**HI2A5 Theories of Politics**

Second formative essay: extended analysis of a primary source

See Tabula – c week 5

Select one or more of the texts or sources that we cover during the ‘polis’ section of the course (weeks 7-12).

**Task:** To write an extended critical reflection on the text(s) you have selected, paying particular attention to an aspect of the author’s political thought.

You may wish to engage with secondary literature on your given text, or use secondary material to link you text to its wider historical context. However, you should remember that the main focus of your essay should be on the text/source itself, and on your own interpretation and arguments. So try not to get so bogged down in secondary material that your own reading of the text becomes recessive. This is good practice for the exam, which require you to present your own arguments and ideas about the texts we’re studying.

You are welcome to write your own title, but you MUST run it by me, and have received my approval (either in person or via email) before the January 31 AT THE VERY LATEST. Alternatively, you are welcome to answer one of the guidance questions below. Please DO NOT write an answer to a question that I have not formally approved. Writing good questions is a bit of an art, and it’s demoralising for everyone when an essay receives a disappointing mark because the student has selected a poorly conceived question.

**Guidance questions** (you are welcome to select one of these instead of writing your own question):

What role does consent play in either Hobbes’ *Leviathan* OR Locke’s *Second Treatise*?

How does Locke understand liberty and its relationship to property?

What do you take to be most centrally at issue in the controversy between Godwin and Malthus on population?

Discuss the places that law and culture play in securing the stability of states in EITHER Montesquieu OR the Federalist Papers.

What moral conclusion, if any, does Mandeville seek to draw from his claim that private vices produce public benefits?

How coherent and convincing is Rousseau’s claim that mankind must be ‘forced to be free’?

How does Marx explain why the working class should act collectively to bring an end to capitalist exploitation?

The word limit is 3,000 words. Please also include footnotes and a bibliography, in line with the style guidelines.