



Ethics and Power: Niccolo Machiavelli's thoughts on Ethics and Power in Politics

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ABSTRACT

Ethics is a science that seeks orientation for human efforts to answer a very fundamental question, how should I live and act. Meanwhile, power is the effort of an individual or group to influence others according to the wishes of the perpetrator. Ethics and power are two very important positions in the political frame. even these two terms have been discussed since ancient Greece, because they can affect the running of the government. Because if these two terms are not used in their capacity, this will result in the instability of a country, or even give birth to a rebellion. Machiavelli as a political figure in the Renaissance era has succeeded in creating a work that combines the royal system (monarchy) and the Republic. which he titled The Prince and The Discourses, although at first they were addressed to the Medici family who regained control of Florence. From these two books, lessons can be drawn on how a leader (King) should control, manage, and take care of the staff, as well as the people in order to create a prosperous country, and be able to achieve glory, and be respected by the people and other countries. The concept of "justifying all means" that many people know from Machiavelli seems to have become a label for him. Yet we ourselves have not tried to study Machiavelli's political concepts in detail. And we also don't know why many world dictators use the Machiavelli concept in realizing practical politics in their countries, which are implemented with an iron fist. Do they actually use this Machiavelli concept kaffah (totally), or only half-heartedly in order to preserve their power? Because Machiavelli once said that the purpose of power is only for the sake of maintaining stability, and the welfare of the country, not only for individual interests.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Niccolo Machiavelli was a philosopher and politician, who lived in the 18th century. This figure is very well known as the father of modern politics who succeeded in opening the faucet of political shackles from the confines of the Church at that time. Machiavelli talks a lot about ethics in politics in his work. But on the other hand, Machiavelli is also known as a politician who justifies any means to gain power. In fact, if examined objectively, there are factors that cause this character to have to

express his idea like that. So the question arises, what exactly is the background of Machiavelli's political thought, so that he wrote his work *The Prince* and *The Discourses*?

In limiting the scope of the study of the works of Niccolo Machiavelli, what is written is focused on his framework of thinking on ethics and power which there are several reasons behind it: first, the transition process in the State of Florence that occurred during Niccolo Machiavelli's time, gave birth to some of his ideas which were the result of his studies while serving as the apparatus in Florence.

Second, in the circumstances of the State of Florence Machiavelli experienced some political treatment from his government which often resulted in a transfer of power between the first ruler and the Medici family who won the war. So that Machiavelli's position was always changing, sometimes he became a very important State apparatus, and sometimes suffered bad treatment until he himself had to be exiled to a village far from royal life or even worse he spent several years in prison (Riyantie, 2020).

Third, the Machiavelli figure himself has already been recognized by the political world as the father of political cunning. even at the extreme he was recognized as par excellence of political deception and betrayal, as the incarnation of a cunning and brutal force in politics, and as the originator of modern totalitarianism (Machiavelli, 2020). In fact, if we read objectively and not half-way between *The Prince* and *The Discourses*, it will be found that the concept of a dignified ethics in politics that is echoed is a politics full of ethical values, not driven solely by the desire to gain power (Shahreza, 2018). According to him, ethics emanates from authentic actions that are full of sovereignty from a leader with character. That is actually the idea given by Machiavelli for the sake of the continuity and stability of his country which is experiencing a political crisis. Unfortunately, it is precisely the concepts of ethics and dignified power that readers of Machiavelli's works often don't pay close attention to.

Fourth, power does need to be maintained and strengthened strongly, while ethics itself does not need to be put forward in politics because it will only weaken the state (justify in any way for the stability of the state). Meanwhile, according to political historians, Machiavelli's innovation in *The Discourses* and *The Prince* is to separate political theory from ethics. This is contrary to the western tradition which studies political theory and policy is very closely related to ethics such as Aristotle's thinking which defines politics as an extension of ethics. In the western view, politics is then understood in terms of right and wrong, just and unjust. Moral measures are used to evaluate human actions in the political field. At that time, Machiavelli had used the term *la stato*,

This is in line with the situation and conditions in Florence, when it experienced degradation and a power struggle which resulted in an unstable state condition so that in the end, the deterrent effect of the power struggle made the people oppressed and the country experienced a multidimensional crisis. So that Florence becomes a weak country and is attacked by the countries around it (Ikhwan, 2016).

