

Thinker	Governance
Plato	- Philosophy.
Aristotle.	- Science
Machiavelli	- art

Machiavelli

Book: The Prince.
Discourses

Introduction of Machiavelli as a thinker.

With Machiavelli a new age in the history of Western Political Thought begins. He symbolizes the end of medieval age & the beginning of Modern Age. Some scholars regard Machiavelli as the first Modern Thinker. Some scholars regard him not as a first modern thinker but as a transitional thinker. All features of modern political thinking have not emerged in his thoughts completely but we do get the introduction of modern political life in his thoughts.

He is regarded as the most unfortunate thinker who has been criticised most.

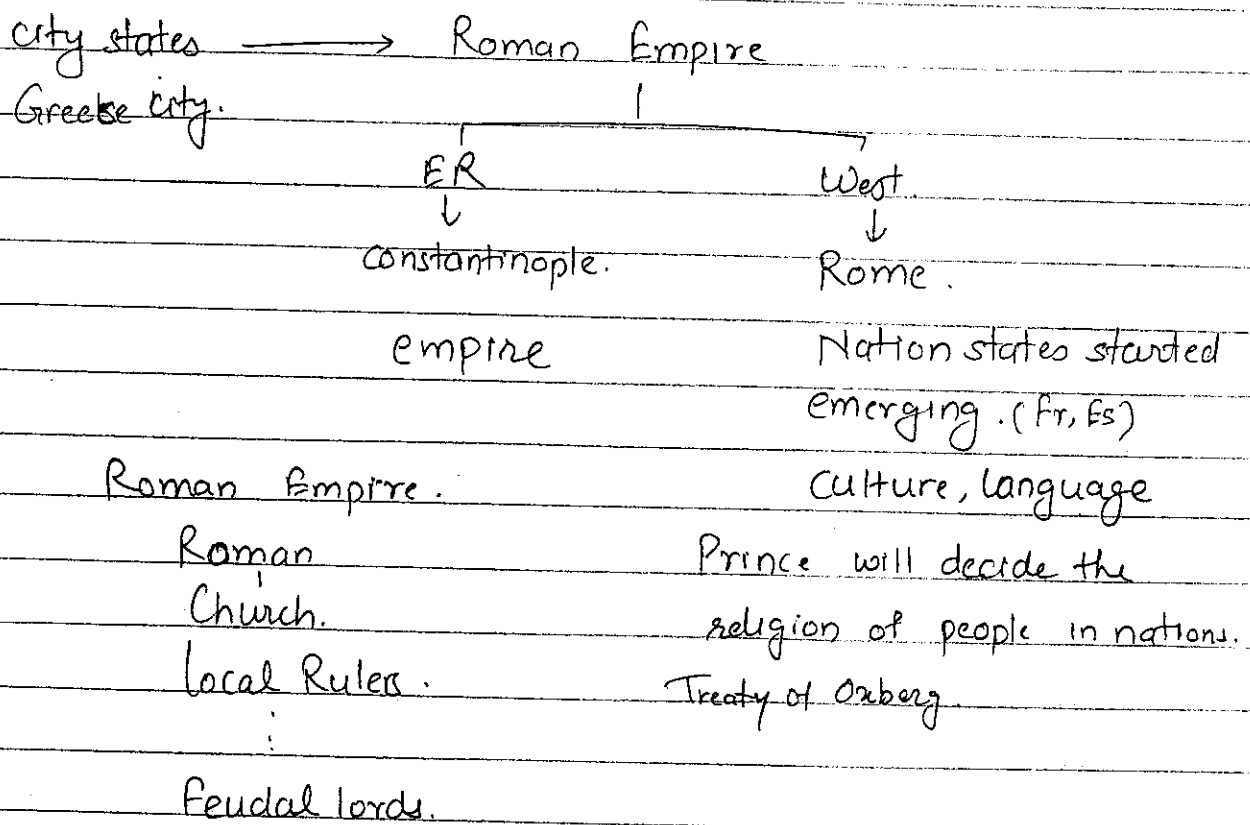
Machiavellianism has become an abused term.

At the same time he is the one who is practised most in the real world of politics.

Machiavelli is often compared with Chanakya.

Under Machiavelli's book the Prince is supposed to be the best book ever written in the field of statecraft.

