



SPRING 2003-2004

JUNE 3, 2004

CVSP 202, SECTIONS 4, 5 & 9 (Hani Hassan)

FINAL WRITTEN EVALUATION

BASIC CRITERIA OF EVALUATION:

CLARITY OF PRESENTATION: this includes handwriting (since I am not an expert in deciphering coded messages); but more importantly, it is an issue of you clearly presenting your ideas, avoiding any vagueness and/or ambiguity.

EXPLANATION AND JUSTIFICATION: never assume I know what you're talking about; it is very essential that you back up any central statements you make in presenting the ideas of the authors in question, and more importantly in your critical evaluation of those ideas.

RELEVANCE: it is essential that you present ideas and arguments relevant to the questions asked. Going into irrelevant discussion is a waste of your valuable time; it could also cause the reader (yours truly) to lose sight of the relevant discussions you present.

CRITICAL THINKING: this is most important in terms of your critical evaluation discussions; it is vital that you present 'evidence' of critical thinking, and not simply agreeing or disagreeing with ideas and authors discussed (simply stating: "I don't like him" or "I love his ideas" is neither evidence of being critical nor of thinking!)

WHATEVER YOU DO, DO NOT SIMPLY SUMMARIZE!

If at any point you are not clear about what the question is asking or of what is required of you, do not hesitate to ask me. But whatever you do, do not ask your fellow students (they will always mislead you by giving you the wrong answer; it's human nature!)

Finally, and putting it as plainly as I can: CHEATING IS ABSOLUTELY DISGRACEFUL; OFFENDERS WILL BE SEVERELY PUNISHED.

*All the Best...*

## **Part I – Dante, Ibn Khaldun and Machiavelli**

**A. Short answer questions (10 %):** Very briefly, what is the meaning and/or significance of the following?

- i. Rational love
- ii. Assabiyah (group feeling)
- iii. Beatrice
- iv. The fox and the Lion

### **B. Essay question (60 %):**

**Clearly identify and present** what you believe to be the **most central and important aspects** of Dante's *Purgatory*, Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah*, and Machiavelli's *Prince* (in respect with furthering our understanding of ourselves as humans, as rational beings, moral beings, socio-political beings...). (In other words, what are the most central, significant and relevant ideas and notions proposed by each author in their respective works?)

#### Critical evaluation:

*"Man is a child of the customs and the things he has become used to. He is not the product of his natural disposition and temperament."* (Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, pg. 95)

*"One can make this generalization about men: they are ungrateful, fickle [i.e. inconsistent], liars, and deceivers, they shun danger and are greedy for profit."* (Machiavelli, *The Prince*, pg. 96)

**Critically reflect** upon the above two statements, **clearly presenting your critical opinion** of the ideas put forth in them and the consequences that follow from accepting these ideas. Basically: which one of these two quotes do you favor? Justify your answer (in terms of why you agree with one and not the other, or neither, or perhaps a mixture of both...)

## **Part II – General Overview (30 %):**

It has been proposed by a number of thinkers that **if we have learnt anything from history it is that we have learnt nothing from history.**

Perhaps Ibn Khaldun was right, in that the past does resemble the future more than one drop of water another, but for different reasons than he thought: perhaps it is because we simply do not learn... perhaps not... what do you think?

**Write a well thought out critical essay** reflecting on the above, drawing upon our readings from CVSP 202 (at least three authors, as well as any other works, authors, thinkers, events... from outside our course that you may want to refer to). i.e. as a human being and a citizen of the 21<sup>st</sup> century world, present your critical thought and reflection on the above statement, in light of the central human questions and themes that we came across throughout the course of the semester: how relevant are they to our modern day world and the human condition therein? How present are these questions and issues still? Have we learnt anything from the history of thought that stretches so vastly behind us? Or do we still have a lot to learn from our past?