

### 17.03. Introduction to Political Thought

#### Lecture Outline: Machiavelli, *The Prince*, chs. 15-26; *Discourses*, Bk 1, Intro & chs. 1-5

##### I. Moral standards in politics

- A. Having conventional virtues v. reputation/appearance of having them  
Satiric commentaries on Cicero's *De Officiis*
  - 1. Generosity and miserliness
  - 2. Mercy and cruelty
  - 3. Integrity/keeping promises
- B. Political actions should be judged by their effects, not by their intrinsic rightness
  - 1. Negative constraints on actions
  - 2. Positive goals guiding actions

##### II. Fortune's role in human life

- A. What is Fortune?
- B. How to deal with her

##### III. *Discourses on Livy*: expansionist Roman republic as the model

- A. Historical cycle of different forms of government
- B. Mixed government as best government
  - 1. Sparta (mixed government) v. Athens (democratic government)
  - 2. Rome (mixed government)
    - a. Conflict between the nobility and the people
  - 3. Sparta v. Rome

##### IV. Highest end of any city is glory or greatness (*grandezza*)

- A. What is glory?
- B. How to achieve it
  - 1. Statecraft
  - 2. Republics superior to principalities