

STUDY QUESTIONS FOR CC.111

Week I MACHIAVELLI: The New Understanding of Human Nature

Reading: *The Prince*, dedicatory letter and chapters 1-13

Dedicatory Letter: Why did Machiavelli have to think long and hard not only about his experience of modern things but also about his continuous reading of ancient things? What distinguishes ancient times from Machiavelli's time?

Chapter 1: Why is Machiavelli so concerned with the manner in which principalities are acquired?

Chapter 3: What natural difficulties and necessities confront every new prince? What is Machiavelli's view of acquisitiveness? When does it merit praise and when blame?

Chapter 5: Why are republics easier to conquer but harder to hold down? Why does Machiavelli give advice to would-be conquerors of Italy, and what do they have to conquer? Why is Italy so vulnerable to conquerors in the first place? What kind of country is Italy?

Chapter 6: What makes a prince great? What does Machiavelli mean by "virtue"? What is Machiavelli's argument regarding Moses? Is it convincing?

Chapter 7: What does Cesare Borgia deserve praise for? Why was Cesare Borgia such a failure? How could anyone succeed where Borgia failed?

Chapter 8: Is Agathocles a good man? What, if anything, did Agathocles do wrong? When is cruelty well-used?

Chapter 9: What is the character of the people and of the great in every city? How can it be virtue to get a principality with the support of your fellow citizens?

Chapter 12: What is the connection between good arms and good laws? If good arms guarantee good laws, what's Machiavelli's view of law?

Chapter 13: What's the significance of the example of David?

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CC.111 Modern Conceptions of Freedom
Spring 2013

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