From Political History to Political Studies: A Brief Introduction to Political History and Political Science History

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Abstract:

In *Metapolitics*, Alain Badiouclaimsthat there is no philosophy of any kind, inclusive of philosophy of politics, existing prior to politics. This is the prime purpose of our brief introduction to political science history. We cannot ignore the historical text of political science when exploring the philosophy of politics. "Transcendence" and "immanence", these two important approaches of philosophy, co-exist in the history of thoughts. By transcendence it refers to the exploration of the universal truth; by immanence it is the truth self-owned by general people. Philosophy gives attention for the first time to modern people in Kant's *What is Enlightenment*. In this essay, what we see is not a definition of human in universal historical context, as is discussed in "Cogito Ergo Sum" (I think, therefore I am) paradigm of discourse by Descartes. It is an important events in academic exploration of human's immanence, as the historical identity of human as the subject of knowledge is highlighted in academic history in a formal manner and then presented to later generations.

Keywords: Transcendence, Immanence, Political History, Political Science History

I. Why we need political history and the intellectual history

In *Metapolitics*, Alain Badiouclaimsthat there is no philosophy of any kind, inclusive of philosophy of politics, existing prior to politics. This is the prime purpose of our brief introduction to political science history. We cannot ignore the historical text of political science when exploring the philosophy of politics.

"Transcendence" and "immanence", these two important approach of philosophy, co-exist in the history of thoughts. By transcendence it refers to the exploration of the universal truth; by immanence it is the truth self-owned by general people. Philosophy gives attention for the first time to modern people in Kant's *What is Enlightenment*. In this essay, what we see is not a definition of human in universal historical context, as is discussed in "Cogito Ergo Sum"(I think, therefore I am) paradigm of discourse by Descartes.[1]It is an important events in academic exploration of human's immanence, as the historical identity of human as the subject of knowledge is highlighted in academic history in a formal manner and then presented to later generations.

It indicates that people's thoughts arein the discourse of the text of a certain historical period to which they belong. People actually explore the human beings under a specific historical background and thespecific history which human beings are experiencing. Such history-based thinking serves as the prerequisite and an important pathway for us to explore all fields of social sciences.

Therefore, the Author made a suggestion to Ms. Yang Yuning (the Author's teacher) that a generalized introduction be drafted for the course. It is hoped that historical text ofhistory of politics and political science, as is generally accepted by social science circles, could be interpreted in a detailed manner. And then the relationship between key scholars and their works would be identified and sorted out. Course design in such a way will be more similar to college courses and closer to the logic of learning in the field of social sciences. Meanwhile, students will find a comfortable space of discussion apart from the complicated, multi-dimensional course learning.

As this is a generalized writing sample without discussion on findings of the Author. Nor are there extended discussions on current theories and practices. This paper is a specialized writing for the course design. Therefore, no literature will be involved.

II. Eureka!: Ancient Greece as the origin

Ancient Greece is an inevitable topic in discussions on the origin of western civilization. History evolution in the west in the field of language, economics, politics, and thoughts is greatly illuminated by Ancient Greece. Starting from Max Weber, western academia has been ex-

[1] Refer to (M. Foucault, 1997)

ploring the origin of history and proposed the well-known "Achsenzeit" (the axial age)[2]hypothesis. When history evolves to a certain phase, various social factors would be inspired by thoughts of a certain period and then function to change or boost the course of history. This certain period of time is called the axial age. For China, the axial age refers to the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period and for the West it is the Ancient Greece. This hypothesis is yet to be widely accepted in academia, but it does show the importance of Ancient Greece in western history.

Speaking of politics, city-states system is mentioned by almost all. Originally it was established based on family clans and then evolves into various political forms. Ancient Greece has witnessed over 200 city states of various sizes, which is a stunning number for Mediterranean region.

It is hard to accurately categorize these city states, considering their complicated nature and the large number. However, they generallyfall into three groups of regimes, i.e., classical democracy, oligarchy, and monarchy.