Concern of Machiavelli



Concern of Machiavelli

- He was concerned with the situations prevailing in Italy. Italy was a house divided against itself. Italy was a corrupt society. Italy was the seat of Roman Church & by that time it had become a very corrupt institution. He held Church responsible for corruption in the society. It is the influence of Roman Church that impacted evolution of Italy as a nation. Other regions established themselves as nations whereas Italy was far behind. Italy became vulnerable to external attacks. He thought that

world understands. argument of power not power of argument.

ethics - religion.
reason = god

only a strong prince who rules with an iron hand having absolute authority can establish Italy as a nation state & tackle its problems.

His book 'The Prince' contains instructions on the statecraft to an aspiring prince. His Prince is not the hereditary ruler but a political entrepreneur.

Because of the impact of Italian circumstances on his thinking, Sabine calls Machiavelli as narrowly dated & narrowly located.

Laski calls him as a child of Renaissance.

He is known as the First Realist Thinker.

He builds the Laws of Politics in a statecraft on the understanding of human history & human psychology rather than ethics & religion.

He is also known as "Father of European Secularism" as he makes a clear distinction betⁿ Religion & Politics. He brings Church under the state.

o In Politics, the ends justify the ~~needs~~ means.

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Prominent suggestions of Machiavelli to a Prince.

- First suggestion introduces Prince with his realist approach.

- A Prince should look at the things as they are rather than as they ought to be.

his understanding
of Reality,
Nature of Politics.

- One who tries to find goodness in every profession is bound to get disappointed. He will ruin not only himself but also his state.

Context of the statement:

- 'The Prince' is supposed to be best book ever

- written in the field of statecraft. It is one of

- the suggestions of Machiavelli to an aspiring

- prince. He is explaining the nature of the world

- of Politics. He suggests that Politics is different

- from religion or ethics. He also explains human

- nature. Human nature according to Machiavelli is

- self centered. Prince must understand the real

- world of Politics & the reality of human nature.

- He expects that a Prince should be realistic. He

- should understand the things as they are rather than

- in the manner Prince would like them to see.

- Prince should not live in the world of ideas or he

- should not live under illusions. If Prince will not

- understand the reality as it is, he will bring

- destruction to his state and to himself.

We can compare Machiavelli's views with that of Plato.

Theory of History.

Evolution:
marks

cyclical.
Machiavelli

Progressive.
Western.

Plato is an idealist for whom there is no difference in the field of politics & ethics. For Plato actually, ethics should be a guide for a ruler.

Machiavelli is realist who establishes that politics is neither ethics nor law. Politics is management of Power. Politics may be uninspiring but that is how it is. It has an autonomous character of its own. Unlike Plato & Aristotle who believe in essential goodness of human nature, who believe that man is by nature social animal, Machiavelli believes that man is self centered. Hence Prince should understand human psychology & conduct himself in the field of Politics. eg. Nehru China was.

Understanding of Human Nature and Importance of History.

o Man is by nature selfish, coward, ungrateful, deceitful, avaricious (extremely greedy), fickle-minded.

o Man can forget the loss of his father but not the loss of his patrimony / property

This is description of human nature by Machiavelli. He wants Prince to understand human nature. His belief is that laws of Politics are based on human psychology. He has observed human nature during

his time in Italy & found human beings extremely self centered & greedy. He substantiates his opinion with examples from history. He believes that history is a better guide than philosophy. His view of history is cyclical. He does not believe that human nature has changed or will change. These are the eternal features of human nature.

Implications for Prince about his analysis of Human Nature.

- Man is by nature selfish. It means man will give primary to his own interest rather than the interest of the Prince. Thus Prince should not take the support of anyone for granted & for ever.

They will support the Prince so long they feel that Prince is fulfilling their interest.

Not only man is self centered but also ungrateful.

They forget the favours done by a Prince.

This shows that Prince should not take it for granted that he will get the support forever even if he has favoured someone, he will remain grateful to him. In this context he suggests Prince

'It is better to be feared than to be loved'.

People love at their own will but fear at the will of the Prince.

His suggestion is that Prince should prefer to establish its fear rather than establishing his authority on love. Since man is ungrateful & self centered he will forget the favours done by the Prince.

Man is ungrateful but at the same time man is fearful & coward. Prince should exploit this weakness of human nature & establish his rule on sound footing.

Critical Evaluation :

- His advice is relevant. It is not that he does not suggest the policy of love. He is only suggesting that it is preferable for a Prince to be feared than loved. Policy of love alone may work only if people have sufficient reason. He suggests to use both carrot & stick. In our times leaders like Hillary Clinton has no. of times mentioned the importance of smart power, a combination of hard & soft power. Regarding the field of politics in general & International Politics in particular we cannot undermine the significance of power. Regarding International Politics, it is said that world understands the argument of power rather than power of argument.

