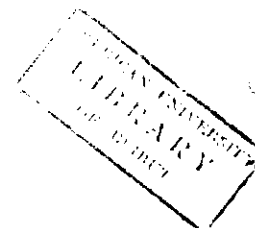




CIVILIZATION SEQUENCE 202



FINAL WRITTEN INTERPRETATION EXERCISE

A.U.B
1999-2000

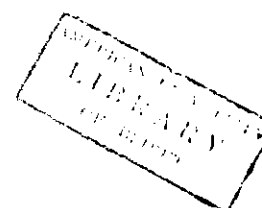
June 5, 2000
Samira Khoury

OPEN BOOKS - OPEN NOTES - OPEN MINDS (TIME: 1 1/2 HOURS)

PRO-MEMORIA: Your papers will be graded in terms of five major considerations:

1. **RELEVANCE:** Your ability to define or limit the issues under discussion (neither TOO MUCH NOR TOO LITTLE; sticking to the point; focussing on the point).
2. **COHERANCE:** Your ability to select, organise, argue or analyze the issues logically, relatedly, systematically.
3. **ADEQUACY:** Your ability to present the point of view of the text fairly, forcefully, empathetically, showing a command of the material and an appreciation of the major elements and characteristic "spirit" of the text.
4. **CRITICAL EVALUATION:** Your ability to apply the vision or views of the text, to compare with other views you have considered, and to measure the views against your own experience and reflection upon the issues presented.
5. **VERBAL EXPRESSION:** Your ability to use language at the service of your thought. I cannot grade what you have in mind, unless you express it clearly.

ANSWER ONE QUESTION



- I. "The study of the books of the ancients"(Ibn Rushd, p.3-6)

"We can even say that a man who prevents a qualified person from studying books of philosophy, because some of the most vicious people may be thought to have gone astray through their study of them, is like a man who prevents a thirsty person from drinking cool, fresh water until he dies of thirst, because some people have choked to death on it. For death from water by choking is an accidental matter, but death by thirst is essential and necessary."

1. Explain, first, briefly, the above simile.
2. Interpret it within the context of Ibn Rushd.
Point out his conclusions concerning "the art of arts, philosophy"(p.4)
3. How would Ibn Khaldun (p.398 ff.) comment on the above quotation?
OR Al-Ghazali (use one of his similes...)? OR Thomas Aquinas?
4. What are your conclusions or comments?

OR II. **"ADVISERS"** (Machiavelli, p. 75/76)

- 1) Discuss critically the main criteria based upon which a prince (= a ruler) should recruit his personal staff and select his advisers.
- 2) What are your conclusions concerning the recommended attitude of the prince and his human relations with his advisers?
- OR { 3) How does it reflect on Machiavelli's own view and attitude?
OR 4) Compare with Ibn Khaldun's analysis of the role and function of the "door keeper" (Hajib) and the ruler's "special friends" (Muqadd. p. 148) (You may enrich your interpretation by other relevant passages - but quote!)
- 5) Whose concept do you prefer? And why?

OR III **"The common people are always impressed by appearances and results."**
(Machiavelli)

- 1) Interpret Chapter XVIII of "The Prince" by analyzing the implication and the conclusions the author is drawing from the above quotation with regard to the special aim of this chapter.
- 2) Comment on the quotation from Ghazali's or Ibn Tufayl's perspective.
- 3) Evaluate this passage and the author's concept critically and state your own opinion.

OR IV **"PUPPET SHOWS AND SHAM FIGHTS"?**

"It is all the same whether there are many councils or no councils. They only deceive us with puppet shows and sham fights. They fear terribly for their skin in a really free council!" (Luther p.3).

- 1) Identify clearly but briefly the reasons that led Luther to this conclusion, and his recommended solution.
- 2) Would Machiavelli approve of Luther's solution and recommend it to his "prince"? Why or why not?
- 3) If the ruler acts like "them" in this quotation, then the dynasty is in which stage according to Ibn Khaldun? Justify very briefly.
- 4) Conclude critically on the basis of your experience of such "puppet shows and sham fights".

OR V. "...God spoke ... through an ass against a prophet...."
(Luther, p.9).

1. Why does Luther quote this story of Balaam's ass? What does he aim at? What is the consequence of his argument and its significance?

- OR { 2. How would Al-Ghazali and/or Ibn Rushd evaluate Luther's attitude? Justify your answer.
OR { 3. Compare critically with Aquinas' attitude.
4. Conclude and state your OWN opinion.

OR VI. Guidance = Virgil and/or Beatrice?

"He (Virgil) says he'll bear me company until I shall be where Beatrice also is, and after that he needs must say farewell."
(Dante, Purgatory, XXIII, p.27 f.)

1. Interpret these lines (allegorically?) with particular emphasis on what each Virgil and Beatrice symbolize (or stand for), their function and role in guiding Dante on his journey, their relationship and their limitations.
OR { 2. Comment on the results of your interpretation from the point of view of Ibn Rushd. Does he agree with this allegorical meaning? Why or Why not?
OR { 3. How would Augustine OR Aquinas OR Luther view this guidance? Justify and clarify which would be the favourite guide for your chosen author.
4. Conclude and state your OWN opinion.

Good Luck
for All your
Finals --
S Khoury 3/6/2000