The most classic representative of democracy in Ancient Greece is Athens. We call it "classical democracy" in that the democracy of Ancient Greece is quite different from today's democracy: it is a political system built on slavery. Comparatively, modern democracy such as that in the USA is not developed with slavery as the premise. From the founding of the USA till American Civil War, slavery, to some extent, is only a tool which helps boost economic development in some regions. In Ancient Greece, a small number of citizens who own relatively a large scope of freedom secure social stability via autocracy on slaves. Academic arguments on the number of slaves go on till today. However, it is generally accepted that the proportion of slaves is times of that of male citizens who own political rights. Slaves are private property, responsible for material production for their owners. Those slaves owned by the state will be engaged in activities like security, record, or building and maintenance of public facilities.

Oligarchy refers to a form of government or control by a small group. Here we include aristocracy in oligarchy, because aristocracy, to a large extent, is the oligarchy aiming to safeguard the interests of slave owners when a hierarchical system is widely established in a city-state and the power of original bloodline aristocrats is gradually shared by slave owners in business and industries. A typical example is Sparta where citizens do not enjoy initiatives. They do have the right to discuss and to vote. However, their right to vote is based on the magnitude of feedback of all citizens. Decision-making would be affected, if the

elders who coincidentally have initiatives are "hard of hearing", for instance. Such an agenda is just to enhance the legitimacy of oligarchy, for a state cannot sustain if public opinion is completely ignored.

The last one is monarchy, and Troy is an example in Ancient Greece. Yet there are more usurped monarchies (tyrants), e.g., city states like Corinth and Athens have seen notorious tyrants. Detailed discussions will be offered in later chapters.

The above-mentioned is the general outline of politics in Ancient Greece. Ancient Greece is also the period when the earliest paradigm of western political philosophy and science was formed. The most important two people are Plato and Aristotle.

In *The Republic*, Plato describes a perfect regime in his mind: the philosopher king. He discusses the practices of the truth and of politics via the allegory of the cave. Plato believes that the most intelligent person should be made a king. Then the king will lead the people out of the cave, despite of the glaring sunlight outside. It is actually monarchy. One of the reasons why Plato speaks highly of such a regime is probably the death of Socrates. As an advocate of democracy, Socrates died of the regime that he has supported heroically. Plato, as his student, casts serious doubts upon democracy. From allegory of the cave to kings as philosophers, discussions of Plato hold that it is necessary to have a philosopher closest to the truth if people want to get close to the truth. It indicates that Plato describes the rule based on the truth thoughts, and pure idealism; not the politics as we understand today.

Aristotle is more important than Plato in political science (compared to philosophy as an area of studies). Based on the real situation in Ancient Greece, Aristotle composes*Politics*, the first formal written book on political science in human history. Exploring the city state regime, slavery, and three political systems, i.e., classical democracy, oligarchy, and monarchy, Aristotle follows Plato in terms of an ethics-political philosophy logic in discussions. And he finally proposes "middle way golden mean", an approach to ethics that emphasizes finding the appropriate medium, or middle group, between extremes. Then he applies this to political science and suggests that a mixed regime would be a good solution.

III. Populus Romanus[3]: Republic of Rome

Ancient Rome follows Ancient Greece in sequence. In a sense, Ancient Greece is the place where the concept of democracy was born and Ancient Rome gives birth to

3 Latin, referring to all Roman citizens. It is often seen in Roman laws.

legal system and the concept of republic. Abbreviation of the Republic of Rome is SPQR, referring to Senatus Populusque Romanus*)*. Senatus is the parliament, Populusque means all citizens, and Romanus is Rome. SPQR basically means the Roman Senate and the people. Now the expression SPQ(X) has been "copied" by a number of states. [4]

Ancient Rome is a mixed regime. There are kings, aristocrats (performing practically no function), and citizens. Of course there are slaves. It is heavily influenced by Ancient Greece: quite some city states of Ancient Greece changed from monarchy to aristocracy, then to tyrant regime followed by democracy, and finally to ochlocracy. Ancient Rome does not want to follow the path. In a sense, political regime of Ancient Rome is a summary of city state regime of Ancient Greece.

Another important concept is "Republic", originally from Latin "res publica". The meaning of res publica is "public things". Power of the state is granted by the people. People as citizens also enjoy civil rights and share common rights and obligations.

We shall mention Roman law here. Roman law is viewed as the ancestor of all current laws. Ancient Rome is the country where the concept of legal system was first known to people. We would not discuss more about it, as it is in the scope of legal history.

