

Plato, for sex, aggression towards figures of

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Plato, Niccolo Machiavelli, and Sigmund Freud each had their own opinions on how civilization should be advanced. As they each contemplate and analyze the civilizing process, different ways of political changes are encountered. Beginning with Plato, he argued that a society is made up of three parts: working citizens who produce goods, citizens who fight and defend the city from enemies, and guardians who politically govern the city. Plato also stresses the effectiveness of virtue, justice, and morality within a society and how it is what keeps the culture organized while also binding the civilization together. On the contrary, Niccolo Machiavelli does not show much regard to morality, and instead advocates resorting to violence as the most effective way to advance civilization. Along with using force, man must acquire considerable knowledge to figure out when exactly resorting to violence is most appropriate for a state.

Sigmund Freud believes that humans carry various perpetual instincts, such as: desires for sex, aggression towards figures of authority and competition with those who interfere with an individual's path to satisfaction. Freud's argument is, in order to advance civilization, one must have to repress and subdue these powerful urges that lead to inevitable suffering. Plato envisioned a society that was governed by philosophical governors who were put into the place of authority not by force or suffering of their citizens, but by the morals, talent, and knowledge that they hold. If we lived in a culture where mankind acted morally, without violence or infringing upon another human's rights, only then would a civilization be able to thrive and progress. Plato argues that one should not be willing to make others happy at the expense of others. " In establishing our city, we are not looking to make any

one group in it outstandingly happy, but to make the whole city so as far as possible" (Plato, Republic, IV, 420b). Plato believed that violence was unjust, so does this mean that a just leader should act the same way he does his citizens with his enemies? Plato would agree that guardians should hold the knowledge of how to distinguish an enemy and a citizen, and how they should act towards each of them. " But surely they must be gentle to their own people and harsh to their enemies.

Otherwise they will not wait around for others to destroy them but will do it themselves first." (Plato, II, 375, c). In this sense, Plato would agree with Machiavelli that leaders and guardians should not behave justly with just anyone. " States are governed by one prince and his servants hold their prince in greater authority because in all his province there is no one recognized as superior but himself." (Machiavelli, IV, page 17).

Here, Machiavelli and Plato can both agree that rulers must step up and lead their people to greatness but, what I would not agree with is a person who rules solely by use of force and power. Plato would agree that using force would only lead to more conflict within a civilization. From my understanding of The Republic and The Prince, virtue is supposed to be a skill that is learned, but a man that rules only through violence and without knowledge of skills is not a just ruler.

Plato believed that a true guardian should be just at all time no matter what the circumstance was, and this is one of the many qualities that would make him a good leader. While Plato was a strong advocate for ruling with moral virtue, Machiavelli advocates violence and cruelty in order to keep the state

safe from outsiders. I agree with Plato's idea that rulers must behave and should refrain from resorting to violence, but they should also be able to tell when it is appropriate to use force in the interest of the entire city/state.

Under these circumstances, it should be the leader's responsibility to establish a just culture where moral virtue is put into place in order to create a respected system that can function. But, in order to have a just state, there must first be a just leader with moral virtues. Since the leaders are given all power to govern, they must make sure that every decision they make is a just one that takes virtue into consideration. Machiavelli, arguing from a realist's point of view, believes that politics and morals should not intertwine, but should be held separate. A leader would not be able to hold his power if he ruled through moral virtue. " They wanted to hold Greece much as the Spartans had held it, by making it free and leaving its own laws.

But they did not succeed; so they were compelled to destroy many cities in that province so as to hold it. For in truth there is no secure mode to possess them other than to ruin them. And whoever becomes a patron of a city accustomed to living free and does not destroy it, should expect to be destroyed by it." (Machiavelli, V, Page 20).

This is an example of Machiavelli disregarding morality by supporting the idea of using violence to prevent violence. If Machiavelli paid as much attention to moral virtue as much as he does with using violence, he believes that civilization would decline, as he thinks that moral rules in politics are not the same as the moral rules we abide by in a typical citizen's life. He defends

this claim in Chapter 6 by using an example of rulers in the past who were defeated because of the lack of force that they had used. "...

And thus things must be ordered in such a mode that when they no longer believe, one can make them believe by force." (Machiavelli, VI, page 24)

According to Machiavelli, the definition of virtue is knowledge. A leader should be able to figure out when and where it is appropriate to resort to violence/evil. But, even after this knowledge is acquired, would that still make any violent action just? Machiavelli would go on to argue that instead of looking for a just philosopher to lead a state, we should look at things through a realist's perspective and make our decisions while keeping the history and facts of a state and its previous rulers in mind. For example, Machiavelli spends a great deal of time looking at previous kingdoms, such as the Kingdom of Darius, France, Turks, Romans and explaining how or why they either failed or succeeded in order to make rational decisions that would benefit or potentially destroy civilization. In *Civilization and its Discontents*, Sigmund Freud specifies the major constrictions between civilization and the individual. The conflict primarily arises from man's pursuit to natural freedom and civilization's need to repress man's instinctual desires.

Freud believes the wellbeing of an entire civilization is risked when an individual is put in any position where their desires (such as: cravings for sexual fulfillment and violence) are drawn out. Civilization would then appropriately respond with laws that forbid crimes like murder and rape, while enforcing these laws with severe punishments if they are not abided

by. These restrictions would then subsequently inhibit man's possibilities of pleasure and happiness. "Life, as we find it, is too hard for us, it brings us too many pains, disappointments and impossible tasks.

In order to bear it we cannot dispense with palliative measures... There are perhaps three such measures: powerful deflections, which cause us to make light of our misery; substitutive satisfactions, which diminish it; and intoxicating substances, which make us insensitive to it." (Freud, Ch. 2, 41)

Freud would argue that this course of action is not only what makes up civilization, but also what gives citizens that never-ending feeling of dissatisfaction and desire for more of what they are given. This, and the expectations of society to repress one's urges is where an individual's aggression toward others that get in the way of their personal happiness, and authority figures who enforce the laws stems from. Freud, Machiavelli, and Plato all had distinct thoughts on how to advance civilization, but also seemed to agree on what human nature truly is. Violence.

Freud validates the human nature of an individual's desires and how civilization's task is to repress them in order to grow and develop the culture. Machiavelli agrees that violence is a part of human nature, but also believes that violence has the potential to solve civilization's problems if addressed in the right way, using knowledge of history and concrete facts. Plato recognizes violence, but also believes that it is inexcusable and unjust to use violence, when acting morally and with virtue would essentially advance a civilization that could function properly. Plato would also contend that if we lived in a culture where mankind acted morally, without violence or

infringing upon another human's rights, only then would a civilization be able to thrive and progress.