

"the prince" report sample

Psychology, Success



Machiavelli was a master of political philosophy. Although born in 1469, for hundreds of years after writing his most famous work “ The Prince”, Machiavelli’s works are still relevant to current political issues (Machiavelli). Some feel that his works illustrate the evils of dictatorship. The acquisition of power and the substantiation of power are the focus of his writings. “ The Prince” was one of the first works to distinguish between dictatorships as a constitutional institution of the republic. Absolute monarchies are generally not regarded as dictatorships, since power exists in traditional legitimacy. Yet whenever an absolute monarchy violated the customary standards of monarchical authority, his rule must be termed a dictatorship. Machiavelli has the fortitude to remain detached from his writing and the models he portrays (" Machiavelli). He presents a duality in his view of human nature, sometimes representing humans as diverse and intelligent, while other times representing humanity as cruel and loveless. Machiavelli has the foresight to realize that humanity has many different sides to it that a ruler must consider.

Machiavelli and the Quest for Power

The gain of power remains a constant theme throughout “ The Prince”. He suggests that fortune and virtue are of utmost concern when on the quest to gain power. Virtue by Machiavelli’s definition is that the desire to achieve personal goals is essential to making them happen (" Machiavelli). Fortune refers to the opportunity to challenge for power. He implies that a certain amount of “ luck” is needed for anyone to gain power. The opportunity must present itself. Hiero of Syracuse is often cited as an example of how to forge alliances to achieve personal desires. Hiero merely needed the opportunity

to do so. Machiavelli writes that 'that he lacked nothing to reign but a kingdom'. (Machiavelli, 1532 (2005), 23)

“ The Prince” also emphasizes virtue as a necessary quality (" Machiavelli). Fortune helps, but virtue also plays a key role in obtaining power in a smooth fashion. In order to obtain the most optimal leadership, a good ruler should have both qualities.

The use of violence is brought up frequently as a tool for achieving desired goals. His idea is supported by history. War has been a prevalent means of achieving power. When writing about war, Machiavelli states, “ When seizing a state, the conqueror should consider all the injuries he must inflict, and inflict them all at once, so that he doesn't have to repeat them day after day". Distrust is prevalent in both opinions. Machiavelli’s views seem very pro-war. Those interested in conflict study often cite Machiavelli’s work as instrumental in understanding the politics of war.

Works Cited:

Machiavelli, N. (2011). The prince. Simon and Brown.