IV. God, monarch, and human: the Middle Ages and Renaissance

Analysis of the origin of western culture in a conventional way will lead to three origins: the classical tradition from Ancient Greece to Ancient Rome, Christianity, and revolutionary tendency.

Concerning the Middle Ages, the check and balance between theocracy and the sovereign is a very important theme of discussion. Administrative sectors and military sectors are administered by the sovereign. The theocracy is in charge of all legal issues and civil institutions (churches). European history is in a way similar to Japanese history: the Mikado safeguards the legitimacy of the rule by the daimyos, everyday life of people is governed by religious places and institutions, and the daimyos conduct actual governance on people.

Another often-mentioned word about the Middle Ages is feudalism. It is a complete derogatory term under the context of Marxism. However, in discussions of political science, it is necessary to take a neutral, objective stance

to understand feudalism as an important political model. By feudalism it means the granting of a free inheritance of land to aristocrats and their heirs. Feudalism lasts till the European Revolution, which shows its importance in political studies. The tradition of "natural law" in the Middle Ages has actually served as an important prerequisite of "king under law".

Usually people would be reminded of theologians like Thomas Aquinas or Baruch de Spinoza when talking about the thoughts in the Middle Ages. People who have made great contributions to political science, such as Thomas Hobbes and Niccolò Machiavelli would be neglected. The reason is pretty simple: it is widely accepted that the renaissance does not belong to the Middle Ages. Renaissance is a French word meaning "rebirth", i.e., rebirth of literature and art, which indicates the return of art to Ancient Greek traditions. In terms of the thoughts prevailing during the time, renaissance undoubtedly can be categorized into the Middle Ages. [5] Alain Badiou argues that there is no philosophy of any kind, inclusive of political philosophy, existing prior to politics, as has been mentioned in the beginning of the essay. The major regime in renaissance period is still feudal monarchy, accompanied by theocracy like Vatican and republic of merchants like Venice. Therefore, the thoughts of renaissance are actually an endorsement of monarchy. Books and discussions at the time such as The Prince or Leviathan basically are defending monarchy. However, these scholars are still very important people in political science, because monarchy is the most practical, the most stable political regime for pre-modern countries of the time.

V. The Age of Exploration

In most Chinese textbooks, the Age of Exploration was explained as the discovery of new sailing routes. The Author does not agree with it. Comparing to discovery of new sailing routes, "the age of exploration" sounds more like a historical period.

From a Marxism perspective, the Age of Exploration is part of the primitive accumulation of the bourgeoisie. Following the Age of Exploration comes the prosperity of European economy and the step-by-step perfection of European market system and stock market system. "The rich" start to enjoy increasingly higher social status. And the Triangular Trade and global colonization gradually connect every corner of our globe.

The Age of Exploration is an important period for economic studies. But it is not a key point of this course. Therefore, this essay only provides a brief introduction.

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4 City emblem of Rome today still has "SPQR". You can find "SPQL" in St George's Hall of Liverpool, as you will see SPQ(X) in many a European park. X usually is the initial of the city's name. SPQ(X) today carries the meaning of "public".

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VI. The return to the Axial Age: The Enlightenment

Historically, the Enlightenment is linked to the Protestant Reformation when people began to challenge the authority of the Catholic churches and see gods in their own ways. Those days saw great advances of modern science and technology. Gutenberg press boosts the growth of publishing industry. The scope of knowledge dissemination grows larger with invention of the press and increasingly frequent cross-country academic communication. Then the Enlightenment arrives. People's thoughts are no longer confined to the doctrines of the churches. Knowledge is shared and disseminated in a much larger scope. In short, the Enlightenment imposes far-reaching influence upon human knowledge. Today's academic paradigms are basically built in the Enlightenment.

