

The prince by niccolo machiavelli



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Introduction

Niccole Machiavelli was a Greek political theorist and philosopher, and he was among the first political theorist to delineate study of politics from religion. His thinking was that it was wrong to transfuse religion with politics, yet the morality that characterizes religion could not be used in the understanding of politics. The writer wrote during the age of renaissance, he depicts to his audience that religion would only be important if it was used as a strategy for the mentainance of the state rather than ruling the state.

Body

Niccole Machiavelli comes out as a reformation theorist, during his time religion and politics were seen as one. His argument was that for there to be survival of the state the two must be separated. He goes on and to support his argument by saying that the decay, the near collapse of Italy was caused by the fission of politics and religion. Machiavelli therefore calls for radical changes; these changes must live out the clergy for there to be survival of the state. To illustrate his disappointent with the clergy, he makes numerous references to the life of Pope Alexander the sixth. This was the most corrupt man in Italy; he saw the disintegration of Italy in smaller spheres of influence. While the pope was both the earthly and spiritual leader, he did not prevent Italy from collapsing. In fact the pope used to live his cathedral and pronounce proudly, that he had illegitimate children alllover Italy.

Machiavelli portrays to his audience a solution to a decaying society, and the solution was lying in the prince. It is the prince, who could reform Italy, and he goes further to illustrate that; the prince was not electable but infallible. It

is the prince who can reform Italy; he must not be questioned in terms of his policy and actions. The prince should suspend the current constitution and he would rule by a decree, no individual should question his authority. He explains further that power and authority were in the hands of this individual, and it was within the rights of the prince to engage in any activity, that guarantees state survival. He goes on to depict to his audience that a prince follows a general rule; the end justifies the means that, it does not matter how the end, state greatness is to be achieved. The prince is allowed to kill, execute or murder the opponents of the state.

Conclusion

The writer continues to say that the prince may also apply kindness in his ruling, but this kindness should not be seen as a sign of weakness. It is the responsibility of the prince to be cruel and ruthless, particularly if the actions of an individual will threaten the survival of the state. The writer's lesson to his audience is that; a leader must have the courage of a lion but this is not enough, for the leader should be cunning as a fox. But once order has been restored in society the constitution must apply.

The writer wants his audience to learn about the ancient political systems and their challenges; he also comes with a solution which is still being used to date. His separation of religion from politics is seen in every country today, religion is used as a tool for the survival of the state while political parties are used to rule a state.