

Introduction

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This special edition of the *Review of Politics* commemorates the extraordinary career and scholarship of Catherine H. Zuckert, the Nancy Reeves Dreux Professor of Political Science and editor in chief of the *Review of Politics* from 2004 to 2017. Zuckert's prodigious scholarship in the history of political thought includes studies in ancient, modern, and postmodern philosophy, as well as literature and politics. She has authored books on Plato, Machiavelli, American literature, and postmodern thinkers, as well as two books on Leo Strauss coauthored with Michael Zuckert. In addition, she has edited essay collections and overseen numerous special issues of the *Review of Politics*.

The articles in this volume originated as papers presented at the conference *Ancients, Moderns, and Postmoderns: Honoring Catherine Zuckert*, held in May 2017 at the University of Notre Dame, on the occasion of Zuckert's retirement.¹ Their presentation here follows the chronological order of publication of three of Zuckert's books: *Postmodern Platos* (1996), *Plato's Philosophers: The Coherence of the Dialogues* (2009), and *Machiavelli's Politics* (2017). The authors of these papers include colleagues of Zuckert from the University of Notre Dame and from the outside academy, together with former students of Zuckert who are now teaching in the academy. After a final contribution by Michael Zuckert on her pioneering scholarship in the field of politics and literature, Zuckert responds to her commentators and offers a note on her future research plans.

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Postmodern Platos

Jeffrey Church's essay "Three Arguments for the Philosophical Life" highlights the contribution that Zuckert makes to the all-too-scant contemporary debate concerning the good or best life for human beings, and the possibility of identifying or defending such a life in the late modern and contemporary world. "Zuckert's book is a landmark work in contemporary political theory and in the scholarly study of the postmodern figures," writes Church, "and indeed, on the question of the value of philosophy in particular, the book remains an essential contribution to helping us grapple with philosophy's relation to the best human life." After elaborating on Zuckert's analyses of various postmodern defenses of philosophy as a way of life, particularly those offered by Nietzsche and Strauss, Church raises for readers and for Zuckert the question of which, if any, extant alternative justification for the philosophic life is true. Is it Nietzsche's "Promethean late modern impulse to transcend all given order and achieve the victory of human freedom," or the Socratic "ancient recognition of the finitude of our capacities to know and to act"?

Church reads *Postmodern Platos* as posing this unanswered question: Nietzsche or Socrates? Michael Gillespie's contribution, "The Question of the Examined Life," continues Church's commentary on Zuckert's examination of the philosophic life. On Gillespie's interpretation, Zuckert's account leaves standing only one contemporary defense of the philosophic life, that offered by Strauss and indebted to Plato's Socrates. Gillespie considers this apologia inconclusive at best, given its coexistence with antimetaphysical stances and radical questioning ushered in by modern thought and radicalized by Nietzsche and Heidegger. If the philosophic life is the examined life, the life of questioning of self, society, and world, and if, as some of the most gifted postmodern minds have concluded, there are no answers to be had to the crucial questions, or no beautiful, ennobling answers—at best, there are only permanent questions or problems—how could such a life be per se preferable to a life of meaning-creating, meaning-affirming convention? Gillespie suggests that a persuasive postmodern defense of philosophy may be a function of "the question of the relative value of the *vita activa* versus the *vita contemplativa*." He concludes, "It seems to me that Strauss does not give us a clear or unequivocal answer to this question, and I take it that it is no accident that Zuckert's two works following *Postmodern Platos* were on Plato and Machiavelli. Perhaps some of the answers to my many questions may be found there."

David O'Connor's contribution rounds out this first segment. His engagement of *Postmodern Platos* hinges on the famed oracular impetus to or endorsement of Socratic philosophizing, Know Thyself! O'Connor mirrors Socrates's turn to the human things, suggesting that too quick an examination of cosmology threatens to obscure the real "first philosophy," the interrelated