The word "enlightenment"is originally from Kant. In What is Enlightenment, Kant said:

"Enlightenment is man's release from his self-incurred tutelage. Tutelage s man'sinability to make use of his understanding without direction from another. Self-incurred is this tutelage when its cause lies not in lack of reason but in lack ofresolution and courage to use it without direction from another. Sapere aude![6]*Have courage to use your own reason!"- that is the motto of enlightenment."* (Kant, 1784)

In a sense, the return to the Axial Age during the Renaissance recalls forms of artistic expression and ways of thinking in Ancient Greece. Comparatively, the Enlightenment is more radical. It advocates the democracy of the Ancient Greece. It also advocates and further interprets the truth, the most-emphasized concept of Ancient Greek philosophy. Such an attitude of respecting the legacy of Ancient Greece is one of the most important reasons why German philosophy in the Enlightenment is called German classical philosophy. During the Enlightenment, philosophers ponder a crucial question: the relationship between reason and freedom. "I think, therefore I am"[7] by René Descartes is one of the most famous interpretations of such a relationship. When discussing the thoughts in the Enlightenment, most would start from "subjectivity", a concept that runs through the whole period of the Enlightenment. By subjectivity in this essay, it means that people are independent, proactive, and purposive. When

subjectivity is used as a reference to human, the center of discussion is not human's body or political affiliation. Rather it refers to human "spirit", or in other words, "a man of free will".

People are capable of being independent and therefore they are rational. By independent it means "we can be the master of ourselves", i.e., our minds could dominate, rather than being dominated by, our body, as Aristotle said. In the Enlightenment, it is further interpreted by Kant-Hegel paradigm and is defined as master-slave dialectic. [8]It also shows the influence of Ancient Greek thoughts upon the Enlightenment.

Discussion on the subjectivity provides an important logic: we are rational, and thus we are independent. We can decide the to-do or not-to-do list. We are free. In short, discussions of subjectivity are the origin of liberalism and individualism.

It is true that there is freedom. Then is there a boundary for freedom? If our freedom actually affects others in exercising their right to freedom, they would not be able to enjoy freedom because of us. The relationship between freedom and equality thus is established.

The above discussions are dialectical commonalities shared by thinkers in the period of the Enlightenment. From a political point of view, thinkers at the time generally advocate democracy. They cherish the memory of Pericles. We are of the same kind but some of us are ruled by others, as they argue in their books. French people make up a major proportion in the discussion. France does develops well during the reign of Louis the XIV. However, centralization of authority also reaches its peak in France. That is why French people like Montesquieu are virtually trapped in silent resentment. They dare not object to monarchy but they all speak highly of democracy. To some extent, the mission of the next historical phase is then proposed: a revolution is needed.

VII. "Grab your weapons, citizens!"[9]: A period of revolutions

Following the Enlightenment, revolutions of big scale turn up in Europe and America, namely, the Glorious Revolution in Britain, American Revolutionary War, and the French Revolution. The three revolutions finally lead to three major forms of regimes: constitutional monarchy, federal republic, and democratic republic.

The earliest one is the Glorious Revolution in Britain. This change of regime became known as the Glorious Revolution because it had occurred entirely peacefully. The monarch is still there with power being confined and

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6 Sapere audes in Latin means "dare to know". In all versions (different languages) of What is Enlightenment, this expression remains as it is in Latin to commemorate Kant and his contributions. It is also one of the most noted slogans of the Enlightenment.

7 Refer to (笛卡尔 , 1986)

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regulated by the Constitution. The Constitution also regulates responsibilities of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. In generalization, the House of Lords involves in the discussion and the handling of state affairs and Members of the Commons debate the big political issues of the day and proposals for new laws. Members of the Commons are elected and member of the House of Lords are hereditary. Churchill once refused to be knighted, because he hoped that his children would one day enter the House of Commons.

American Revolutionary War is both a revolutionary war and a war for independence of a colony. It makes waves in the world: a once-colony gainsindependenceand establishes a state without aristocrats and kings (queens). The new regime draws useful lessons from the most advanced thoughts in Europe at the time, such as the macro-control theory of Adam Smith, Montesquieu's separation of powers, the law theories of Blackstone, etc. A bold try is also conducted: states of the USA (shortly after independence) decide to compromise with each other and adopt federalism.

