

MR-74 Second Paper Questions

Write a 5-6 page paper (double-spaced, one-inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman) in response to **one** of the following two questions. Your paper is due **Wednesday, April 1, 2009** by 8:00 PM to the electronic mailbox of your TF.

1. There may be no overarching “cause” of English constitutional development between 1603 and 1689, but the chronicles offered by Kishlansky and Morgan highlight the persistent influences of (1) religious conflict and (2) fiscal crises. Discuss at least two episodes during this period in which one or both of these factors led to constitutional change, and in doing so be sure to identify and elaborate on at least one important similarity or difference between the episodes. Now consider once again the old Machiavellian theme of political *stability*. With your two episodes in mind, address this question: Does this era of political transformation in England offer any enduring lessons on the requirements for stability within a republic?

2.

In September [1649] the indefatigable Lilburne issued an appeal for popular action to elect a new representative assembly to bypass and overthrow the existing Parliament and establish the principles of the *Agreement [of the People]*. But by this time the feebleness of the response made clear that the Leveller cause was dead.

Edmund Morgan, *Inventing the People*, p. 77

[*The Commonwealth of Oceana*] is one of those works that transcend their immediate context. The book’s historical significance is that it marks a moment of paradigmatic breakthrough, a major revision of English political theory and history in the light of concepts drawn from civic humanism and Machiavellian republicanism.

JGA Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 384

What factors, in your opinion, explain the difference in the influence of the Levellers and James Harrington? Why, in particular, are the Levellers regarded as a short-lived reform movement, whereas Harrington is treated as the founder of a distinct (and influential) form of republicanism? In answering this question, pay close attention to the arguments of the Levellers and of Harrington, and the political contexts in which their respective arguments were being made.

Suggestions:

- (1) Go through the question carefully and read it more than once. Address the entire question (all parts of it) in your essay.
- (2) Consider a counterargument or two against the position you take.
- (3) Proper spelling, orthography and grammar are a must. Check your paper before turning it in.