and when do we do it?

January 9: Discussion of syllabus; preview of ALL THE KING'S MEN.

January 16: no class; assignment: film IDES OF MARCH-- streaming individually or meet for Pizza and film, January 18: 3PM.

January 23: Read ALL THE KING'S MEN, chapters 1-6 and Mark Edmundson's article, "Liberal Education" -- on blackboard site. **QUIZ today**.

January 30: Read Shakespeare's CORIOLANUS, acts 1 - 3 and watch the film version streaming (check the blackboard site)

CORIOLANUS, takes you back to the first decade of the Roman republic. I'll supply the context in the panopto, but when we get to class, we'll mix and match commentary about democracy and leadership in King's Men and the assignment today. We'll discuss the meanings--and usefulness--of the term "populism" Prepare, please, by using the quotes at the front of the syllabus to evaluate the leadership styles on display in the play--those of Coriolanus, the tribunes, and the senate. Attend to the differences between the text and the film to ensure your references apply correctly to one or the other--or both. What value would you assign candor (or transparency) or cunning in leadership?

February 6: Read Machiavelli's PRINCE, chapters 6-7, 15, and 19 and Jones's chapter, "Maxims or Axioms" (both on blackboard)

I intend to talk about terms and translations as well as to provide historical context for Machiavelli in the panopto, but to connect the two readings for today, you'll want to attend to what Jones has to say about him as well. So, you should be able to tell us why (or why not) one should consider Jones a modern Machiavellian. Jones's chapter is part of a set of essays subtitled "the pursuit of idealism and the revenge of history." See if you can infer how his endorsement of maxims and distaste for axioms fit that theme. Finally, look at the quotes at the front of the syllabus. Would you guess Nussbaum and Walker Bynum are maxim women or axiom women? Do Willie Stark, Adam Stanton, Hugh Miller, Coriolanus, Menenius, and the tribunes seem to you to be maxim men or axiom men?

February 13: Read Yael Tamir, WHY NATIONALISM, chapters 7 and 17 (on blackboard and on line from the library, as an E-book) and C Wright Mills, THE POWER ELITE, chapters 14 and 15 (on blackboard) -- **QUIZ today**

To my mind, Tamir's defense of nationalism is flawed, but feel free, please, to disagree. She concedes that ethno-nationalism exerts an "awful power" but brands "liberals" and defenders of multiculturalism as the real villains. They, much as Jones's "axiomatics," plump for utopian societies and forget about the need to "endow life with meaning" collectively. But nationalists' narratives, she says, pragmatically corrected for that. "In its prime," Tamir argues, "nationalism was the great equalizer." Well let's test that; scholars tend to think of the 1950s as one of the prime times for nationalism in the United States and western Europe, fresh off their victories in what was an atrocious war. Yet C. Wright Mills, writing at that time, thought the elites, along with ordinary citizens, especially in the United States, were rather predatory. I'll be interested in what you think of both Tamir and Mills.

February 20: Read Ari Adut's brief (14 pages) "critique" of contemporary leaders and followers. By February 19, 3PM email attach your papers PDF and word doc, please. Maximum 1,500 words. NO names, just the student IDs of all those responsible for the submission. Double-space, regular font and margins.

PROMPT: Discuss some similarities and / or dissimilarities between Adut's criticism of leaders / followers and the criticisms (and endorsements) that you've encountered in or extracted from any three of the following:

ALL THE KING'S MEN

CORIOLANUS

"Maxim or Axioms"

Tamir's chapters

Wright Mills's chapters

Feel free to comment on the adequacy or accuracy of those criticisms and endorsements.

February 27: watch the film version of Shakespeare's RICHARD III and read pp. 102-117 from Paul Corner's MUSSOLINI IN MYTH AND MEMORY.

Tyrants: writing for the Tudor dynasty that replaced King Richard III and using other Tudor apologists' narratives, Shakespeare put Richard onstage and beyond rehabilitation. Benito Mussolini was quite literally strung up a generation of Italian anti-fascists has been rehabilitated recently. So, what makes memory play tricks on us? Pick a leader of your country and tell us whether and how s/he has been vilified or celebrated.

B R E A K

March 13: Listen to the speeches of Obama and Sharpton delivered at the 2004 Democratic national convention (blackboard). Read Justice Clarence Thomas's concurring opinion in the Seattle case of 2007 (on blackboard).

We're combining consideration of one of the more pressing leadership challenges facing your generation in the United States--pluralism--with discussions of political oratory, race, and regionalism. The assignments

stretch from this week to next. Compare the effectiveness of the two speeches. Relate each to the Thomas opinion.

March 20: Read William Chafe's CIVILITIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS, the introduction and chapters 1-4. Watch the film SELMA.

