

Machiavelli: a renaissance thinker



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The fourteenth century was an inexperienced start of a revolution called the renaissance. The renaissance is recognized for its birth of many noteworthy philosophers, including the well-known Machiavelli. He without a hesitation is the best political thinker existed. His beliefs and ideas have been a motivation and inspiration for many accomplished leaders across the world even modern leaders. Even though he was a positive influence on humankind, he also has a bad reputation because he misunderstood the views on politics. Machiavelli was considered as the father of political science and a political philosopher. Machiavelli was born on May 3, 1469 in Florence, Italy, raised up in a nearly poor family; his parents could not send him to school because of their wealth. Instead, his mother, a religious poet, and his father, an attorney, home schooled him. It is only known that his family did their best to obtain a reputable and famous image, and Machiavelli grew up to be a nice, educated, and greatly known man. He attended the University of Florence and studied logic, astronomy, music, mathematics, and philosophical debate. Machiavelli's political career took off in 1498 when he was offered a government position in Florence. The question that is been asked, " Is Machiavelli a renaissance thinker?" This question is not easy to answer. A renaissance thinker had many different types of traits in the sixteenth and fifteenth centuries. Machiavelli was an extraordinarily unique person in all aspects. He had traits of humanism, realism, materialism, and scepticism because he was always curious, wanted to achieve and wanted to know about the world. The traits he was unsuccessful at as a renaissance thinker were individualism, secularism, and well roundedness because he never thought about himself and the importance of life. This does not make him a complete renaissance thinker.

In the renaissance, humanism and realism were key characteristics, which made Machiavelli such a great philosopher. Before the renaissance, the world was a perfect place and no body ever questioned anything and always believed in the church. Machiavelli thought he could achieve anything he wanted to if you put your mind to it. He wrote a book called *The Prince*, which explains how the political system should be run and how leaders should control their realm. This is where he had used his humanism skills. *The Prince's* input to the history of political reflection was essential because it helped political realism. His way of realism was that to portray the world the way it exists. Machiavelli originally wrote *The Prince* in hopes of securing the favour of the ruling of the Medici family, and he deliberately made its claims provocative. His book, *The Prince*, best-known book expresses and describes the arts with which a ruling prince can conserve control of his kingdom. Humanists also viewed the book negatively. *The Prince* is a manual to acquiring and keeping custody of political power. *The Prince* created the word “Machiavellian” an embodiment for dishonesty, tyranny, and political manipulation. Some historians argue Machiavelli had a secret or clever message that explains away the ugly suggestion of the plain text, saying that Machiavelli really favoured advantage after all and was just trying to scam princes into policies that would lead to their conquer, not their victory which makes him evil. As he had said, “The sole test of a good government was whether it was effective, whether the ruler increased power” (Source 2). He explains that ruler should always be effective and change something in society. Many historians believe that his evil side to the book made him not a true positive renaissance thinker.

Individualism and secularism are characterized in the Renaissance are not themes of Machiavelli's thinking. Machiavelli was not individualistic because as a great publisher and as a leader never took credit for his work. His use of historical examples throughout *The Prince* displays understanding of Roman and Greek history and is consistent with the pristine love for ancient times of the Renaissance, which shows the characteristics of the classicism. He appears to be extraordinarily well educated, although his families wealth probably prevented him from studying at a greater university. As a result, the effect of humanist teachings, common at most of the organization of higher learning at the time, on Machiavelli was limited. Machiavelli's information of specific particulars of politics is principally the termination of a life-long career as an official and servant. " Human beings are selfish and interested only in advancing their own interests" (Source 2). In this quote, we learn that Machiavelli was not even close to being an individualistic and a secularistic man because he says that people should not be thinking about himself or herself. In his book *The Prince*, Machiavelli often criticized human nature accusing humans to be " ungrateful, voluble, dissemblers" (*The Prince*). He said, " To lead you have to adapt to the situation" (*Prince Movie*). He is saying to accommodate what the people want is the way you should be.

Machiavelli as a great man was always sceptical and very materialistic. When Machiavelli had written his book *The Prince*, he was always curious and questioned why and how leaders had done things at the time. When Machiavelli had written his book, he had researched and studied successful leaders at the time. He was always taking notes and always was asking

questions and was always trying to find the answer. When Machiavelli had grown up, he had been a very materialistic person. As he is said, “ Power is money, money gets you power” (Medici Movie). In the quote, he explains how if leaders have a lot of money they have a better chance to be leaders than the lower class because money gets you many things in life. Unlike a pre-renaissance thinker, Machiavelli did not base these ideas on simple beliefs. He observed the great rulers of his time and before such as Francesco Sforza, Lorenzo de Medici, and Cesare Borgia and how they ruled. His deceptive method however proves that he was not the perfect renaissance thinker.

This concludes that Machiavelli could have been a renaissance thinker, however; he lacked essential categories to be truly a renaissance thinker. He had lacked in a very important category, is to be well rounded, which would have made him closer to a renaissance thinker. He being in the renaissance time should have been good at acting, wrestling, math, poetry, and writing. Out of these five things, he was only great at math and writing which were key things but not enough to be a complete renaissance thinker. As now we know about Machiavelli, and how he is not a renaissance thinker, imagine if he could have his time period when he was born called The Machiavelli Time-period. He would have been perfect for this category and would have succeeded very well. The con about this period is that everyone would always talk about politics and instead of other important aspects in the world. This world would only be about politics, which would have modern world people’s lives boring and reckless. Machiavelli was, in every sense of the word, to be almost a complete “ renaissance thinker”.

Work cited:

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