experiences of pedagogy and friendship. O'Connor's Socrates is especially Xenophon's, who in the *Memorabilia* offers this window into Socrates's own account of the goodness of his activity: "The treasures that the wise men of the past have left written in their books, I open and go through in common with my friends; and if we see anything good, we pick it out, and we believe it a great profit if we prove useful to one another" (*Memorabilia* 1.6.14). O'Connor's commentary underscores the prephilosophic experience, or phenomenology if you will, of *good* that is expressed in this account of Socrates's way of life, and so of the *gift* of awareness of good and evil that undergirds all human life, including both piety and philosophy. Perhaps via a greater attentiveness to this experience, this gift, on its own terms and as intertwined with love as *eros* and *philia*, desire and friendship, as these are experienced in our practices of teaching and learning, we may preempt the postmodern tendency to fragmentation, to the pitting of piety against philosophy, of wholeness and happiness against science and wisdom, that Church's and Gillespie's analyses emphasize. O'Connor sees glimpses of this profoundly human, hopeful vision in the joy Zuckert evinces in her writing and teaching: as he concluded his lecture at the conference, "It has been not the smallest delight of being Professor Zuckert's colleague for many years that she has loved her students, and has been generous in sharing with them the treasure hunt of common reading. And so she hears the oracle, as Socrates did in the *Phaedrus*: if we did not know our students, we would have forgotten who *we* are."

Plato's Philosophers: The Coherence of the Dialogues

Michael Davis's essay "On the Coherence of *Plato's Philosophers*" introduces this special edition's second segment, raising the question of the relation between wholes and their parts, most specifically here between the whole of Zuckert's commentary on Plato's dialogues and each of that commentary's parts. As Davis's reflection notes, the human problem of knowledge and self-knowledge, as revealed to us in Plato's dialogues, especially the *Theatetus*, and Zuckert's commentary on them, is or involves deeply this very part-and-whole dilemma. The impossibility of humans' assuming a fully eternal, trans-temporal stance, of ever being fully free from time's pressures and wholly at leisure in this mortal life, is for Davis ensconced in Socratic philosophy as Plato presents it. Moreover, this tension need not be tragic: as a reminder of human limits, it is a call to see philosophic reflection, reading, and writing as simultaneously serious and playful, and to free ourselves from the pressures of perfect universality to engage in delighted attention to parts of a whole we intimate yet can never fully know. To philosophize thus is to consider thoughtfully the cosmos and eternity, while possessing the self-knowledge that we do so bound by time.

Susan Collins's "In the Beginning: The Socratic Turn in *Plato's Philosophers*" reflects on Zuckert's ordering of the dialogues according to their dramatic dating rather than compositional chronology. Collins formulates two key questions: "First, what are we to make of the 'story within the story,' that is, of Socrates's own intellectual autobiography—in the *Phaedo*, *Symposium*, and *Apology*—as it stands in the narrative arc that Zuckert draws? Second, what precisely are the questions at stake at the beginning of the Socratic quest, the questions, that is, that impel Socrates's turn from the study of the heavens to the moral and political things?" Collins notes that the "narrative arc" of *Plato's Philosophers* is twofold. The first and overarching arc is one connecting all the dialogues on the basis of their dramatic ordering, to elucidate Socrates's philosophic life and his defense of philosophy. The second, however, punctuates the dramatic ordering to insert an arc within the arc, now comprising Socrates's own autobiographical account across three specific dialogues, *Phaedo*, *Symposium*, and *Apology*. If all the dialogues present to us Socrates, directly or by way of contrast, in his philosophic journey, why do these three dialogues do the same reputedly in his own voice, and why treat them initially out of their dramatic order? This line of questioning leads Collins to reflect on Zuckert's account of the forms or ideas in Socratic-Platonic philosophy, and the ideas' connection to the question of the cosmos's cause.

Kevin Cherry's essay "A Series of Footnotes to *Plato's Philosophers*" commences from Alfred North Whitehead's famous observation that the history of Western philosophy comprises a long "footnote to Plato" and from Mortimer Adler's witty addendum that "Aristotle wrote most of the footnotes." Cherry's analysis travels from *Plato's Philosophers* and its "metadiologue" among Socrates, the Athenian Stranger, Timaeus, et al., to Zuckert's articles on Aristotle's political science, and thence back to Plato and Socrates. Cherry's reading of *Plato's Philosophers* alongside Zuckert's articles on Aristotle leads him to posit a "Platonic turn" in her interpretation: a turn broadly speaking from Strauss's judgment that the philosophers in the dialogues "ultimately say the same thing," toward a new, more complex reading of the *Coherence of the Dialogues*. Cherry's analysis focuses on diverse accounts and practices of philosophy—seeking wisdom about human life through dialogue; seeking wisdom about the universe through empirical investigation—and thus complements the parallel discussions in the special edition's section on *Postmodern Platos*. On Cherry's reading, "Zuckert argues that the Athenian Stranger's manner of proceeding allows him to have 'a much greater and more direct effect on politics than Socrates'" and that "on Zuckert's reading, Aristotle—despite his shortcomings—is a better guide to political practice than the Athenian Stranger in part because of a fundamental agreement with Plato's Socrates about the limits of politics." Cherry's conclusion returns to an observation made early in his essay, that Plato's "hero" was Socrates, as Zuckert acknowledges explicitly in *Plato's Philosophers* and as Aristotle implicitly indicates by naming the