Machiavelli also suggests that man is by nature possessive and avaricious/greedy.

We can see the impact of his times in his description of human nature. He represents that age of European History when materialism was on rise. He has established that man has natural love for property. He advises Prince not to touch the property & women of his citizens.

Machiavelli: Prince should know
his interest is in interest of state.

Bismarck.

He suggests that the love of property is so great that man forgets the loss of his father rather than the loss of his property.

Hence a wise Prince executes rather than confiscate.

Suggestion on the use of force/power.

- Use of force should not be first option. However we cannot avoid the use of force in the real world of politics. Prince should know the successful management of power.

Force should be used as a last option, preferably not directly by the prince but through his subordinates.

If Prince decides to use force, he should use it completely to crush the person. His suggestion on the use of force & amount of force to be used is based on his understanding of human nature.

He mentions about the passion for revenge. Revenge is a very strong emotion. One should never leave anyone in a position to take revenge. Man can go for extremes in taking revenge. Man will even forget his self interest.

Suggestion on qualities of the Prince.

- A Prince has to be both fox & lion.

(clever) (Brave/courageous)
tricks wolves

Machiavelli should be believed that Prince should possess special qualities.

He should possess the cleverness of the fox so that he can understand the traps. He should also possess the strength of lion to defeat those who would be conspiring against the prince.

He compares such persons with wolves. Thus he believes that qualities of Prince are different from that of an ordinary person.

- His advice can be understood as no state can protect itself without having a proper intelligence & defence structure.

Suggestion: Prince must be cold blooded man.

- It suggests that Prince must know how to control his passions. Whatever decisions he takes it should be a well calculated action. He must analyze all pros & cons of his action.

Suggestion with respect to Religion & Ethics.

- o In Politics, ends justify the means.

Context of the statement:

- Prince may suffer from dilemma. This may impact ability of Prince to take best decision in the interest of nation or it may result into delay in taking decisions.

Reproduction strong in Indra.
Hence, Centre should be strong.

- He suggests that Politics is neither ethics nor religion.
- Politics is an autonomous sphere. Hence religion & ethics should not determine the political choices.
- - He suggests dual morality. Morality of a Prince is different from the morality of a common man.
- What is ^{non} permissible for a common man can be permissible in case of the Prince in the national interest.
- A common man may sacrifice his life for the sake of his principles however prince cannot sacrifice ~~in~~ the national interest for the sake of his principles.
- A Prince will be judged by the ends he achieves. Ends will justify the means he will employ.
- Hence he should not suffer from dilemma in opting the means. He thinks his best in the national interest. Thus he puts nation state above church & nationalism above religion.

• Critical Evaluation of Machiavelli's thoughts.

- - Machiavelli is criticised for separating ~~be~~ religion & politics. His book the Prince was in the list of prohibited books by Catholic church.
- - Many scholars criticised Machiavelli for advocating immorality. However it is not justified to call him immoral. He does not permit Prince to take these actions which may be against religious norms or immorality for his self interest. He is permitting Prince only in the context of national interest. He does not want that religion

§ ethics may act as an obstacle in the path of national interest.

He established the need of hours that nationalism to be treated above religion.

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Gandhian criticism of Machiavelli's Ends & Means

- Gandhi was critic of western civilization & more specifically Machiavellian teaching of separation between ethics & politics or religion & politics. Unlike Machiavelli, Gandhi does not see separation betⁿ ends & means. He emphasized on purity of means. Machiavelli gave priority to ends, Gandhi gave priority to means. In his book 'Hind Swaraj', Gandhi writes that we cannot expect a rose flower by sowing the seeds of babool tree. Gandhi considered politics without ethics & religion as a death trap.

Machiavelli's views on religion.

- Machiavelli has an utilitarian approach towards religion. If religion is useful to promote national interest use it. If it is against national interest reject it. Religion can be a means & national interest is an end.
- He understands the importance of religion as a disciplinary force. The element of self interest is so strong that prince requires extraordinary means to establish discipline & self control. Religion can be a such means. If not religion strong rule of a Prince can be such means. He suggests that Prince should appear to be religious even if he is not religious.

If in the interest of nation, he uses religion as appearing to be a religious person, there is nothing wrong.

