

**POL 484 H 1 (S) L0101/POL 2026 H 1 (S): Topics in Political Thought I
(Machiavelli's Political Thought) Winter Term, 2013**

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 4-6 pm.

Description

Our theme this semester is the highly unusual republicanism of Machiavelli's *Discourses on Livy*. We begin by focusing on Machiavelli's relationship to the classical republican tradition, both as represented in the texts of the ancient historians (Polybius, Livy, Sallust, Tacitus, and others) and as reconstituted by Machiavelli's contemporaries in the Italian Renaissance. This focus is suggested by the literary form of Machiavelli's work, which is ostensibly a commentary on the first 10 books of Livy's *History*. We will find, however, that Machiavelli innovated within, reinvented, and to some extent even repudiated, the classical republican tradition, on his way to establishing a newly modern republican paradigm. Hence, our task is to lay bare the theoretical challenges and uncomfortable questions that Machiavelli's *Discourses on Livy* poses to subsequent, including contemporary, republican theory.

Texts

Mansfield, Harvey C. and Nathan Tarcov (trans.). 1996. *Niccolò Machiavelli. Discourses on Livy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

This text is available at the Bob Miller Book Room, 180 Bloor St. West. Loeb translations of the ancient historians can be found online at the Perseus website (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/collection.jsp?collection=Perseus:collection:Greco-Roman>); we will refer to these as necessary.

Format, Requirements, and Marking Scheme

Our study of Machiavelli's *Discourses on Livy* will be conducted as a seminar in which the instructor lectures and initiates discussion and students participate actively. Active participation requires considerable time and effort in preparing for class. You should plan to read the *Discourses on Livy* carefully, taking notes as you read, marking your texts, and returning again and again to difficult or salient passages. Because the reading and the in-class sessions will be demanding, it is important that you sign up only after realistically assessing whether your schedule this semester will permit you to do the required work.

Class participation will count for 15% of the final mark. As part of your participation mark, you will be required to draw up a question for class discussion. The final half-hour of each session, starting in the third session, will be devoted to discussing these (larger and more synthetic) questions, which are intended to balance the detailed work we

undertake during the first 90 minutes. These questions will be submitted to me by 5pm on the Wednesday before the seminar and read aloud in class.

The marking scheme for the undergraduate course will be as follows: one essay of 2000 words will be due on **March 1** (35% of the final mark), and a second essay of 3500 words will be due on **April 5** by noon (50% of the final mark). These marks are in addition to the class participation mark (15%). In addition to making an original and well-structured argument, each paper must also engage substantively with the secondary literature – in the first paper, you will be required to cite and engage with at least two secondary sources, at least one of which must be a book; in the second paper, you will be required to cite at least four secondary sources, at least two of which must be books.

The marking scheme for the graduate course will be different. Graduate students may choose one of the following options:

(1) one essay of 3000 words will be due on **March 1** (35% of the final mark), and a second essay of 4500 words will be due on **April 5** by noon (50% of the final mark). These marks are in addition to the class participation mark (15%). In addition to making an original and well-structured argument, each paper must also engage substantively with the secondary literature – in the first paper, you will be required to cite and engage with at least two secondary sources, at least one of which must be a book; in the second paper, you will be required to cite at least five secondary sources, at least two of which must be books.

(2) One essay of 7000 words, due on **April 5** by noon (85% of the final mark). This mark will be in addition to the class participation mark (15%). In addition to making an original and well-structured argument, your paper must also engage substantively with the secondary literature; hence, you will be required to cite and engage with at least seven secondary sources, at least two of which must be books.

The papers should be sent to me at Ryan.Balot@utoronto.ca. I will suggest paper topics well in advance of the deadlines, but you should feel free to construct your own topics provided that you discuss the topics with me.

