# History of Political Institutions

## Prof. Paolo Colombo

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to provide the fundamental elements for understanding the forms that political power assumes and the institutional, constitutional and, essentially, administrative mechanisms through which power is exercised within various societies throughout western history.

At the end of the course, students will have gained the knowledge and skills necessary for fully developing awareness of the dynamics that regulate relations between governors and the governed, up to the contemporary era; they will also be able to interpret current essential political and institutional problems of Western society in light of the analysed historical background; they will have acquired a fundamental technical terminology in the field of political and social sciences. These acquisitions will facilitate access to master degree courses, particularly in relation to the history of comparative public administration and the history of military institutions.

***COURSE CONTENTS***

Part 1

1. Method issues.

2. The primordial roots of power.

3. Classical ancient times.

4. Barbarian kingdoms.

5. Society and the feudal monarchy.

6. Councils and dominions.

7. From the Modern State to the Absolute State.

8. The origins of English constitutional history: the concept of representation.

9. Conflict between the Crown and parliament in England.

10. The American constitutional revolution.

Part 2

1. The French constitutional revolution and the Napoleonic period.

2. Nineteenth-century constitutional monarchies.

3. The European democratic roots

4. The issue of parliamentary government.

5. The Albertine Statute.

6. Fascist institutions.

7. Nazi totalitarianism.

8. The French Third Republic.

9. The transition from a fascist monarchy to the republic.

10. The constituent assembly and the republican constitution.

***READING LIST***

The examination syllabus includes:

1. Lecture notes.

2. P. Colombo, *Storia costituzionale della monarchia italiana,* Laterza, Rome-Bari, 2001.

3. P. Colombo, *Governo,* il Mulino, Bologna, 2003.

Students not attending lectures will study the following books:

1. J. Ellul, *Storia delle istituzioni,* Mursia, Milano, 1981 (voll. II e III).

2. P. Colombo, *Storia costituzionale della monarchia italiana,* Laterza, Roma-Bari, 2001.

Besides, one volume between the following ones, on student choice:

– P. Colombo, *Governo,* il Mulino, Bologna, 2003.

– P. Colombo, *Con lealtà di Re e con affetto di padre. Torino,* *4 marzo 1848: la concessione dello Statuto albertino*, il Mulino, Bologna, 2003.

– P. Colombo, *La monarchia fascista. Storia costituzionale della Corona durante il Ventennio (1922-1940),* il Mulino, Bologna, 2010.

– M. Fioravanti, *Appunti di storia delle costituzioni moderne. Le libertà fondamentali,* Torino, Giappichelli, 1995.

– C. Bon, *Alla ricerca di una più perfetta unione. Convenzioni e costituzioni negli Stati Uniti della prima metà dell’800,* Franco Angeli, Milano, 2012.

* V. Villa, *The Crown is a living bond*. *L'attività pubblica all'estero della monarchia britannica (1952-1972)*, Aracne, Roma, 2018.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will mainly be taught in lectures– with any obstructing conditions –; experts will give talks on special topics; depending on the number of students attending the course, individual or group research projects will be assigned.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The student’s learning outcomes are assessed by means of an oral exam. Questions will specifically aim to ascertain the candidate’s capacity to express themselves dialectically, with accuracy and appropriateness, and their capacity to show their mastery of chronological successions. The acquisition of an appropriate technical terminolgy and of the adequate capacity to contextualise politically the several notions will also be assessed. Students will be examined – with any obstructing conditions by a Commission of Professors, whose President is the Professor holding the chair. The final mark is out of thirty: the exam is successful is students receive a mark equal or superior to 18/30. The maximum grade is 30/30; the Commission may decide to award deserving students with a “*cum laude*”.

Only and exclusively students *attending* the above described course may take a written test, which will be made available at the end of the whole cycle of lectures. Such a written test is useful to check the level ok knowledge acquired throughout the year.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Being an introductory course, there are no content-related prerequisites to attend the course.

However, sufficient preparation is required on the essential features of the history of Western civilization (as provided by a course of upper secondary studies) and students’ ability to orientate chronologically between the main historical periods. Students are also expected to show curiosity and intellectual interest in the historical-political reflection on the forms of power and their historical development, which leads to a proactive attitude (strongly recommended) aimed at on one hand filling any previous gaps during the course through individual study and, on the other hand, consolidating their knowledge throughout the entire academic year.

In case the current Covid-19 health emergency does not allow frontal teaching, remote teaching and assessment will be carried out following procedures that will be promptly notified to students.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG, or on the Faculty notice board.