genre we call the Platonic dialogue *Sōkratikoī logoi*, Socratic discourses or speeches (*Poetics* 1447b11; cf. *Politics* 1265a10–11). Cherry wonders whether Zuckert's hero is Socrates, or rather Plato himself, since "the heroism of Socrates is made clear to us only through the Platonic metadialogue to which *Plato's Philosophers* is such a magnificent guide."

Machiavelli's Politics

Faisal Baluch's essay "Machiavelli as Philosopher" opens this volume's third segment, continuing the theme of Socrates and his philosophic way of life. Baluch's reflections embark from Zuckert's observation that the originator and namesake of *Machiavelli's Politics* "is in some respects surprisingly like Socrates." Thus, it appears, all roads lead to Socrates, even early modern roads, in this volume of essays.

"Machiavelli as Philosopher" explicates, questions, and ultimately defends and extends Zuckert's understanding of Machiavelli as both like and unlike Socrates, and her vision of Machiavelli's intellectual activity as like yet unlike Socrates's philosophic way of life. Baluch's reading of Zuckert locates parallels between these ostensibly quite different thinkers in their interlocutors (the young and spirited, and the experienced old or ancient), the ways they relate to those around them in society (unashamed to be unconventional or to appear ridiculous), and even the topics on which their thought focuses and some aspects of the content of that thought (especially regarding human things and virtue). With special reference to chapter 15 of *The Prince* and the chapters immediately following, Baluch observes that "even as Machiavelli effects his moral revolution and reaches conclusions diametrically opposed to those reached by Socrates, he begins like Socrates by engaging current opinions and showing how they are incoherent and lead to consequences that create a divergence between the appearance of virtue and the reality of the virtue." Supplementing his reading of *Machiavelli's Politics* with consideration of a recent article by Zuckert, "Machiavelli: A Socratic?" (*Perspectives on Political Science* 47, no. 1 [2018]), Baluch concludes that Machiavelli in Zuckert's eyes is a philosopher, but not a Socratic philosopher in a deep or full sense, because the Florentine utilizes philosophic inquiry wholly in the service of external, practical, or active ends. Machiavelli's "'activist' stance leads to another fundamental difference between [him and Socrates]. Since the activity of philosophy takes on an instrumental role in Machiavelli's thought, the life of philosophy is no longer the best way of life, it is merely an instrument." The essay concludes with Baluch's case, drawing from Machiavelli's letter to Vettori and *Life of Castruccio*, for Machiavelli as more Socratic than Zuckert suggests. As Baluch notes, one's judgment on the relation of Machiavelli's life and work to those of Socrates depends not only on one's reading of Machiavelli, but also and especially on one's understanding of what makes a person, and his or her way of life and thought, *Socratic*.

Alexander Duff's essay, "Machiavelli and the Contestable Surface: Zuckert and Strauss," develops its comparison by continuing reflection on philosophy and politics as activities and ways of life. Beginning from "the literary surface" of Machiavelli's works as presented by Strauss and Zuckert, Duff moves from the former's "world-historical" depiction of Machiavelli's self-understanding as founder-lawgiver of political-philosophic modernity, to the latter's "remarkably sober and frequently restrained account from Machiavelli." He observes that "the dedication [of *The Prince*] is central to her reading: 'whether Machiavelli actually presented his little book to the prince or not, *he apparently wanted it to be read as if he were giving it to a Medici prince for the purpose of employment.*' Duff reads Zuckert as attending more carefully than Strauss to perhaps more prosaic, yet highly significant aspects of the literary surface of Machiavelli's works, including statements concerning his intended addressee(s) or audience(s), and considering the broader or fuller surface of all Machiavelli's writings, not only or chiefly *The Prince* and *Discourses*. To draw out Zuckert's precise understanding of Machiavelli's philosophic activity and its political purposes, Duff's analysis once again travels by way of Socrates and his philosophy. Duff accomplishes this by focusing his own attention on the surface or beginning of two of Zuckert's books, namely their titles: *Plato's Philosophers* and *Machiavelli's Politics*. Duff concludes, "This is what we learn from Zuckert: in order properly to approach the thought of Machiavelli, it is necessary to see that by his literary artistry, as it governs his written works, he directs our attentions to the 'actions of great men,' or would-be great men, the ones he is advising in politics, that is, his audience of historical actors."