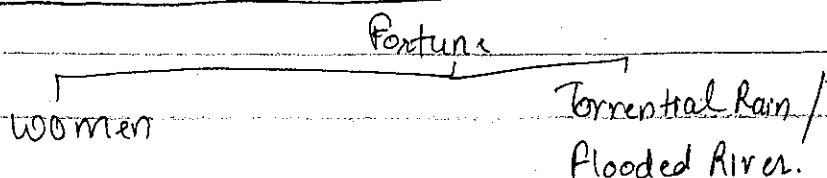
Machiavelli's views on nobles & the common man.

- Prince should not offend anyone but in case it becomes necessary, he should take the side of a common man over the nobles. Nobles maybe a threat to Prince, but common man is never a threat. Ambitions of common man are limited.
- We can see the impact of his time when Feudalism was coming to an end & capitalism was emerging.

Machiavelli has suggested that Prince should have "National Army" rather than depending on mercenary soldiers.

Machiavelli supports imperialist foreign policy as it will enhance scope for material advancement by acquiring new resources. His advice is if culture of the acquired land is similar to that of Prince he can rule it directly. If there is a lot of difference in culture & way of life of the acquired land, king must appoint some local person as his lieutenant.

Machiavelli's Views on Fortune. (Bad Luck).



- He uses the term 'Fortune' in Italian sense which implies Bad Luck or the things not under control.

Even if prince is fully prepared and has all the attributes of an ideal prince, but still he may have to suffer.

- He gives 2 qualities of Fortune

- He compares it with flooded river & torrential rains. When they will come, they will bring complete devastation.

- However a wise prince will always make prior preparations. We can control flooded river by building floodgates & embankments.

- He also compares fortune with women.

Like women, fortune also favours brave men.

Evaluation of Machiavelli as a thinker.

- Sabine suggests that thoughts of Machiavelli are narrowly dated & narrowly located.

Sabine's statement shows that Machiavelli's

thoughts, his assumptions about human nature,

his view on religion, the principles of statecraft,

are too much influenced by the conditions prevailing in Italy of his times.

Had he belonged to other time & space he would not had such views on human nature, religion and politics.

This opinion of Sabine also results into establishing that his thoughts lack universalism.

It is true that the thoughts of Machiavelli were very much influenced by the Italy of his times, for that matter every thinker is a child of his times. It is also true that Machiavelli's views on human nature, religion & politics are extreme. He looks only at the darker side of human nature, religion & politics. His treatment of human nature, religion & politics cannot be called a balanced approach but still what he says cannot be denied altogether. It would not be pragmatic to overlook Machiavellian suggestions. Significance of Machiavelli is not limited to the Italy of his times. Nehru has found lot of similarities between Machiavelli & Chanakya. Both Machiavelli & Chanakya differ in time & space but still there are similarities in the thoughts. He has influenced persons like Mao. He has influenced scholars like Hobbes, H. Morgenthau. He is father of "Political Realism". Regarding Machiavelli it is said he is the one who is criticised most but also practiced most.

- Machiavelli as a child of his times / Renaissance
- No other thinker reflects all the major tendencies of his time as Machiavelli.

Times of Machiavelli

- Machiavelli is treated as a transitional thinker.

"... standing on the crossroads. He represents the time

when Medieval Age was coming to an end in Europe & Modern Times started its beginnings.

Renaissance - Revival / Rebirth.

It marks the rebirth of critical reasoning.

It shows the revival of some features of ancient Greece. During ancient Greece, human beings were at the center. Greeks thought about making this life better. Greeks promoted dialectics,

rational thinking. Gradually, city states of ancient Greece gave rise to Roman Empire.

Religion emerged as a disciplinary force to manage the empire. Gradually, religion came to dominate all spheres of human life. Religion impacted logical reasoning, demanded faith & unquestionable obedience.

Gradually, we see the emergence of scientific spirit. Renaissance reestablished human being at the center. It first started in the field of Art & Literature & then started impacting all spheres of human life in the West.

- Machiavelli also questioned the authority of church. We see reemergence of humanism

(treating human as centre rather than god). In his philosophy, Renaissance's scholars.

were also influenced by History. Machiavelli's love for history also shows the impact of Renaissance.

Reformation :

Establishment of religion as belonging to the private sphere.

Separation betⁿ public & private & foundation of secular state.

It is reflected in Machiavelli when he makes a separation betⁿ religion & politics & puts religion under the state.

Geographical Explorations.

This is reflected in Machiavelli's support for expansionist foreign policy. §

Scientific Revolution influenced Machiavelli's approach towards Political inquiry. He suggested to understand the things as they are rather than as they ought to be.

