

COURSE UNIT DESCRIPTION

Course unit title	Research field, branch, code	Faculty	Department, Institute
Politics and Theology in Ancient Literature	Philology, Linguistics, H004	Philology	Classical Philology

Study cycle	3 rd (doctoral)
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Mode of delivery	ECTS credits	Type of the course unit	Language of instruction
Contact (lectures, workshops, tutorials)	8		
Individual or in a group			

Annotation of the course content

The aim of this course is to introduce politics and theology in ancient literature and writings, their intersections, problems, and influence on the emergence and development of political theology as an independent discourse. The course introduces the ancient concept of politics as a practice (the dialectic of ruling and participation) and its development in the Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods; it identifies the core concepts of the political field (polis, citizen, polity, justice, law) and discusses the differences between the fundamental modes of political reflection (political thought, political theory, and political philosophy). It explores the role of the gods in the realm of the polis (the functions of founding myths, patron-gods, religious reverence and festivals), problematises the distinction between the public and the private in religious life (the question of faith, the performativity of piety), and examines the reasons for the commonalities of political and religious practice. It discusses the formation of theology as a distinctive discourse and its challenges: the beginnings of theorising about the divine (archaic poets and early philosophers) and the relation between theology and other discourses of philosophical thought (epistemology, metaphysics, ethics). It analyses the problematic cases of intersections between political and theological thought: the application of political models to theology (Homeric hymns, Hesiod, Anaximander) and the application of theological models to politics (Plato, St Augustine). Finally, it overviews the influence of the ancient approach to politics and theology on the formation of an independent discourse of political theology (C. Schmitt, E. Kantorowicz, G. Agamben).

Reading

1. Cartledge, P. (2009). *Ancient Greek Political Thought in Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2. Bartninkas, V. (2019). „Kas yra antikinis politinis mąstymas?“. *Problemos* 96: 48–60.
3. Zaidman, L. B., Pantel, P. S. (1992). *Religion in the Ancient Greek City*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
4. Burkert, W. (1985). *Greek Religion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
5. Gerson, L. P. (1994). *God and Greek Philosophy: Studies in the Early History of Natural Theology*. London: Routledge.
6. Clay, J. S. (2003). *Hesiod's Cosmos*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
7. Clay, J. S. (2006). *The Politics of Olympus: Form and Meaning in the Major Homeric Hymns*. London: Bristol Classical Press.
8. Kahn, C. H. (1994). *Anaximander and the Origins of Greek Cosmology*. Indianapolis; Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company.
9. Vernant, J.-P. (2006). „Geometric Structure and Political Ideas in the Cosmology of Anaximander“. In: *Myth and thought among the Greeks*. New York: Zone Books, p. 197-211.
10. Bartninkas, V. (2023). *Traditional and Cosmic Gods in Later Plato and the Early Academy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

11. Burnell, P. J. (1992). „The Status of Politics in St. Augustine’s *City of God*“. *History of Political Thought* 13: 13–29.
12. Schmitt, C. (2014). *Politinė teologija. Politinė teologija II*. Vilnius: Versus aureus.
13. Kantorowicz, E. H. (1997). *The King’s Two Bodies: a Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
14. Agamben, G. (2011). *The Kingdom and the Glory: for a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
15. Beiner R. (2011). *Civil Religion: a Dialogue in the History of Political Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lecturer	Degree	Main works in the research field published during the last five years
Vilius Bartninkas	Doctor of the Humanities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bartninkas, V. (2023). <i>Traditional and Cosmic Gods in Later Plato and the Early Academy</i>. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009322638 2. Bartninkas, V. (2023). „Persistent Dissent and Plato’s Later Theory of Civic Participation“. <i>Polis: The Journal for Ancient Greek and Roman Political Thought</i> 40: 415–435. https://doi.org/10.1163/20512996-12340416 3. Bartninkas, V. (2023). „Platoniškoji nuosaikumo politika ir šiuolaikinė pilietinė teorija“. <i>Problemos</i> 104: 74–85. https://doi.org/10.15388/Problemos.2023.104.62022 4. Bartninkas, V. (2022). „The Greek Notion of Sea-Power“. In: R. Clare and H. Williams (eds.), <i>The Ancient Sea: Utopia and Catastrophe in Classical Narratives and their Reception</i>, Liverpool University Press, p. 43–61. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv32nxx3k.8 5. Bartninkas, V. (2022). „Teologija ir matematika Platono vėlyvojoje etikoje“. <i>Literatūra</i> 64: 20–30. https://doi.org/10.15388/Litera.2022.64.3.2 6. Bartninkas, V. (2021). „Imitating the Traditional Gods: Moral Virtues and Cult Practice in Plato’s <i>Laws</i>“. <i>Mnemosyne</i>, first published online: 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1163/1568525X-12347312 (Spausdinta: 2023, <i>Mnemosyne</i> 76: 43–64) 7. Bartninkas, V. (2019). „Drama ir politika Atlantidos pasakojime“. <i>Literatūra</i> 61 (3): 22–31. https://doi.org/10.15388/Litera.2019.3.2 8. Bartninkas, V. (2019). „Kas yra antikinis politinis mąstymas?“. <i>Problemos</i> 96: 48–60. https://doi.org/10.15388/Problemos.96.4

Approved by decision of Doctoral Committee (date, record No) July 1, 2024. Protocol No. (7.17 E) 15600-KT- 321.

Chair of Committee Prof. Dr Daiva Aliūkaitė