Vickie Sullivan's essay closes this last segment of commentary on Zuckert's three books. Continuing Duff's commentary on the comprehensive study Zuckert offers of all Machiavelli's extant works, Sullivan frames her remarks with this observation: "one might fittingly say that encountering [*Machiavelli's Politics*] is akin to looking across the Great Plains and then peering into the depths of the Grand Canyon from its brim. ... In showing how Machiavelli later elaborates, and therefore revises in some sense, certain themes of *The Prince* and the *Discourses*, Zuckert establishes the daunting fact that a deep understanding of the Florentine's intent must also be broad." On Sullivan's reading, Zuckert is thus able both to appreciate and to adjust or moderate other approaches to interpreting Machiavelli's political project, including those emphasizing historical-contextual, and democratic, elements. Sullivan's next section takes up Machiavelli's views on religion, suggesting that Zuckert's attention to this theme glosses over some of the dangers for republics which Machiavelli attributes to Christianity as it has developed in history, in favor of the Florentine's view of religion, including Christianity, as a possible aid to republican rulers seeking peace and public utility. A final section considers Montesquieu as student and corrector of Machiavelli's politics. Sullivan's contribution concludes by developing the comparison between these two great moderns: "Zuckert adduces compelling evidence

that Machiavelli was attempting to enlighten both rulers and peoples as to their proper interest so that politics—and therewith ordinary human lives—could be improved. ... On this reading, Machiavelli has much in common with the eighteenth-century Enlightenment philosopher Montesquieu, and, in fact, Zuckert terms the Frenchman ‘Machiavelli’s great student.’” Still, Sullivan argues, “however much Montesquieu learned from Machiavelli, he issues warnings against the harshness of Machiavelli’s writings that, in fact, highlight the distance between the politics of Machiavelli and liberalism’s later proponent.”

When opening her lecture at the conference, Sullivan spoke of Zuckert’s impact on her as a teacher. Sullivan studied with Zuckert as an undergraduate at Carleton College, and continued in contact with her throughout her graduate studies and beyond. Sullivan’s words beautifully sum up the gratitude voiced over and over again at the conference by many current and former students at the undergraduate and graduate levels: “Catherine, although never fully accepting my interpretations, has always listened, debated, and most importantly, helped me to make them in the first instance and then to assist me in making them in better ways. She guided me as I learned to think independently. I don’t think there is any greater gift that a teacher can give to a student. Especially when the teacher is such an accomplished scholar and a formidable thinker, independence is intimidating for a student and all the more valuable a gift. But Catherine is a most generous teacher.”

Politics and Literature

In rounding out the contributions of the conference, Michael Zuckert’s essay focuses on Catherine Zuckert’s path-breaking scholarship in politics and literature. He thereby returns to the beginning of Catherine’s career and her first publication (and his as well), a coauthored article on Mark Twain’s *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court*. Catherine Zuckert’s turn to literature reflected a love of it, to be sure, but more deeply an appreciation of the deep facets of humanity, of the individuality of each human being, that eschew external observation or behavior-based analysis.

Literature is not for Catherine Zuckert a simple supplement or adornment to political philosophy and political science. At its best, it comprises a window into the interiority of particular human beings, even when these are characters in fiction, and an opportunity to probe the formative aspects of regimes, political orders that tend to shape the souls of those living in them according to various ideals and aspirations, views of good and evil, justice and injustice.

As Aristotle put it—and the novelists confirm—human beings seek the good, that is, some object of their action which they perform take to be a good human life. Novels, more firmly than theory, reveal the variety of goods that human beings seek. But these goods are not merely external ends slapped onto an otherwise whole human person—the goods are

themselves person-shaping. The novel is typically an exposition of the character, meaning, and quality of a human life shaped by the goods sought. It is necessarily an examination of the moral or value-determined life and of its successes and failures, merits and demerits.

