

International Politics



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Week 1

Introduction to International Politics

Modern political issues



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Define main challenges that you think the contemporary liberal politics or other political arrangements are facing?

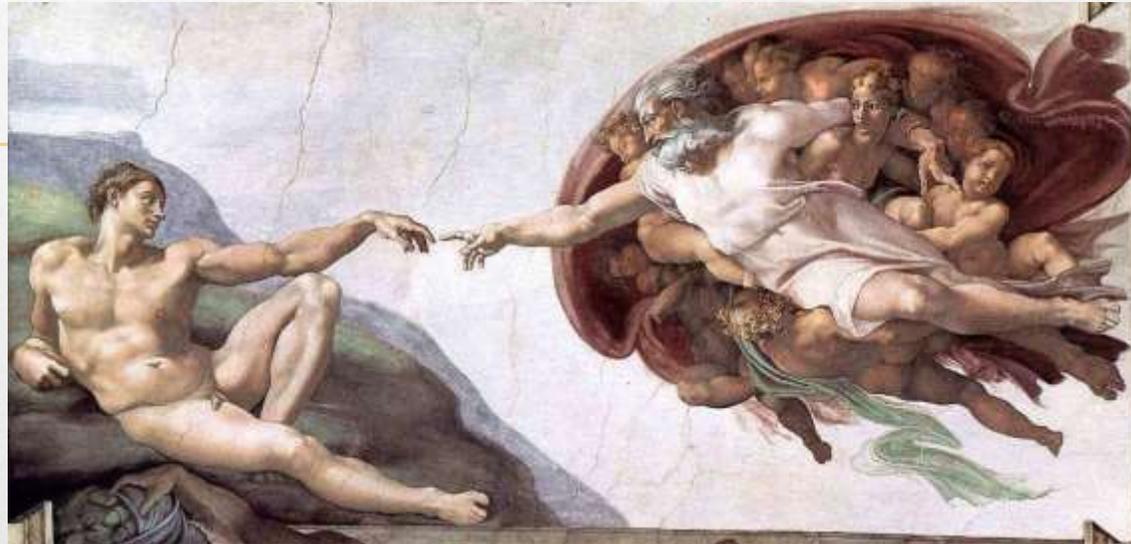
Examples: independence, self-rule, political stability, political parties, constitution, institutions, social justice, politicized religion, foreign interference, immigration and multi-culturalism, education etc.

Metaphysical Ethics



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- Greek philosophy and ethics: identification of the moral act
- Religious Ethics, universal salvation, metaphysical truth, Theological Voluntarism

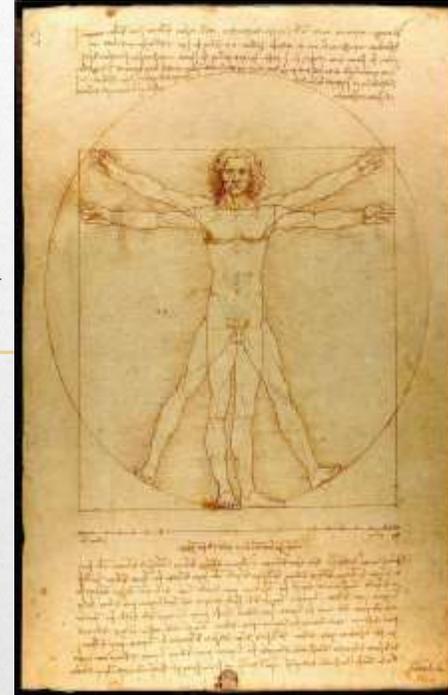


Metaphysical Ethics



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- Roman: Cicero *concordia ordinum*
- Middle Ages: Cultural progress, pessimism
nostalgia for the antiquity
- Dante, Petrarch, Giotto, Botticelli, Brunelleschi
Donatello, Michelangelo, Da Vinci and
Giordano Bruno (1548-1600)
- Birth of Rational Institutionalism
- Formalism in Ethics



Humanism



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- Failure of transcendental ecclesiastical morality, competing moral compasses.
- Challenges to Vatican moral authority, reformation
- Latin versus vulgaris!
- Affirmation of national identity as compared to universal Catholic identity
- Print Capitalism
- Discourses concentrates on a more ideal form of government for an altogether better age
- Several other works, Art of War , History of Florence, plays etc.
- Mirrors for Princes : Arthashastra, Siyasat Nameh and The Prince

Machiavelli's context



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- In 1494 he was dismissed and then imprisoned with the accusation of conspiracy to overthrow the government of Medici
- Machiavelli's Prince: a job application
- Machiavelli Versus Guicciardini
- Inclusion in *index librorum Prohibitorum*
- Separation of ethics from politics
- Establishment and preservations of the state, welfare and well-being of citizens and not doing the God's will on earth

Renaissance Italy



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- Italian nationalism and state building
- Italian independence and French, Spanish and Holy State interferences
- Church was seen as partly to blame for the current status of the country, violence, lack of patriotic virtue, absence of nationalism etc.
- City states gave rise to a more intellectual individualistic culture which broke down the medieval hold of the Church on knowledge and culture

