

**The Study Of Humanism**  
CCANESA, University of Sydney  
9 August, 2013

The morning will feature papers by Chris Celenza, Nicole Hochner, Miguel Vatter, and Mario Casari which will be devoted to discussing future directions in the study of humanism. The papers are designed to be short, punchy, risk-taking statements of future directions of research. The idea is to be more op-ed than academic. We want to capture that type of thinking that academic articles and monographs are bad at capturing. The afternoon will be devoted to reading selections from Machiavelli's Discourses (text and translation attached).

For the program see here.

More specifically this event will be organized as follows:

**1. Morning session: Does Humanism have a Future? Undoing the Canon**

Format

The morning session will consist of the following 4 short papers:

Chris Celenza (JHU/American Academy in Rome),  
*Renaissance Humanism and Intellectual History in Context*

Nicole Hochner (Hebrew University of Jerusalem),  
*A Manifesto for a New Contextualism*

Miguel Vatter (UNSW),  
*Was Machiavelli a Christian Republican? Byzantine Platonism and Jewish-Islamic Prophetology as Alternative Sources for Machiavelli's Thinking on Religion*

Mario Casari (University of Rome "Sapienza"),  
*'Oriental' Book-Hunting: the Humanistic Search for Arabic Texts*

Papers should be no longer than 15-20 mins. There will be ample time for discussion.

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Some potential topics for discussion include the following, but please don't feel limited to these questions:

**Themes in the Study of Humanism**

What is the humanistic canon?

How were the humanists thinking society?

What is the intersection between political philosophy and State?  
Whether the category of humanism is still useful (ie, what was humanism and who were humanists? do we all agree on the accepted definitions?)  
The audiences and publics for humanist thought, speech, writing: ie, who were the humanist publics?

### **Methodology**

What are the practical problems for the future study of humanism?  
Where should humanism be studied in the modern university?  
Do different regions offer different forms of humanism?  
What is the ideal training for future scholars of humanism?  
What projects need our urgent attention?

## **2. Afternoon session: Machiavelli's Discourses**

The afternoon session will be devoted to discussion of specific chapters of Machiavelli's Discourses (see below). Texts and translation are attached.

### BOOK I

IV - (Disunion of Plebs & Senate made Rome free & powerful)  
XI-XIII (Religion)  
XXVIII-XXX - (Gratitude and ingratitude)

### BOOK II

V - (Changes extinguish the memory of things; Languages and memory)

### BOOK III

XXIX - (Faults of People arise from Princes)  
XLIII - (Men born in a province observe for all time the same customs)