Following the two revolutions, the French Revolution is the most complicated and the most radical one. It establishesthe Civil Code[10], effective to this day. France becomes the very first country in Europe that overthrows the reign of monarchs. During the Revolution, France witnesses quite some parties and political groups, frequent heated discussions among different schools of thoughts, and bloodsheds. A republic is established after Bourbon Dynasty is pulled down. And then Napoleon seizes political power and crowns himself. As the First French Empire soon disintegrates after the War of Waterloo, parties and political groups advocate their thoughts to fight for power. There are also numerous philosophers and thinkers reflecting on the Revolution. In The Old Regime and the Revolution, Tocqueville says:

"How could a catastrophe have been avoided? On one side, a nation in which the desire for wealth in-creased daily; on the other, a government unceasingly engaged in exciting and disturbing men's minds, now inflaming their avarice, now driving them to despair rushing to its ruin by both roads."

A large portion of political science in the French Revolution is the rethinking on to-be-practiced theories of political science of the Enlightenment. Revolution shines down on French, a country of great philosophers and thinkers. However, it is accompanied by both freedom and terror---

the two words are bizarrely near-synonyms at the time. The short-lived Paris Commune comes out of the cinder of the French Revolution and later become an important historical part for political studies. [11]

VIII. A spectre of Communism [12]— The Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution is the period when modernization advances in the fastest pace. It sees rapid development of science and technology, steep growth of industrial levels, establishment of factory system, and the increasingly evident division betweenthe bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

During the Industrial Revolution, universal education is carried out, leading to growth in literacy rate. Printing press development enables the access of all people to readings and reading materials. The earliest form of media (newspaper) emerges and people become more interested in politics and social events.

Various schools of thoughtsalso appear on the scene. Influenced by the vision of building a better society, as the Paris Commune advocates, they are eager to startanother revolution. Here comes communism, a concept most well-known and most familiar to Chinese people, which will guide the working class to revolution.

Karl Marx explores in detail the relationship between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, identifies the predicament with which the working class face, and produces a critique of capitalism in Capital. Later, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, his closest friend, voice their critique to the world in Manifesto of the Communist Party:

"A spectre is haunting Europe -- the spectre of Communism. All the Powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre: Pope and Czar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals and German police-spies." (Marx & Engels)

Nationalism risesat the same time. Evolution of the concept of "nation" helps rebuild the political pattern of the whole Europe. The Franco-Prussian War is one of the examples. Other places outside of Europe, including China, begin to realize that "the foreigners"come for invasion. They are not to build a new kingdom. To a large extent, formation of the concept of modern states imposes great impact upon the course of world history.

In addition to political thoughts like communism and an-

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10 *The Civil Code*is also referred to as*the Napoleonic Code,* re-named after the First French Empire founded by Napoleon disintegrates to show the objection to French monarchy.

11 The Paris Commune was discussed in detail in works of political sciences, such as Marx's The Civil War in France and Bakunin's The Paris Commune and the Idea of the State.

12 This title is from Manifesto of the Communist Party and it is now widely used by communists.

archism, feminism, a thought representing half of human population, starts to rise to recapture the rights that women deserve. The voice calling for voting rights for women becomes prevailing in Europe and America. Women had always been viewed as "incomplete" and "incompetent" in politics. Voting right ignites the torch for women in politics. Therefore, it is a very important event in this course.

IX: Another meaning of "Axis": World War I and World War II

When the Industrial Revolution reaches its peak, World War I broke out, followed by World War II in only 21 years. Hitler, Mussolini, and Emperor Hirohito call for "return of the Axial Age" (seemingly only Hitler wants so, according to the Author),form the Axis Powers [13], and begin their invasion and massacre.

Nazism is actually born under such a historical background. Nazi Party turns the overwhelming nationalist awareness into political power. Atrocity of populists is then brought to camps scattered in Europe. Soldiers in battle and ordinary German people at the time still feel that the golden, glorious rays are shining down on them. Their pride is reflected in the massacre of Jewish people and the reign of the whole Europe.

Europe after World War II virtually becomes a land of devastation. No nations, except the USA, have truly benefited from the war.[14]The World War II saw around 70 million deaths in the world. It proves a fact: the most horrible catastrophe in human history is not necessarily a natural calamity; the Inferno exists not only in the Bible.

