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