

History:niccolo machiavelli

Family



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Niccolo Machiavelli Niccolo Machiavelli was a remarkable Italian figure who is recognized as a statesman, political theorist and writer. “ He was born 3 May 1469 in Florence and at a young age became a pupil of a renowned Latin teacher, Paolo da Ronciglione. It is speculated that he attended the University of Florence, and even a cursory glance at his corpus reveals that he received an excellent humanist education.” (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 1) Niccolo Machiavelli commenced his political life and role at the age of 29. This was the time when he was designated to be chancellor and secretary of the second chancellery of the Republic of Florentine. He had supreme power in this office, and his job was to execute the policy decisions of others, carry on diplomatic correspondence, and compose reports. The diplomatic and foreign visits experiences gave him insight that would be included in his later writings. Machiavelli's most famous and noted work was called " The Prince," which he wrote in 1532. " The Prince" was a short book that in general, said one thing: all means may be resorted to for the establishment and preservation of authority. In other words, the book described the means by which a prince may gain and maintain his power. “ Machiavelli's The Prince is best known for his bold and liberating attack on older traditions of political thought. He openly assaults the naive hope in the salvific rewards of virtue, held out by Christian apologists, and the parallel assertions by classical thinkers that the just or virtuous life yields an unassailable intrinsic happiness.” (Rafael, 171) Machiavelli had a major influence on the people of the Renaissance. Although he was publicly disliked by some people, his actions he made as a political leader and his emphasized points in his books influenced many people. (Federico, 129) Many people did not like him at the time, but Niccolo Machiavelli was a great

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person and influenced the world greatly. His ideas on politics expressed in his writings gave insight to many people. Niccolo Machiavelli gained a spiraling reputation throughout his life of unscrupulous mistrust, being connected with dishonest government and diabolical. Machiavelli, during this period, was alleged as a conspirator implicated in the collapse of Gonfaloniere Soderini. He was detained and later tormented for this - he sustained saying that he was blameless. Later, when he was set free from prison, he was enforced to withdraw from public life. He was expelled to his country domain at San Casciano. This is where he wrote *The Prince*, *Discourses* and two plays, amongst some other minor work as well. However, many people criticize Machiavelli's radical suggestions in *The Prince*. At this present time in our society many of Machiavelli's thoughts and philosophies would be considered ridiculous and entirely corrupt. However, perhaps in the time that Machiavelli ruled, those members of royalty would consider these beliefs and philosophies completely rational, logical and of course off the record. Machiavelli has many ways of wording his ideas very harshly; however a lot of what he says has great merit. In leadership, any leader is better to be feared than to be loved. A different respect is given out of fear, than the respect that which is given out of loves. (Gilbert, 33) The respect given for love for an individual is more caring and compassionate. In governmental leadership, care and compassion for the leader may be detrimental to the ruling of the society. Whereas in fear, your society will do as told out of fear of what may happen if they do not abide by these orders. One could argue that Machiavelli's old boss was dead and he was simply attaching himself to a new one in order to rule vicariously through de' Medici, or that in serving princes he lived a better life than if he were not

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connected to power. Perhaps this is so. The Prince offers many clues to Machiavelli's true motivation. Consider the passage in Chapter 7 where Machiavelli describes the undoing of Cesare Borgia, " And he told me, on the day that Julius II was created, that he had thought about what might happen when his father was dying, and had found remedy for everything, except that he never thought that at his death he himself would also be on the point of dying" (Machiavelli, 32). One can infer from this passage and the passage on page 31 where he delineates the steps to maintaining a principality that Machiavelli sought out de' Medici to see the work that Cesare Borgia had started finished. That is, to bring about a strong, unified Italy. Machiavelli states in Chapter 9 that a prince is better off gaining his support from the people than from the great and powerful, " But when a prince who found on the people knows how to command and is a man full of heart, does not get frightened in adversity, does not fail to make other preparations, and with his spirit and his orders keeps the generality of people inspired, he will never find himself deceived by them and he will see he has laid his foundations well" (Machiavelli, 41). " In the Discourses on Livy, Machiavelli favors the deeds of the ancients above their philosophy; he reproaches his contemporaries for consulting ancient jurists for political wisdom rather than looking to the actual history of Rome. He argues that the factional tumults of the Roman republic, which were condemned by many ancient writers, actually made Rome free and great." (Harvey, <http://ehis.ebscohost.com>) In response to the supposition that the subjects would abandon their prince in times of adversity Machiavelli states, ". . . a powerful and spirited prince will always overcome these difficulties, now by giving hope to his subjects that the evil will not last long . . ." (Machiavelli, 44). In Chapter 16 Machiavelli

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discusses "liberality" wherein he encourages the Prince not to lavishly give to the great and powerful because this would come at the expense of his subjects. In Chapter 21 he suggests that prince should get to know his people and meet with labor and business leaders. Machiavelli also spoke of weakening the Church, albeit rather covertly, when he says that King Louis made a mistake in strengthening the Church in Chapter 3, and again in Chapter 7 when he says that Cesare Borgia had to "upset those orders" which were in part the political relationships of the Church, and finally when he attributes the ultimate failure of Cesare Borgia to the papacy. (Quentin, 87) If Machiavelli sought to empower a leader who would be concerned with his subjects, the question arises of his thoughts on republics. It cannot be ignored that the advice to a prince acquiring a republic is, "For in truth there is no secure mode to possess them other than to ruin them" (Machiavelli, 20). The separation of the Church and State was a major theme. Not was it only in Europe, but it was in the United States as well with the Constitution. It was the mirror image as far as getting the State out the Church. It is still can be seen today as well. Machiavelli was a patriotic scientist who may have been the first advocate in modern history of the separation of church and state. He examined political behavior as an end unto itself, without the imposition of God's will, and by discussing what is rather than what should be. A Citizen army was better to have than a professional army because the citizen had a more of commitment. This would have good results in the terms of the internal laws of Italy. Works Cited Federico Chabod: (1958) Machiavelli & the Renaissance. - Bowes & Bowes. London. 129 Gilbert, F. The Humanist Concept of the Prince and the 'Prince' of Machiavelli ('The Journal of Modern History', XI, 1939) 33 Harvey Mansfield, Britannica Biographies, Machiavelli, <https://assignbuster.com/historyniccolo-machiavelli/>

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