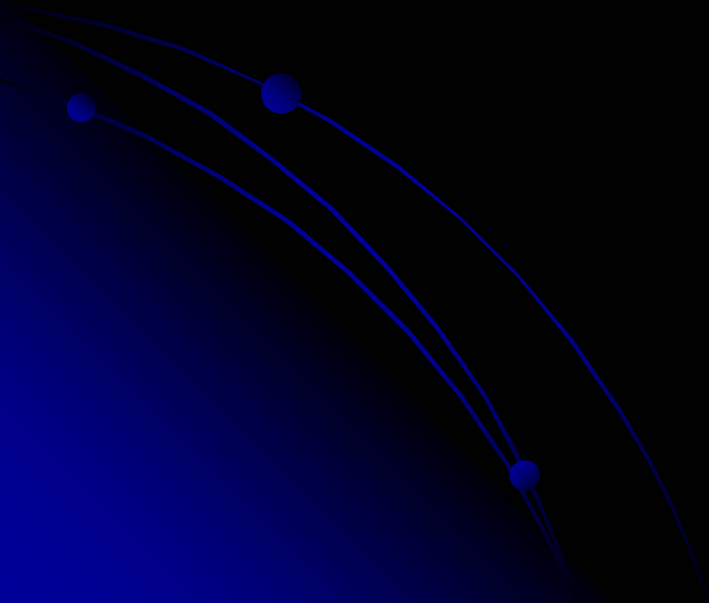


# Machiavelli's The Prince

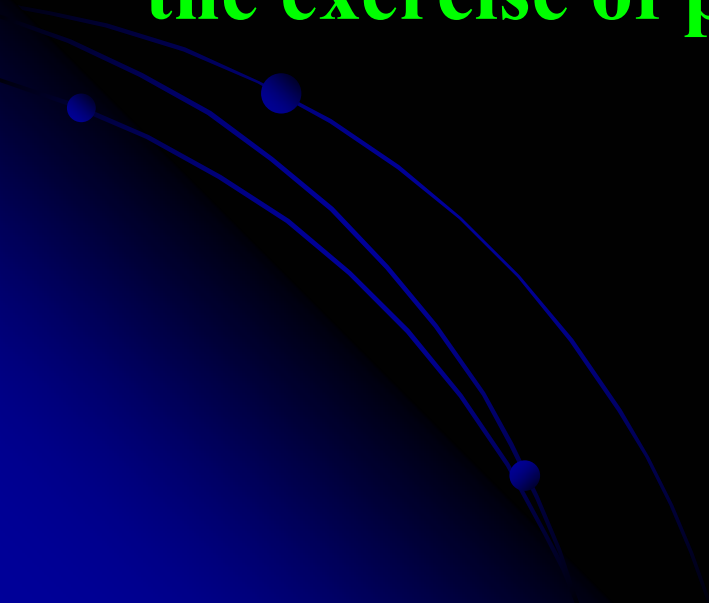
## Part II



# Machiavelli's "The Prince"

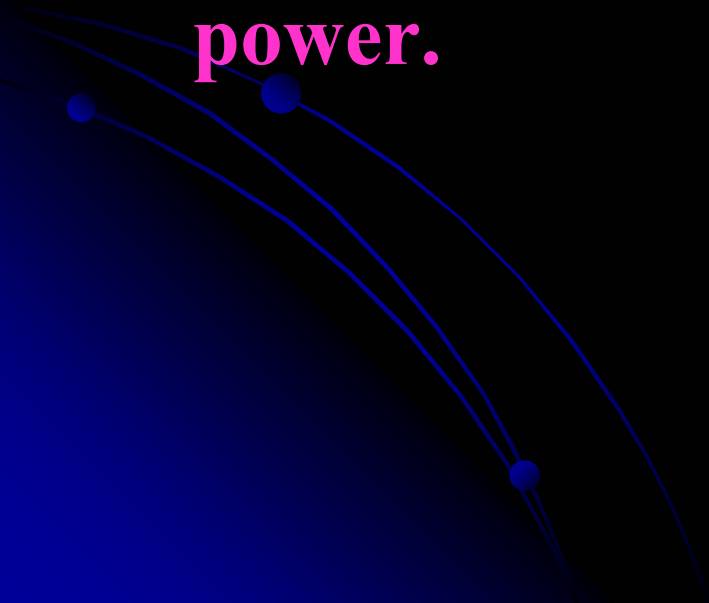
**Whith what problem is Machiavelli most concerned?**

