

Good essay about political theory

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



Question one

Compare the role that ‘ men of such ambition and talents’ play in the creation and preservation of political order in the political thought of Locke and Machiavelli. In what ways are these men both necessary and dangerous?

In a Lockean commonwealth, is a citizen who wishes simply to live out a private life more secure against such a danger than a citizen in a Machiavellian principality? Why or why not?

Niccolo Machiavelli is credited for the study of modern science. He was a diplomat, a philosopher and a humanist. This man was known for his crude ways of describing unscrupulous politicians. He was known to use negative terms. Machiavelli had many views. Though he was a man of substance in his society, first by being second in command to the chancery and second by being an ‘ ambassador’ (Machiavelli, 21), he held controversial views concerning politics and politicians.

Machiavelli in his best known book, ‘ 2 Prince’, said that the power of a hereditary prince must have socio-political maintenance. He held the view that in the face of morbid corruption, the prince still had the power to maintain order and stabilize the political structure of his kingdom.

Consequently, he deduced that both private and public morality had to be understood by the prince in order for him to rule well. Stabilization of power was the key. Many scholars note that Machiavelli glorified ‘ instrumentality’ in the building of state (Machiavelli, 27).

Like Machiavelli, John Locke’s political philosophy was controversial. He claimed that men are not naturally equal and free. He instead claimed that all men are subject to the monarch. Though he admitted that men are

naturally equal and free, he also added that everyone has rights to life, property and liberty. He used his philosophy to point out that men transfer some of their rights to legitimate governments so as to have stability and be comfortable in their enjoyment of their lives.

These two great men of history are both necessary and dangerous in the modern political world. Their views, though many years old, still hold water in today's ruling world. First, Machiavelli's view that in the face of morbid corruption, the prince still had the power to maintain order and stabilize the political structure, and that both private and public morality had to be understood by the prince in order for him to rule well can be used in the modern political economy to maintain stabilization in a state. Stabilization of power, he said, was the key. This is a necessary condition in the leadership of a country or state. However, as many scholars noted that Machiavelli glorified 'instrumentality' in the building of state. This is a dangerous view. He glorified princes and the ruling by monarchy. Today's' political dynamics command that there must be democracy within a state. This is what will ensure stability. Monarchs and instrumentalism are dangerous in modern times.

Locke, on the other hand, held freedom and liberty views. He said that men are not naturally equal and free. This is a dangerous view. This is because constitutions, which are the threshold of any political leadership, give every person freedom. He also claimed that all men are subject to the monarch. In the modern world, monarchs are not practical. However, he admitted that men are naturally equal and free, he also added that everyone has rights to life, property and liberty. He used his philosophy to point out that men

transfer some of their rights to legitimate governments so as to have stability and be comfortable in their enjoyment of their lives (Machiavelli, 1532). This claim in all its form is wrong and dangerous. People give their governments right to rule them and ensure stability in a state. Not the other way round. A citizen cannot give his or her government the rights which he or she has in accordance with the constitution. Nevertheless, his views are also necessary. He talks of freedom and liberty to every person. Without these, the country or state could be in a political quagmire. Therefore, he is necessary.

In a Lockean commonwealth, a citizen who wishes simply to live out a private life is more secure against such a danger than a citizen in a Machiavelli. This is because in a Lockean standard of leadership, rights and freedoms are assured. In contrast to the Machiavellian principality which ensures some rights of citizens are taken away and transferred to the state, in a Lockean commonwealth these rights are assured. Consequently, the Lockean principality is better than the Machiavellian one.

Locke and Machiavelli would not support the United States (a powerful and prosperous nation) when it comes to the formation of international organizations such as, the United Nations. These organizations are meant to settle disputes among nations and thereby avoid the war. However, considering the two men's attitude concerning the existence of a natural order (Hobbes, 27), it would be unthinkable to say that they would support the United States in this. This is because according to them, outside governance, all nations exist in a natural order. Therefore, they would not see the logic behind an international organization which solves disputes

among and between nations. Nevertheless, they both also tell us that it is rational to try to escape the inconveniences of the state of nature by creating a civil government (Locke, 29). It can be assumed that the civil government which the two men are talking about is an international organization. Thus, it is still irrational to think they would not support the most powerful and prosperous nation (United States) in the formation of an international organization like the U. N. consequently, the most logical reasoning would be this; they would support the United States to some extent. Since there would be international wars, both Locke and Machiavelli would agree that there would be need for ‘ a civil government’ to help in the quelling of tension and avoid war. Nevertheless, since, they both support the natural existence of nations together; they would be reluctant to support the country.

Now, in case of their support of the country, the question becomes, to what extent would they recommend that we cooperate with such institutions? Should the United States seek approval before going to war? Locke and Machiavelli would only support the United States in the formation of such organizations if their concern would only be the solution of international problems which do not in any way infringe in they rights and freedoms of the United States and her citizens (Hobbes, 43). If the U. S. would be affected negatively, then the international organizations would not get their support. They would also support them only if they would contribute to the bringing of peace when there is tension and war. Their concern would also be to know whose fault the dispute is. For example, in the Middle East crisis where Israel is always at logger heads with Palestine over Gaza, international

organizations should know whose land that is or resolve to divide it equally. Nevertheless, in the Iraq War where the United States invaded the Islamic country without sufficient consultation, both men would disapprove.

The U. S. is a very powerful country both economic wise and militarily. Thus, it has the power to do what it pleases without much questioning. But with international organizations like the United Nations, the country is put in check. Both Locke and Machiavelli would be in support of this. This is because they were of the view that countries should naturally exist in a naturally and peaceful way without any disputes (Locke, 46). However, when this law of nature is disturbed and disputes which include wars arise, then there should be ‘ a civil government’ (an international organization) to solve these disputes.

When these organizations are formed, another question arises. Should we allow an international organization to possess independent military forces? The United Nations does not have an independent military. When there is need for military aide, the organization gets its military from the member states which include the United States. There is a reason why this is so. If such an organization possess in dependent military, the veto powered countries (such as the United States, Britain and China) would use the military in their convenience (Locke 43). For instance, one of the mentioned countries may have an enemy. There is a possibility that that specific country can use its power and influence to unjustly attack the nation with which it is in dispute. Therefore, it is not wise to give such an international organization which is dependent mostly on the goodwill of its more endowed members to have a military of its own. The dependence of such an

organization makes it dangerous so (Hobbes, 47)

Finally, would Locke's or Machiavelli's ideas be more relevant considering the situation that exists in the world today? The answer here is uncertain. This is because, first, Locke's and Machiavelli's ideas applied to the generations which are past. During that time, wars and disputes over resources like oil was not as much as it is. The two men belong to the ancient mode of reasoning that all nations naturally exist among each other and all are satisfied with the resources that they possess. Nevertheless, today's world is filled with conflicts all over. Both internal and external conflicts are everywhere. Nations fight against each other and nations fight amongst themselves. Their ideas therefore, would be useless and out of sync with the modern world. Their views were relevant in the world that past. But in this kind of world, those ideas are simply irrelevant. Some may argue that they can be relevant to some extent. But that is subject to debate.