We'll take racism in the United States back from the twenty first century into the nineteenth and twentieth. My panopto will direct you to several images from Winslow Homer, and I'll discuss the decision in the Brown v. Board of Education case, to which Clarence Thomas referred. But viewing and reading for the week put you in the 1960s. Ascertain the objectives of the leadership in Greensboro North Carolina as they confront the challenge posed by court ordered integration. After watching SELMA, tell me whether you think Jepson should change the title of its required course "Justice AND Civil Society" to "Justice OR civil society."

March 27: Read Anne Applebaum's TWILIGHT OF DEMOCRACY: SEDUCTIVE LURE OF AUTHORITARIANISM, chapters 1-5.

Last week, the Greensboro, North Carolina officials cleverly juxtaposed the progressive values associated with local control and democratic preference alongside the government's order to integrate the schools. So, we are back considering the desirability and viability of democracy in what, conceivably, could pass as an age of hypocrisy. Let's do that in excellent company. Anne Applebaum begins her story after the Berlin Wall came down (1989) and many pundits endorsed the view Francis Fukuyama popularized in his almost ecstatic END OF HISTORY, specifically that civilization had seen the end of illiberal, one-party states. Applebaum will tell you what happened next--and after that--and why. It's not a "pretty" story, but is it accurate? Was "liberalism" a "god that failed" or is liberal democracy too flawed to be god-like? What do you think? Applebaum will name and shame a few leaders for succumbing to an authoritarian impulse, but--really--aren't ordinary people to blame? Think back to our sessions with Machiavelli, Mills, Mussolini, Willie, Jones, Luther Hodges--reread a few quotes you found at the front of the syllabus: Shaw, Yeats, Augustine, Nussbaum--

then, let me know what more you'd like us to do to meet the objectives articulated at the start of the course:

This semester we'll use some classics and some recent literature and film to assess whether and how nationalists store up trouble for citizens and leaders. It seems timely to do so, and that issue will draw us into discussions of racism, xenophobia, and authoritarianism--as well as the viability of democracy in an age of hypocrisy. All of this constitutes a set of challenges for the leaders you choose and/or become.

April 3: By April 2, 3PM email attach your papers PDF and word doc, please. Maximum 1,500 words. NO names, just student IDs of all those responsible for the submission. Double-space, regular font and margins.

Prompt: rewrite the three sentences above, beginning with "This semester we'll . . ." Be sure your sentences reflect what the class, in your estimation, has done so far. With the remaining words, isolate two or three assignments (along with the discussions of same) that were particularly effective drawing the course to complete the objectives **you set for it. If you'd prefer a prompt in the form of a question: what have we done so far, and in what places--and how--did we do it well?**

April 10: Read Hannah Arendt's EICHMANN IN JERUSALEM, chapters 1, 4-8, 15, and epilogue

Arendt has been accused of having exonerated Eichmann. Has she been too critical of the "show trial" and insufficiently critical of the man on trial? Put this assignment (and the next) and your ambitions alongside the possibility that prudence may overtake the better angels of your nature--that you will face the seductive lure of authoritarianism in yourselves or others. What then?

April 17: Read Thomas More's UTOPIA, book 1, and any 30 consecutive pages of book 2. Quiz today.

Thomas More wrote this before he accepted a job with King Henry VIII of England, whom he knew to be something of a tyrant. Book 1 seems to be the result of his contemplating just that move. Henry ran a tight ship, and his advisers were expected to tow the party (Tudor) line. Book 1 explains

why More's fictional character, Raphael Hythloday, refused to serve. His friends urged him to do so. After all, he had traveled around the world--reputedly, collecting experiences that ought to have enabled him to offer wise counsel. Why did Hythloday decline? Why not serve a leader, whose power was absolute? Think of the good one could do? Thomas More then inserts himself into the conversation near the end to dispute the position Hythloday holds. Perhaps one cannot have a perfect society, but cunning counsellors can, at least, do damage control. In answer to that, Hythloday claims that he came across a just-about-perfect society, a Utopia. We'll be comparing his notion of perfection with yours. Are there elements, habits, practices, values, you'd smuggle from this sixteenth-century fantasy world into our modern morass? Our morass or mess allows for freedoms Utopians did not possess; they sacrificed certain liberties to achieve what looks to be a widespread concern for the commonwealth, for social harmony. More, as you learned, believed that incentives were required to ensure progress, and incentives led to the stratification (and a meritocracy) that fostered competition--and undermined harmony. We're just over 500 years from Hythloday's birth, and perhaps we should ask whether the freedoms and competition his Utopians sacrificed have given us the political culture and leadership we want. Or has the route More, the character in the book, has marked out given us--instead--a political culture that favors authoritarians and that bears a striking (and distressing?) resemblance to the leadership Augustine's pirate describes?