**What is the most important consideration in the exercise of politics?**

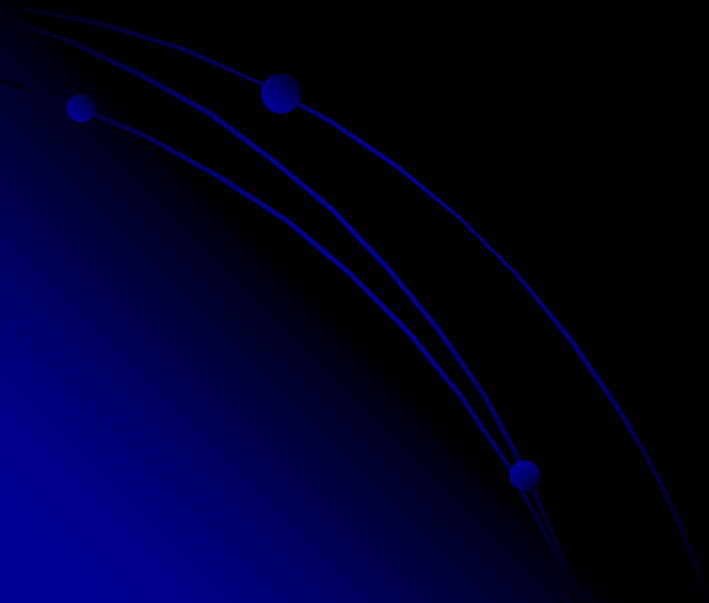


**Machiavelli is most concerned  
with:**

**Stability of the government as  
well as acquiring and retaining  
power.**



**What does Machiavelli think  
about morality?**



Virtue is vice/ vice is virtue. It would be *nice* if a Prince could be virtuous, but this is impossible. He states “he should have no concern about incurring the infamy of such vices.” The world will not allow for such ideals in the practice of politics.

Is it okay for a Prince to come to power through, or engage in, crime?

Machiavelli would say the end justifies the means.

# Machiavellian Virtue

- Machiavelli is confusing when he mentions virtue.
- He argues that to be virtuous in the sense of pure or moralistic is impossible for leaders that face threats both external and internal to their state.
- Those that are virtuous will be exploited and taken advantage of for being naïve.

# Machiavellian Virtue

- Machiavelli usually uses the word “virtu” to describe leaders that are:
  - **Industrious and well-learned of politics, able to gauge both friends and enemies, i.e., cunning**
  - **Skilled in both war and politics, not depending heavily on the advice and power of others**
  - **Independent power base built on charisma and leadership qualities.**

**The power and privilege of American political office is often used to provide benefits to friends and political allies, which in turn reinforces monetary support for electoral campaigns.**

**Recent example of Brown at FEMA an blatant example, or Harriet Meirs for Supreme Court**

**What would Machiavelli think of the Prince being considered generous by doling out such benefits?**



**Maybe useful to keep allies close but not the best way to rely on allies in a pinch. It is better to better to be perceived as stingy so that one does not look soft or like a push-over.**

**What is the exception to being stingy?**

**When a Prince is rising to power.**

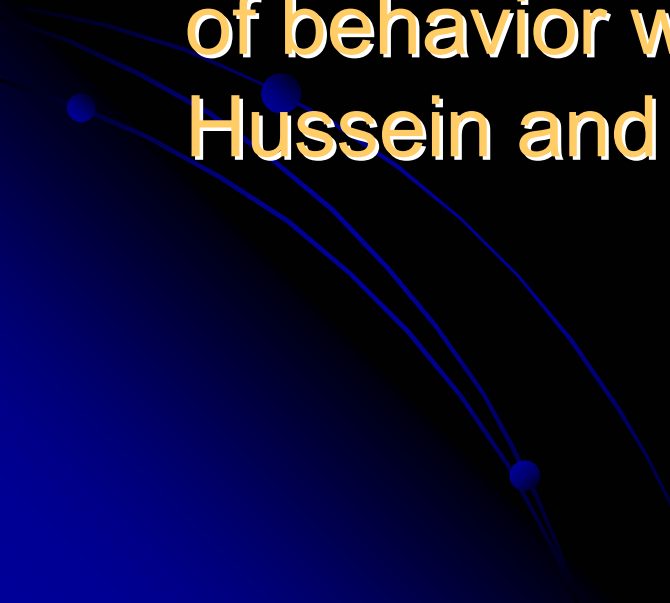


**What does Machiavelli say might happen if taxes are raised too high to spread favors to friends?**

**The Prince might lose support of people and weaken country. This is interesting since the United States and other democracies have a difficult time controlling money and tend to spend and borrow beyond their revenue.**

