

PHIL 8210: *Seminar in Political Philosophy*

Topic: *Legitimation Theory and Narrative*

3:35-6:35 PM, M, Peabody Hall 205S
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In this seminar, we will investigate the relation between attempts to provide a theory of legitimation for political or cultural conditions and the narratives which often accompany these attempted legitimations. My interest in this topic arose out of the consideration of Hans Blumenberg's attempt to provide a legitimation for the "modern age," and this work will lie at the center of this seminar. The rest of the material we will consider will contribute, in one way or another, to a reassessment of Blumenberg's notion of legitimation. In particular, Ernst Kantorowicz's work, which we will study intensively in the latter part of the term, will provide a multitude of evidence that Blumenberg's legitimation theory and narrative can be profitably enriched through a comparison with issues in medieval legitimation theory and narrative.

Course requirements: regular attendance and a final, research term-paper. Students not attending regularly will be subject to academic withdrawal.

This syllabus is a plan for action.

Required texts:

Rousseau, *Second Discourse and Social Contract*
Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*
Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* (Parts One and Two)
Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*
Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*

August

17 Introduction
24 Rousseau
31 Habermas

September

7 LABOR DAY HOLIDAY: NO CLASS
14 Blumenberg, 3-61
21 Blumenberg, 63-120
28 Blumenberg, 125-179

October

- 5 Blumenberg, 181-226
- 12 Blumenberg: conclusion
- 19 Weber
- 26 Kantorowicz, 3-87

November

- 2 Kantorowicz, 87-192
- 9 193-272
- 16 273-383
- 23 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY: NO CLASS
- 30 383-506

December

- 7 Conclusion