Destruction of Feudalism & Rise of Capitalism.

Machiavelli's distrust of the nobility along with the church reflect the impact. Machiavelli's

Prince is not the hereditary ruler, but Political Entrepreneur.

Rise of Nation States.

Machiavelli also gives supremacy to nationalism

wanted Italy to emerge as a nation state

First thinker to suggest for National Army.

• Machiavelli as a First Modern Thinker

- Though Machiavelli is regarded by few as

First modern thinker & the reasons given

in support are

• He makes break with medievalism by

separating religion from politics & establishing secular state.

• First thinker who talks about nation state & nationalism, The prominent political entity

• The pr of modern times.

- However there are many scholars who do not

regard him as the first modern thinker &

consider Hobbes as the first modern thinker.

• He gets the idea of nation state, nationalism etc,

but we do not get a complete idea of system

of governance in modern nation states as

emerged in west. His theory does not establish

principle of sovereignty of the state.

Machiavelli belonged to the time when modern age

has not completely evolved. This is also reflected

in his work. Hence it is better to consider him as

a thinker in transition but we can say that he

was definitely non-medieval.

Machiavelli's Methodology

① Observation

- Historical Method

- Machiavelli considered history as a best guide for politics. However his use of history is not treated as scientific. He looked into only those aspects of history, puts forward those events, which support his political assumption.

Machiavelli's views on republican form of govt.

Machiavelli as a scholar of civic republicanism.

- Wherever necessary monarchy, wherever possible republic, but in no situation Aristocracy.

- Machiavelli favours Monarchy in his book

'The Prince'. Monarchy is necessary for corrupt societies. He prefers republican form of govt where people have civic virtues. In his book 'Discourses' he supports republican form of government like Aristotle. Better laws can emerge by active deliberation among citizens. However citizens should have enough reason. They should have capacity to control their self interest & work for collective interest.

- He was against aristocracy. This shows he was child of his times. He belonged to the time when Feudalism was coming to an end. He considered nobility as a threat to national unity, called them Parasite Class. In this way he differs from Aristotle.

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- o Injuries should be done altogether so that being less tasted they will give less offense.
- Benefits to be granted little by little so that they are better enjoyed. — Machiavelli

- statecraft. book.

practical suggesti. princ.

politics management of power.

how prince should power. better feared than loved.

complete power if used.

people loyal → little benefits

Relevance: Iraq, Pak, etc.

- o I have resolved to open a new route which has not yet been followed by anyone. — Machiavelli

- politics vs religion/ethics.

political realism.

autonomous sphere of politics.

right/wrong in religion not applicable in politics.

princ.: ends justify the means.

Mach. was criticised for this.

- o Aims pursued by revolutionaries like the origin of revolution are same in tyrannies, kingship as they are under regular constitution. — Aristotle

- Theory of revolution, studied.

studies, causes

main cause. feeling of inequality

543 ^{studies} unequals. unequally.

- individual ownership common etc.

- middle class ~~more~~ stability.

- ~~causes~~

o Indeed it is generally true that it is a difficult business for men to live together, to be partners in any form of human activity, But it is specially difficult to do so when property is involved. — Aristotle.

- criticism of Plato's theory of property.

non consistent thinker, thinker of common sense.

Refer. Brian Nelson

man is social.

beginning of realism → not complete break from idealism.

both deductive & inductive approach.

- This statement is from Aristotle's Theory of Property
Aristotle gives his Theory of Property in context of his criticism of Plato's communism of property.

Aristotle is functionalist in his approach. He is not radical like Plato. Property is a time tested institution coming to us from ages. The benefits of private property are: it gives sense of achievement to a person, it motivates him to work harder, man of property is a man of reason. He can contribute to social charity. He acknowledges some of the evils associated with private property. However unlike Plato, who suggests to abolish property for the guardian class, Aristotle's approach is rectifying the evils, rather than abolishing an institution which does have utility. His suggestion is that Property should be in private hands, however common ^{use} ownership of property should be promoted. He gives reasons that man should understand the contribution of society in his achievements. At the

same time stability will come under threat if there are glaring inequalities in the society. While explaining that property should be in the private hands, he explains the weakness of human nature. He suggests that it is difficult for men to live together & to be partners in human actions on their own. Hence there should be a state. without state our life would be like the life of beasts/animals. It is a teleology of man to be a member of the state. Aristotle may not appear as consistent as Plato or Hobbes or Hegle. He is a thinker of common sense. His suggestions are based less on ideas & more on practical reasoning.