**Saddam in part kept his ruling coalition together by spreading wealth among mostly the Sunni faction, but that was not all that loomed.**

# How does he say armies should be treated after wealth is acquired by conquering new areas?

- Spread wealth with the army.
  - An excellent modern example of this type of behavior was exhibited by Saddam Hussein and the pillage of Kuwait.
- 

# Book XV: Blaming or Praising the Prince

- What does it mean when Machiavelli says:

“For a man who wants to make a profession of good in all regards must come to ruin among so many who are not good. Hence, it is necessary to a Prince, if he wants to maintain himself, to learn to be able not to be good, and to use this and not use it according to necessity.”

# Book XV: Blaming or Praising the Prince

- Machiavelli means to warn that people are not angels and politics is a dangerous because interests collide.
- Politicians must be alert to the baser instincts in man and try to be even more devious, when necessary, than political opponents. This is political realism.

# Book XV: Blaming or Praising the Prince

- Is every politician a Realist? No.
- However, some of the most idealistic that seek to end injustice have been assassinated
  - Martin Luther King
  - Ghandi
  - Robert Kennedy
  - Abraham Lincoln

# Book XVI: Liberality and Parsimony

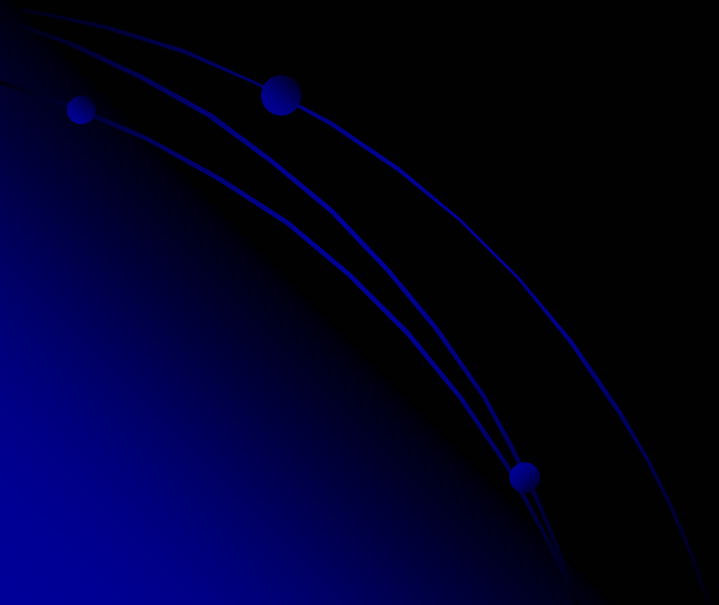
- To be seen as Liberal (generous), not leftist, is good, but to actually be liberal is bad. Why?
- To be seen as parsimonious (stingy, or worse oppressive in taxes) is also bad and may lead one to be hated.
- How does the Prince avoid these traps?

# Book XVI: Liberality and Parsimony

- What Machiavelli is saying here is that to be too liberal/generous is to be seen as weak and eventually you will be taken advantage of.
- To be seen as too stingy, greedy, dictatorial is also detrimental when it leads to hatred.
- A balance thus must be struck



**Is it better to be loved or feared?**



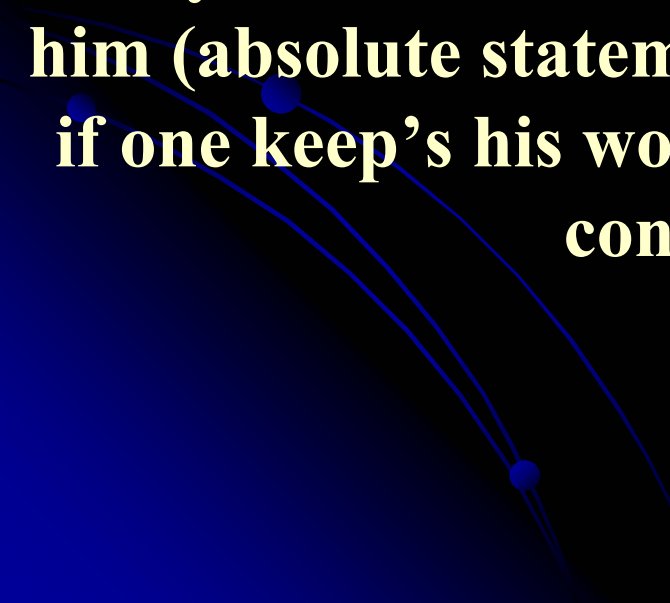
**It would be best to be both feared and loved, although it is necessary to be feared. That way your rule of law will not be challenged. It is riskier to offend a man that is feared.**

