AP550 – Historical & Philosophical Foundations of Higher Education

09/21/11 – Class Notes

Frequently Asked Questions about the Class

1. Can both book reviews be on the same topic? Would prefer that you diversify
2. How many pages? 8-12 is a good range; 6-7 if the writing is very good and succinct
3. How much work should I be putting into the class? ~3 hrs/wk = B to B-; ~6-8 hrs/wk = A to A-
4. After this class, will I be considered a historian of Higher Education? NO!
5. Is it possible to get 1 hour with Dr. Cronin? Yes, just contact by email

General Information

Good article in Atlantic Monthly – Corruption & Failure of Organized Sports

Focuses on failure of the NCAA; Mia will post on the blog site

Dean of MET College will be guest speaker in class in about 1 month

ANCIENT PHILOSOPHERS (Presentations)

Sophists (5th Century B.C.)

Ancient Greece, believed virtue was pre-taught

Believed to be among first full-time teachers, but controversial because they received salaries

People were skeptical of validity of teaching, because they required to be paid

Focused on nature of language & culture

Socrates (469 BC – 399 BC)

Opposed the Sophists

Never recorded any autobiographical information;

However, much known information comes from his most famous student, Plato

Would never charge for services

Believed his role to help others know what is real, true & just

Credited with the Socratic Method

Earliest teaching method; involves dialogue & questioning; formulating hypotheses &

exercising one’s mind; critical reasoning

Had major impact on law schools & American business schools

At the end – Elder citizens did not agree with his methods

Committed suicide – was given the choice to leave or recant his teaching

Plato (427 BC – 346 BC)

Most known student of Socrates; teacher of Aristotle

Believed world should be ruled by philosopher kings

Aristotle (384 BC – 322 BC)

Product of Plato; was his greatest student

Plato had just started his school when Aristotle was born

Was the son of famous physician (Macedonia); migrated to Athens to study at Plato’s school

Plato stepped down from his school; passed school to his nephew

Aristotle was disappointed and left - went to Asia Minor

Teacher of Alexander the Great, who went on to conquer and rule Macedonia

Aristotle had dislike for Alexander’s need to rule; some suspicion that Aristotle was

involved in Alexander’s death

Started 2 schools and then returned to Athens; perfected deductive logic there

Studied everything there was to study at that time

St. Augustine (350 AD – 430 AD)

Born in current day Algeria; St. Monica was his mother

Converted to Christianity; developed his own approach to philosophy & theology

Became Bishop of Hippo (Africa)

Controversial – he believed in Christian Doctrine, but lived a hedonistic lifestyle

Harbored a mistress and illegitimate son

Two great works: Confessions & City of God

Aquinos (1225 AD – 1274 AD)

Dominican Friar; influenced by Aristotle & Augustine

Attended University of Paris

Great work: Summa Theologica – 5 proofs of Gods existence; explored what God is NOT

System of Ethics (man strives for highest union with God)

Aeschylus (525 BC – 455 BC)

Born outside Athens; known as Father of Tragedy (Tragic Playwright)

No reliable sources documenting his life

Believed that a God, Dionysus, visited him in a dream and told him to focus on tragedy

Thought to have written 70-90 plays; only 7 have survived to present day

Introduced concept of more characters in plays (before it was just 1 actor & chorus)

Also introduced more elaborate costumes

Euclid (300 BC)

Not a lot known about his life

“Father of Geometry” – authored Elements (mathematics & geometry)

Speculation that he studies at Plato’s academy

Ptolemy (90 AD – 168 AD)

Egyptian Astronomer, influenced trigonometry

Great works:

Almagest; Universe is geocentric; Earth is stationary

Manual used 150 AD through 17th Century

Geographia – guide to information and techniques to draw map of world

Made it possible to make exact replicas

Also contains most of what is known of inhabited world of Roman Empire

CLASS DISCUSSION

Questions from 9/14

Origins of Learning

Sumeria – Scriptal Art = Origins of literary classes (evidence people could read)

Tablet houses where scribes resided

Taught practical skills – record keeping

Greece – 1st full time scholars; most sophisticated research centers; learning for the sake of

Knowledge; education seen as alternative to manual labor

Believed in training the whole person (rhetorical & philosophical)

Rome – built on Greek system; libraries seen as houses of life

Education was class based

Egypt – Scriptal, expanded Sumerian model; focus on marketing and writing

Created 1st number systems; hieroglyphics; famous library in Alexandria

Fields: Theology, Art, Law, Medicine (top 4); accounting, history, philosophy, math, priestly etiquette

Universities were created so priests and scribes could be educated; also to meet demands of

local area

Philosophies – Ancient Greece

1. Sophists – teachers of wisdom (dominant); anyone who could pay could take part
2. Plato – Relativism teachings; Aristotle – rejected; study of knowledge for own sake
3. Cynics – Human knowledge is untrustworthy; Xeno – stoicism; Cosmo is ever changing; live in harmony with nature
4. Self-Disciplines

Questions from 9/21

Who started earliest universities? Churches & Governments

England – monarchy; Morocco – religious schools, Madrasas

N. Europe – Guilds & Nations (like Unions)

S. Europe – Student organized

Muslim – Preserved education through the Dark Ages

Protestant Reformation

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

German priest/theologian

1517 – Catholic churches selling indulgences

95 Thesis – protested the selling of indulgences

Founded Lutheran church – God’s love provides forgiveness without priests’ connection

Translated Bible into language of the people; University not teaching useful information

Protestants took over many universities in Germany – changed curriculum

Jesuit movement in S. Europe (Protestant movement hadn’t reached yet)

Calvin (1509, France)

Did much of his work in Geneva; studied scripture

Coined Predestination – fate already decided between heaven/hell (challenged free will)

Knowledge of God, Knowledge of self

1559 – founded University of Geneva (puritanism)

Harvard, Princeton, Yale

Intolerant of other views – favored execution of Mary Dyer (executed for preaching

religious freedom)

What are Universities for? Faith or Science?

Study of God? Bible, ethical principles

Study of Man? Humanism

Age of Reason – more accepting of the study of science; science is more structured

Both win – major schools based on religion

MORE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHERS (Presentations)

Galileo (1564 – 1642)

Italian astronomer; major role

Father of modern science & natural phenomenon

Worked to prove bible theories wrong

Vast improvements = new stars, Jupiter, motion = taught in all physics classes

Sun = Center of Universe

Francis Bacon (1561 – 1626)

English Philosopher

Credited with Early Scientific Method

Investigative Method – Isolate causes of certain phenomena

Newton (1642 – 1727)

English; Trinity College (Calculus, optics, gravitation)

Wrote Philosophy of Natural Principles

John Locke (1632 – 1704)

English Philosopher; Father of Liberalism

Influential thinker; homeschooled by father

Sensory Experience

Theory = Government organized to protect; by people for the people

Right to resist government if it is against natural rights

Curriculum should be practical

Adam Smith (1723 – 1790)

Scottish social Philosopher (Modern Economics)

Glasgow University lectures (1748); Head of Philosophy @ Glasgow

most honorable w/ moral sentiments

Great work: Wealth of Nations

Known as quintessential absent-minded professor

Personal papers destroyed after his death, at request in his will; not much is known about him