

CS 202
Time: 2 1/2 hours



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Final Exam

Part A. SHORT QUESTIONS. Choose **THREE** out of six (5 points each).

Instructions: These passages are drawn from the later texts: al-Jahiz, Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli, and Luther. Please write a short paragraph in response to each.

1. "... leadership exists only through superiority, and superiority only through group feeling."

Identify the author and explain what he means by "group feeling". What is the connection between leadership and group feeling? What other forces operate in society?

2. "But in our day we are taught by the doctrine of men to seek nothing but merits, rewards, and the things that are ours; of Christ we have made only a taskmaster harsher than Moses."

Identify the author. What is the "doctrine" that he mentions here and what is his alternative to it? Why does he talk about Moses in this context?

3. "It is not the intrinsic worth of the dog and the cock, their price, their looks, or the place they occupy in the hearts of the common people that led us to write this dissertation..."

Identify the author. What, instead, is his purpose in writing his "dissertation"? Give an example to illustrate the author's purpose.

4. "For who would be content to be the sun, the moon, fire or snow, a tower or a wisp of cloud or even the whole Milky Way, or a measure of water or a modicum of air?"

Identify the author and explain what he intends to say in this rhetorical question. How does the view expressed here fit into his discussion of the problem of evil?

5. "Fortune, as it were, provided the matter but they gave it its form; without opportunity their prowess would have been extinguished, and without such prowess the opportunity would have come in vain."

Identify the author and explain what he means by "prowess". What is the connection between prowess and fortune?

6. "They also think that the articles of faith are established as correct through intellectual speculation and not through tradition, because they belong among the intellectual perceptions."

Identify the author. Who does he mean by "they" and what view of theirs is he objecting to here? Specify another objection that he raises against "them".



Part B. ESSAY on the later texts. Choose ONE out of three. (25 points)

1. Some readers have found Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli to be similar in the sense that they are "amoral" authors, whose texts are devoid of moral judgments and do not even view morality as a factor in human history. Does this agree with your interpretation of these authors? Support your view with evidence from the texts.
2. What conception(s) of human nature do you find in three or more of the following writers: Jahiz, Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli, and Luther?
3. "The esotericism that we encountered in some medieval texts was mercifully absent in Jahiz, Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli, and Luther." Discuss, with reference to three or more of these authors.

Part C. ESSAY on all texts. Choose ONE out of four. (25 points)

Instructions: In the following essay, you should discuss three or more of the authors we read this semester: Augustine, al-Ghazali, Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Rushd, Dante, Aquinas, al-Jahiz, Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli, and Luther. Please refer to the texts in some detail and make sure to organize your essay.

1. "The medieval outlook is a hierarchical one and medieval authors tend to find levels and classes everywhere: within society, among human civilizations, in the universe, and in degrees of proximity to God."

To what extent do the texts we have read support this thesis? (You can consider all the authors from Augustine to Ibn Khaldun as representatives of medieval civilization; Machiavelli and Luther represent the Renaissance.)

2. "If there's one thing I've learned from CS 202, it's that faith is not a simple concept. It's sometimes understood as a kind of blind trust, and sometimes thought of as an overwhelming spiritual experience. Some authors think of it as a set of beliefs to be embraced; others view it as a mysterious connection with God."

How accurate is this statement made by a fictional colleague of yours? How do three or more of our authors understand faith? Are these authors talking about the same thing?

3. Women, slaves, and children seem to be conspicuous by their absence in all these texts. Can we gain any information on the status of members of these groups in the texts drawn from medieval Christianity and Islam--whether implicitly or explicitly? What can we deduce about the way they were treated?

4. "Most of the texts we read this semester are addressed to believers--and they are therefore irrelevant to non-believers."

How would you respond to a friend who made such a pronouncement?