X. Rethinking postmodernity: schools of thoughts after World War II

At the time, human civilization enters a period of Cold War. The USA and the USSR compete against each other for global hegemony. America gives birth to rock and roll, which spreads to the UK where the Beatles finally becomes a world famous band.[15]Pop culture emerges on the stage: the world is gradually immersed in Hollywood, Broadway, Rock and Roll, Pop Art, etc. [16]Communism boosts in the USSR, eastern European countries, and some other countries where postwar recoveries are still ongoing. Quite some countries of the Third World in Asia, Africa, and Latin America gain independence from colonizers and embark on the road of social and economic development. In the meantime, in the postwar ruins, western Europeans ponder what goes wrong with the civilization. After World War II, the USA has provided substantial support with social and economic development in Europe. However, common occurrence is the high rate in juvenile delinquency, rising unemployment rate, unstable income, etc. Europe is the biggest victim of the World War II. Scholars across Europe start to think over the problems with human civilization and to explore what has actually led human civilization to World War II. Paris sees the earliest group of structuralism composed of Foucault, Deleuze and Roland Barthes.[17]They blast all problems identified in European intellectual history and object to existing philosophical system and political science system. And they have also put forward quite some revolutionary theories and concepts. In Germany, Frankfurt School comes to the stage. The School inherits the philosophies of Marxism and identifies problems with Marxism theories. And hence a western Marxism tradition is established. Critical arguments then are produced on cultural issues and political phenomena from a Marxist perspective. Small-sized schools such as Birmingham School also cast criticism on Eurocentrism and modernity. Analyzing territorial cultural issues and then reaching to conclusions, these schools have deep influence upon the development of pan-left wing theories. Postwar schools of thoughts have actually imposed tremendous effect upon current humanity studies and social sciences. Most frontier theories of today are established based on theories and findings of these scholars. Postwar thoughts as a whole adopt a critical approach towards the past and modern times and identify human's concerns for the future. Reflections on the past and the transcendence over the past lead people to more profound thinking of human civilization throughout history. And the academia again is reminded of their social mission as critical thinkers and critics.

13 "Axis" in the Axis Powers and "axial" in the Axial Age have similar meaning and share the same Latin-origin prefix "axis". It is one of the reasons why the hypothesis "the Axial Age" is mostly rejected by western historians.

14 Undoubtedly, the USA also suffers great loss from World War II. But World War II two transformed the USA from a midlevel power to the leader of the "free world".

15 The Beatles is not only famous in the UK but also wildly popular in the USA. In the history of popular music, British Invasion refers to the musical movement of the mid-1960s composed of British rock-and-rollgroups whose popularity spread rapidly to the United States.It symbolizes that pop music has become a global culture.

16 Pop Art is a kind of commodity-driven visual art presentation. It is characterized by its bold, vibrant colors, use of everyday objects, and its message of consumerism and popular culture. Representative artists include Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, etc.

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XI. Afterword

Frankly speaking, the afterword is not aimed at commemorating completion of this essay in which readers will find some mistakes or omissions, or imbalance between universality and academic accuracy. Based on personal experience, I would say the hardest part in designing a course is to achieve an appropriate degree of balance between understandability and profundity. The deeper it goes, the more academically accurate it will be and the harder it is for students to understand. The closer it is to the surface, the easier the lectures will be and the lower degree of academic accuracy the course will have. The Author tries as hard as possible to make this essay more concise and more interesting so that the course will be more understandable to all. Hidden between the lines is a hint, i.e., "the same concept will be vastly different in different historical backgrounds", which will be identified by readers through careful thinking. Writingthis essay is a beneficial try for the Author, as it is the very first time for the Author to write such a long "brief history".

My special gratitude goes to Ms. Yang Yuning, who offers me this valuable opportunity to complete a course design, a mission which possibly will only be available for postgraduate students in internship. I might not have had such an opportunity in the whole period of undergraduate studies. I deeply appreciate that Ms. Yang Yuning has fully trusted me and encouraged me with warmth and inspiration. I am even allowed to submit this course design as my end-of-term assignment. Such an opportunity weighs much more than a decent mark, I believe. I decide to complete it in my full strength. And I will live up to the trust of Ms. Yang Yuning and be responsible for students who would choose this course.

I shall also express my gratitude to Yu Lingxuan and Ma Zihao for their generous support. Yu has produced suggestions on how to better connect Introduction of the Essay with the course and helped explain further the concept of nationalism and state. Ma has helped the discussions on intellectual history and political history and further interpretation of Plato. Without their support, I could not have completed this essay.

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