
Toward a New View of the State

Niccolo Machiavelli and the Modern Secular State

- *Men came to look at the state in a new way as they were looking at themselves in a new way.*
 - *Machiavelli in the Prince shows this new view.*
 - *How did the new view of the state emerge?*
 - *It emerged in northern Italy.*
 - *Two general trends characterize the development of Italian cities.*
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- ***Trend 1: Political evolution of each city depended on city's economic life and interests of its classes***
 - ***Trend 2: In most cities self-government collapsed and was replaced by despotism.***
 - ***Florence shows both trends. Aristocrats; popolo grasso; popolo; popolo minuto.***
 - ***In brief the story runs: popolo grasso exclude aristocrats in 13th century; admit popolo but exclude popolo minuto. In mid 14th century***
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- *popolo minuto rise up and seize power briefly. Then lose out to popolo grasso again. Finally in mid-15th century Medici family comes to power.*
 - *Despots came to power in number of ways.*
 - *What was nature of despotisms?*
 - *Weaknesses: Weak legal foundation; fearful; held power by force; seldom lasted long.*
 - *Strengths: could experiment boldly; all they had to do was keep going concerns going.*
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- *Italians had thrown off medieval theory. New view of politics as practical. Morality and ethics as distinct from politics. Means subordinated to ends.*
 - *This contrasted sharply with First Europe's view of state.*
 - *Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) as spokesman for new view.*
 - *After active political career wrote The Prince.*
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- *Was it a practical manual? Satire? Accurate Portrayal of politics?*
 - *Reading of The Prince.*
 - *Morality and politics separate considerations.*
 - *State is force.*
 - *Cesare Borgia as ideal prince.*
 - *Passages from the work.*
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▪ ***Conclusion:***

- *Machiavelli provides insight into modern secular state.*
- *Concern for practicality and efficiency.*

▪ ***Some questions to think about.***

- *1. Are the statements above from the Prince valid?
Which? Why?*
 - *2. Are modern (successful) politicians
Machiavellian?*
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