**Remember, Machiavelli says there are no good or bad regimes, just strong and weak. (Chapter 16: Cruelty and clemency )**

## **Should the Prince keep his word?**

**No.**

**Why? Because men are wicked and will not keep it with him (absolute statement), although it is better to appear as if one keep's his word. Morality weakens politicians and conquerors (Chapter 18)**



## **Should the Prince avoid being hated or despised?**

**Yes. Infamy is especially gained by “laying violent hands on property or women (p.538 ). This would weaken the posture of strength and virtue of the Prince.**

**Remember: stability is important to Machiavelli, not justice. Hatred may lead to instability.**

**Chapter 19. Pick lesser of two evils whenever feasible.**

# Book XVII: To be Loved or Feared

- Again though, the Prince must avoid being hated, or else the people will seek to remove him.
- For which crimes/acts are Princes especially likely to become hated?
  - Laying hands on property
  - Laying hands on women


# XIX: Avoiding Contempt and Hatred

- This book combines advice from past books. Note that Machiavelli points out that beyond good arms, one needs good friends. Good friends are maintained in part by good arms.
- What this points out that pure brutal force cannot be used to maintain power without some other coalition/base of support in the people.

# Book XXI: Practical Advice on Reputation and Alliances

- On Alliances, take clear position to support weaker sides if stronger side can win and the coerce you too.
- On Reputation, be stately and noble, beyond feared, by supporting the commerce, arts, and works of your state
- On Foreign Policy: “Nor should any state ever believe that it can always adopt safe courses.”

# Book XXII: Choosing Secretaries

- Formal advisors in the government are necessary but can be a danger since such individuals may have their own agendas.
  - Machiavelli suggests rewarding good advisors that serve the Prince first and themselves second. In short, political loyalty, as well as expertise, are demanded.
- 



# Book XXII: Choosing Secretaries

- Did Bush read this? If so, should this book offer additional advice for decision-making?
- Fired members of Bush's Cabinet/team:
  - Paul O'Neill, first Secretary of Treasury 2001-2002 – Critical of Bush Tax Cuts
  - Larry Lindsey, National Economic Council, White House 2001-02 – stated that Iraq War would cost \$100-200 billion, instead of \$50 billion, he was correct but truth was politically damaging to Bush Administration

# Book XXII: Choosing Secretaries

- Clearly President Bush values loyalty highly, especially for partisan purposes and public opinion. Condoleezza Rice is a prime example of loyalty over substance.
- Does he value it too highly? Does this in part explain why mistakes have been made?

# The Problem of Group Think

- This is a decision-making problem that may occur in situations where there is interference in rational decision-making, especially when advisors feel constrained to speak their mind.
- This problem is exacerbated when advisors fear to contradict their superior, i.e., they become *sycophants* or *yes-men*.

# The Problem of Group Think

- Key problems include failure to:
  - evaluate all sides of an issue
  - form back-up plans
  - point out weaknesses or flaws
  - assume someone else in group knows all problems and answers
  - failure to involve expert advice.
  - Chiefs and Indians – failure to contradict superiors

# The Problem of Group Think

- Group Think Foreign Policy disasters have occurred at other points in US history.
  - Failure to see clearly attack on Pearl Harbor
  - Failure to see Chinese intervention into Korean War
  - Bay of Pigs Invasion, Cuba 1961 (classic case)
  - Iraq War: Intelligence failures, no contingency plans for aftermath, no ability to question policy, lack of coordination, experts on region not central to planning.

# The Problem of Group Think

- The Bush Administration has made it clear that it values loyalty highly.
- Has it taken note of the mistakes that were made and how they occurred, or set themselves up for further failures.
- To what degree have policies been driven by partisan over policy concerns?