Human Nature



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- There is some uniformity about human nature and behaviour, otherwise given changing circumstances, examples from history would be irrelevant
- Rigidity, dogmatism, following binding precedents and universal moral norms in all circumstances is absolutely wrong and useless
- fox and the lion, fear often gets same reaction as love but fear gets one more easily obeyed
- In corrupted states if given the choice man chooses the bad option, people cannot be trusted to do the right thing
- As saw before this is a theme running through several thinkers and literary figures after Machiavelli

Vivere Sicuro 1



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- Similarity of the Prince and Discourse: Best systems stable and solid, like Rome based on three powers which watch and keep others in check
- perpetual movement, nothing is stable, Equilibrium cannot forever be maintained
- Violence if necessary, should be done quickly and all at once shouldn't beget violence i.e. it should not get out of hand and become uncontrollable (Stalinism)
- Where the mass is not corrupt the system can withstand many twists of fortune, tumults and disturbances but where corruption has set in only a man with supreme power can enforce obedience to the law

Vivere Sicuro 2



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- Prince is primarily dedicated to this theme
- autonomy and sovereignty of the state is the most desirable aim and that politics should be dedicated to ensuring that autonomy and sovereignty

- The state itself has come about for defence and security
- military provision the most important requirement, importance of discipline and command in armies
- Importance of diplomacy and efficient foreign relations, external army help with independence (Cesare Borgia)

Vivere libero



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- The Discourses, 1513-1519. a series of lessons on how republics should be started and structured
- important notions of checks and balances of power
- Acknowledged the inevitability of class conflict as a sign of a healthy republic
- *Materia Umana*
- Eye-ball test

Vivere Politico 1



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- Politics is an autonomous activity, not just the pursuit of *Eudaimonia*
- Participatory political activity of all groups and classes in the republic is a good in itself
- Republicanism involves a mixed government with a stress on the importance of law and constitutionalism, participation and civic virtue
- Republics are capable of getting the support of the population, encouraging civic virtue, freedom and participation which enhances patriotism and a better military cadre

Vivere Politico 2



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- Freedom he thought was maintained by the balance of forces, the ability to participate and the fact that there existed a conflict between the two major classes
- This is where institutionalism come to play a major role, parallel institutions that keep every political element in constant checks
- institutionalisation of conflict
- In summary: Politics means public debate i.e. conflict and debate, the balance of power and class struggle

What is politics?



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- Politics is the science of power - how to get it, hang on to it and exercise it
- Politics is freedom, so we should have free debates and discourses, where there is politics, there is freedom, *libertas*
- it is about how power is distributed, checked, institutionalized and managed
- No static maintenance of the status quo - movement is constant
- Rational continuous debate on every socio-political question

Views on Religion 1

- Luther's view obeying rulers is comparable to obeying God's rule and any opposition to a prince rule would be equivalent to opposing the God's will
- Machiavelli's definition of virtue: values of boldness, energy, resoluteness, dignity, honour, communal duties and exercise of communal activities, patriotism, guts, resourcefulness, drive and discipline, human excellence - in achieving what it is you want to achieve
- Machiavelli strongly criticizes religion but subscribes to the idea that in corrupt states it is necessary to promote faith
- Role of religion: useful for keeping people obedient, No care for salvation or the next world



Views on Religion 2



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- Religious virtue undermine the civic values and virtues which stressed action, participation, glory in this world and support of collective endeavours, comparison to Civic Virtue
- separation of public and private ethics, in public domain one should be indifferent to moral or ethical positions
- For this reason his books were forbidden by the Church for centuries
- Dangers of politicized religion, Modern Example: Evangelicalism
Islamism
- Superiority of *raison d'état* to all other spiritual and private interests

Legacy of Machiavelli 1



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- Unity of social sciences, hence Machiavelli falls in the long list of social scientists going back to antiquity, but if we define a sub-set field of modern political science he was arguably the founding father
- Several prominent scholars admired Machiavelli such as Antonio Gramsci
- Christianity with its otherworldliness and specific institutions separates and often antagonistic to the state. Pagan religion preferable
- culture is not easily transformed. Once corruption and degeneration has set in it is hard to stop
- His definition of freedom as institutional provisions for balancing social forces still appear to be pertinent and very much desired
- Separation of political power, later developed into *trias politica*

Legacy of Machiavelli 2



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- Main analyst of sovereignty, individual sovereignty and global sovereignty
- He could certainly not be regarded as a 21 century democrat but definitely introduced several fundamental democratic principles
- Periodic elections without permanent institutionalization of plebeian tribunes of contestation has proven to be the main failure of the contemporary democracies i.e. questions of representation, accountability and unrestricted accumulation of wealth
- First theoretician to recognize the inevitability of class conflict and propose democratic solution to channel it.
- Pioneering views on diversity and proto multi-culturalism