

21H.311
FALL 2004

Fifth Paper: Topics

Please write a two to three-page paper in response to **ONE** of the topics below. The text should be double-spaced. The paper is due at the beginning of class on 11/3. Refer to the requirements found on the first paper topic handout for more guidance.

Topics

1) Write a Machiavellian critique of Erasmus' prediction of the coming "Age of Gold" in his 1517 letter to Wolfgang Capito (RR, 80-83). Would Machiavelli agree with Erasmus' analysis of the motivations of various European rulers? Would he place as much emphasis on the importance of letters?

2) The year is 1516. Imagine you are the Pope, the King of France, a pious monk or nun, a member of the Medici family, or an exiled Florentine Republican. You have just read a manuscript entitled *Il Principe*, by a former Florentine functionary named Machiavelli. Write a letter to an acquaintance in which you describe your reaction to this work.

3) What role does fortune (*fortuna*) play in the affairs of the Prince? What can the Prince do to control the unpredictable nature of Fortune?