And earlier, with reference to the *Poetics*, Michael Zuckert observes: “Like Aristotle before her, Catherine sees the plot as the soul of the literary work. The emphasis in her treatment of literature is on the particularity it wallows in, for in this regard literature is at the opposite extreme from theory, which dwells in the universal and abstract. But like Aristotle, she too sees the literary as sharing much with theory in that its emphasis on the particular imparts knowledge or at least conduces to thoughts of the universal.”

This reflection on humanity, politics, philosophy, and literature closes with this observation, that the first nine papers commenting on Catherine Zuckert’s work present her literary mode of engaging philosophy. Michael Zuckert’s essay highlights her philosophic/political-philosophic mode of reading and reflecting on literature. And so, as he concludes, it may well be “that the literary and philosophical, when understood and pursued aright, are not as separable as is sometimes believed.”

Catherine Zuckert’s Response

Zuckert begins her reply to her commentators by observing that they are all friends, and yet—expressed now in modified Aristotelian terms rather than Zuckert’s own—also friends of truth, of the never-in-this-life-completed search for true wisdom which a philosophic life comprises. And so they are also critics of her work, to whom she welcomes the chance to reply. Zuckert’s beginning point reveals another and deeper reason for this volume’s choice to *begin* from the first chronologically of her books, rather than from the beginning of the history of political philosophy she tells across these three books. As Zuckert explains, in *Postmodern Platos* she formulates the central questions she has engaged throughout her scholarly career:

What is the human activity we call philosophy? What has it been in the past? Does that activity remain tenable now and in the future? Having learned that it constitutes a Sisyphean effort to achieve an impossible goal, should we simply give it up? Or should it be conducted in a new way on the basis of a new understanding? What value does or can philosophy have for those who participate in it as well as for those who experience its effects? ... The last question indicates some of the reasons why a person who teaches in a political science department would engage in such an inquiry.

As her colleagues and students know to be her perennial way of reading and responding to their work, Zuckert crafts as detailed, generous, and apropos a

reply as possible to the nine papers discoursing on her three “biggest books.” Indeed, her essay imparts a valuable first-person account of Zuckert’s research and teaching in political philosophy over the past decades, the questions she has grappled with and paths she has taken, or opened up, in seeking answers, even if partial or provisional ones.

Her response to the essays on *Postmodern Platos* features Zuckert’s exposition of her interpretation of Leo Strauss’s intellectual trajectory and his turn to classical, Socratic or Platonic political philosophy. Zuckert emphasizes Strauss’s learning from the ancients to begin from ordinary opinions, and so from the quintessentially human experience of awareness of right and wrong, good and evil, just and unjust. This is a critical aspect of what Strauss describes as taking a “common sense” starting point for philosophizing, the perspective we take as ordinary human beings in our daily lives, personal and societal or political. From here we may recognize the partial or contested nature of these opinions, and aim to ascend via Socratic dialectic to a more complete, yet always partial, understanding of ourselves, our polities, the universe, and even its cause. Notes Zuckert, “Strauss puts ‘common sense’ in quotation marks, because he recognizes that opinions differ not only from individual to individual, but even more from society to society, and at different times and places. In all cases, however, he insists that we must, like the classics, begin from these opinions. *Otherwise we risk losing our sense of the essential differences among beings, especially the differences between human beings and gods, on the one hand, and human beings and animals, on the other*” (emphasis added). It seems that for Strauss and for Zuckert, nothing less than acknowledging and defending our humanity is at stake in the return from the postmoderns to the ancients, especially to Socrates and to Plato. They teach us, not necessarily the ending point, at least not in its fullness or completion, but certainly a healthy and moderately hopeful beginning.

At the end of her work on the five postmodern philosophers making their varied returns to Plato, Zuckert found herself posed with this question: Which of these five interpreters offers the best or most accurate understanding of Plato’s philosophy? Has any one of them grasped it in its fullness? And what political effect does Plato’s philosophy have, or should it have, in the intention of its originator? Hence her turn to study all the dialogues of Plato, culminating in *Plato’s Philosophers: The Coherence of the Dialogues*.

