Faculty Reading Group 2009-2010

“Republics, Ancient and Modern” (Whether stand-alone or the first year of several to be determined at the end of the year)

1. October 15: Sparta and Athens (Moses Finley for background, then Plutarch on Lycurgus and Thucydides account of Pericles’s Funeral oration)

2. November 12: Rome (Context piece tbd plus Polybius *The Histories* Book 6)

3. December 3 (Something to put you in the right mood for the holidays!): Renaissance Italy (Excerpts from Machiavelli’s “Discourses”)

4. January 28: The English revolution (Excerpts from Walzer’s *Revolution of the Saints*)

5. February 18: Enlightenment France (Chiefly excerpts from Montesquieu’s *The Greatness of the Romans and their Decline*, possibly augmented a little with some few passages from *On the Spirit of Laws*)

6. March 25: Revolution and Terror (Possibly some excerpts from Rousseau [if so, probably from *The Social Contract*], definitely two famous Robespierre speeches)

7. April 22: Toqueville and Constant, looking back (Excerpt from the Forward to *The Old Regime* and possibly some excerpts from *Democracy in America*; then “On the Liberty of the Ancients and the Liberty of the Moderns”)

Since the earliest versions of this program, the main items we have lost are some modern commentators on what Athens (and to some extent Sparta) were actually like, the New England Puritans and their “city on a hill” (on which we at one point thought to assign John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity” and excerpts from Perry Miller, *The New England Mind in the Seventeenth Century* or Edmund Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma*) and Geneva and its theater (a good enough pretext for assigning Rousseau’s *Lettre a’ d’Alembert*). The first of these is probably gone for the foreseeable future. If we continue on this theme for a second year, the others might yet find a place.