I will penalize tardiness by subtracting 1% per day of lateness. Students are advised to keep rough and draft work and hard copies of their essays and assignments before turning them in to me. These should be kept at least until the marked assignments have been returned. You are of course responsible for familiarizing yourself with the university's policy on plagiarism. In short, to comply with the university's code regarding academic honesty, you must write your papers specifically for this class; you should not borrow material from another class; and you should not use another person's words or ideas without attribution, whether those words or ideas come from conversations, the internet, or printed materials. If you are in doubt about whether you are committing plagiarism, feel free to ask me, but a good rule of thumb is that if you are wondering whether you might be committing plagiarism, you should cite a source.

Bibliography (on reserve in Robarts Library)

Contextual Approaches (mostly “Cambridge School”)

- Baron, Hans. 1966. *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Bock, G., Q. Skinner, and M. Viroli (eds). 1990. *Machiavelli and Republicanism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hörnqvist, Mikael. 2004. *Machiavelli and Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McCormick, John. 2001. “Machiavellian Democracy: Controlling Elites with Ferocious Populism.” *APSR* 95.2: 297-314.
- Pocock, J.G.A. 1975. *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
[to be consulted with Sullivan, Vickie B. 1992. “Machiavelli’s Momentary ‘Machiavellian Moment’: A Reconsideration of Pocock’s Treatment of the Discourses.” *Political Theory* 20.2: 309-318.]
- Skinner, Q. 1978. *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought I: The Renaissance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Skinner, Q. 1981. *Machiavelli*. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Viroli, M. 1998. *Machiavelli*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Critics of the “Cambridge School” Contextual Approach

- McCormick, John. 2003. “Machiavelli against Republicanism: On the Cambridge School’s Guicciardinian Moments.” *Political Theory* 31.5: 615-643. [This might be thought of as a criticism in name only; cf. McCormick 2001, above.]
- Newell, W.R. 1987. “How Original Is Machiavelli? A Consideration of Skinner’s Interpretation of Virtue and Fortune.” *Political Theory* 15: 612-634. [cf. Berlin, Isaiah. 1980. “The Originality of Machiavelli.” In Berlin, *Against the Current* (New York: Viking Press), 25-79.]
- Tarcov, Nathan. 1982. “Quentin Skinner’s Method and Machiavelli’s Prince.” *Ethics* 92: 692-709.
- Taylor, Charles. 1987. “The Hermeneutics of Conflict.” In J. Tully (ed), *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and His Critics* (Cambridge: Polity Press), 218-228.]

Non-“Cambridge School” Contextual Studies

- Lefort, Claude. 1972. *Le travail de l’oeuvre Machiavel*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Rahe, Paul A. 2000. “Situating Machiavelli.” In J. Hankins (ed), *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rahe, Paul A. 2008. *Against Throne and Altar: Machiavelli and Political Theory under the English Republic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

“Straussian” Approaches

- Mansfield, Harvey C., Jr. 1996. *Machiavelli's Virtue*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Mansfield, Harvey C., Jr. 1979 (repr. 2001). *Machiavelli's New Modes and Orders: A Study of the Discourses on Livy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Strauss, Leo. 1958. *Thoughts on Machiavelli*. Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press.
- Sullivan, Vickie B. 1996. *Machiavelli's Three Romes: Religion, Human Liberty, and Politics Reformed*. DeKalb, Ill: Northern Illinois University Press.

Studies of Specific Aspects of Machiavellian Political Theory

- Connell, William J. 2001. “Machiavelli on Growth as an End.” In A. T. Grafton and J. Salmon (eds), *Historians and Ideologues: Essays in Honor of Donald R. Kelley* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press), 259-77.
- Hullung, Mark. 1983. *Citizen Machiavelli*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Parel, Anthony J. 1992. *The Machiavellian Cosmos*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Vatter, Miguel E. 2000. *Between Form and Event: Machiavelli's Theory of Political Freedom*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic.

Republicanism

- Pettit, Philip. 1997. *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rahe, Paul A. 1992. *Republics Ancient and Modern: Classical Republicanism and the American Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Skinner, Q. 1998. *Liberty before Liberalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Viroli, Maurizio. 2002. *Republicanism*. New York: Hill and Wang.

Studies of Livy

- Chaplin, Jane D. 2000. *Livy's Exemplary History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Luce, T.J. 1977. *Livy: The Composition of His History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.