This study led to what Kevin Cherry terms Zuckert’s “Platonic turn,” as Zuckert describes it, her discovery “that Plato was not attributing the same positions to all the philosophers he presented in the dialogues” and that Plato’s teaching could not be fully found in any single dialogue. A narrative understanding of the thirty-five dialogues of Plato emerged, one grounded not in the alleged chronology of Plato’s own writing, if we could know such with any certainty, but rather in the narrative history that the dramatic dating of the dialogues themselves, their own story, frames and guides. Zuckert’s response to the commentators on *Plato’s Philosophers* emphasizes the partiality of Socratic philosophy, qua philosophy, perhaps as much as

its preeminence for her. This partiality comes to light in Plato's narrative of Socrates's trajectory and development as a philosopher, in his turn to human things, and in the crucial questions raised and content of the thought of others among Plato's philosophers. As Zuckert explains, "What is first for us is not necessarily first in itself. And to acquire self-knowledge, we have to come to understand what is not-self. We are all wholes to a certain extent as individuals and even as communities, but we are clearly also only parts of a broader whole, the only parts that may have access, however dimly, to the whole as a whole." On Zuckert's reading, Plato judges Socratic philosophy superior to the alternatives presented by the other philosophers of the dialogues. At the same time, the understandings of philosophy and particular arguments of these philosophers reveal limits and imperfections of Socrates's philosophy, including his later neglect of cosmology.

Zuckert concludes her commentary on *Plato's Philosophers* by turning to Aristotle, and to what she understands as the "quasi-Socratic" and Platonic dimensions of his political philosophy. Aristotle too begins from "the opinions his contemporaries hold about [ethics and politics], finding contradictions, and seeking a more consistent, comprehensive view. He thus begins with what is 'first for us,' although he does not think that it is first in itself." But she doubts that "one can finally separate such investigations of 'the human things' which entail a view of 'human nature' from a conception of nature as a whole," whereas "Aristotle did not." Observing that the title of *Machiavelli's Politics* conveys an intentional reference to and contrast with Aristotle's *Politics*, Zuckert's reply moves on to her most recent study of Machiavelli.

Zuckert underscores how, on her reading, Machiavelli contrasts with Socratic philosophers, ancient and contemporary, in ranking politics above philosophy among human concerns and tasks or ways of life. Machiavelli's "advice [to would-be rulers, contemporary and in the future] does not consist, as it at first appears, merely in showing them how they can imitate the ancient Romans; it consists, rather, in a new understanding of a new form of republican politics that will benefit everyone." Zuckert confirms Sullivan's observation that she aims "to bridge the current divide between those who read Machiavelli's works primarily in terms of their historical context, literary form, and republican commitments, and those who follow Strauss in arguing that Machiavelli is the founder of modernity." Where Sullivan suggests Machiavelli's chief intention in writing, expressed in esoteric mode, was the overthrow of Christianity, Zuckert proposes instead the primary aim expressed in the surface teaching of the *Discourses*: "an improved understanding and practice of politics ... a coherent argument about the difficulties of establishing and maintaining a free way of life by means of a republican form of government." By this means, Machiavelli sought to make life better for "as many human beings as possible," ordinary and great alike.

The conclusion of Zuckert's commentary on her commentators on Machiavelli fittingly returns to Socrates, Plato, and Socratic philosophy and way of life, as compared with Machiavelli's thought and way of life, in response to Baluch's and Duff's considerations and suggestions. On Zuckert's reading, extending it here with a comparison not her own, Machiavelli shares a critique of Platonic philosophers with Augustine of Hippo: that they are insufficiently concerned with the welfare of the many, who are neither powerful rulers nor in a position to devote their best hours to philosophy. "The picture of philosophy Plato presents in his dialogues is much more beautiful and, in that sense, more noble than the analysis of the requirements of political life that Machiavelli presents. It is not clear, however, that Plato's philosopher is as generous as Machiavelli. He does not harm anyone, but he does not try to benefit everyone. He is arguably, therefore, less humane."

Zuckert's keen interest in humanity, in the inner life and experience of human beings that elude empirical observation or behavioral analysis, has also led her to the study of politics and literature, especially in the works of American novelists, as Michael Zuckert's paper has noted. The novelist describes such passions and thoughts and their impact on action and relations with others, allowing readers to imagine and to reflect on their truth-value and connection with various forms of society and regime.

Zuckert's interest in politics and literature points forward as well as back in her career: she describes her next major research project as extending "the combination of literary with philosophical and scientific methods and content in a study of 'the search for self-knowledge.' As an eminent sociologist recently observed, one would think that no knowledge should be easier for us to acquire; is there anything closer to us than ourselves? In fact, however, the search continues because no one has found satisfactory answers to the questions that almost immediately arise in conjunction with this search."

Readers of Zuckert's wide-ranging scholarship in political theory may look forward to the studies that emerge from this new project, one which engages afresh the central questions she has reflected and written on throughout her distinguished career.