So it is appropriate that Machiavelli bestowed his ideas on the rulers in his country which was then held by the Medici family, with the aim that Florence would not be destroyed and fallen. Even though there is an element that by presenting his concept, Machiavelli also wants to return to his position in the political arena (Riyantie, 2020) (Hakim, 2019).

However, Machiavelli's idea has already been accepted by intellectuals, and politicians are considered an idea used by authoritarian and oppressive world rulers. This is indicated by their various confessions, that they admit to holding and studying the work of *The Prince* Niccolo Machiavelli. Just as Hitler, the Nazi leader in Germany, kept *The Prince* at his bedside, Napoleon Bonaparte argued that only the political works of *The Prince* were worthy of reading, Mussolini even dared to publicly say in front of his people that Machiavelli was a spiritual and intellectual godfather, and there were many others. authoritarian rulers other than them. And this is the reason people think Machiavelli is a bad politician.

Departing from all of that, the author tries to explore and reopen Machiavelli's literature, especially *The Prince* and *The Discourses*, as well as from other books that have relevance to Machiavelli's ethical issues and power, to try to understand the real essence that there needs to be a dignified ethic. in a country according to Machiavelli.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The method used by the author in compiling this thesis is library research, which is a research method that uses data collection techniques by utilizing various library sources related to research problems, both from text books, mass media, or journals, which talk about the subject in question. However, what still needs to be considered is the selective element, namely not all reading elements found are then analyzed and used just like that, in order to obtain relevant research results and not spread everywhere. This study is also often referred to as a literature review (Putra, n.d.).

The character's research is also qualitative in nature, departing from empirical generalizations or historical social realities. These realities are described and analyzed in a comprehensive, holistic, and comparative manner. Phenomenal and historical aspects are also described and analyzed critically to give birth to an ideographic generalization.

According to Bogdan and Taylor (1973), qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data, speech or writing, and observable behavior from the subject itself (Moha, 2019) (Wijaya, 2018) (Sholikhah, 2016). This approach shows directly from the setting as a whole. The subject of the study in the form of an organization, institution, or individual is not narrowed down to a separate variable or a hypothesis, but is seen as part of a whole (holistic).

The research strategy uses the study of critical figures, which is one type of qualitative research. In the study of critical figures, the method used to examine the research subject will affect the subject's perspective. Thus, the study of critical figures lies in the capacity to critically analyze and interpret Machiavelli's figures. Through this method, too, can be identified in depth how the character personally by looking at his concept, according to his perspective on the world with his thoughts, works, and political behavior. This qualitative research tries to generalize the character of Niccolo Machiavelli, in terms of his political thoughts, especially about ethics and power.

Therefore, a good critical literature review is a mandatory prerequisite for any research, both for elaborating or sharpening problems, formulating hypotheses, formulating concepts, determining the theoretical basis used in collecting data, as well as in interpreting data. This library research was obtained by doing deductive reasoning simultaneously from reading sources obtained. So, this study does not only transfer other people's thoughts dogmatically, but requires a researcher's thought process to avoid plagiarism.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the description of the previous three chapters, it is found that ethics and power always complement each other in the political realm. Niccolo Machiavelli also introduced to the Medici rulers that a ruler must be able to see the real condition of his country, by always paying attention to how to be ethical, then choosing the ideal state system, then trying to stabilize the life of the state, both the people and the bureaucracy.

But this understanding of Machiavelli is often reviled and criticized both by predecessors, contemporaries, or by generations after it, or even in today's modern era there are still many people who see this character from the negative side, and forget the valuable lessons he has written both in *The Discourses* or *The Prince* (Strathern, 2001).

A more direct criticism is the accusation of objection that the idea was not specifically out of his own head. Unoriginal, This is more or less true. Machiavelli repeatedly asked that he was not proposing anything new but merely pointing out a technique that the previous Princes had carried out with great success. The fact shows that Machiavelli constantly illustrates his proposals while taking examples of the greats that have occurred in the past, or from events in Italy that are rather recent. Cesare Borgia (whom Machiavelli praised in *The Prince*) did not learn tactics from Machiavelli, on the contrary, Machiavelli did.

3.1 Ethics Perspective of Niccolo Machiavelli

In terms of ethics, Machiavelli argues that humans are made up of one even though they live in every age and place. Humans cannot be separated from the past and the future, and they too will face every challenge of the times. Every human being has the same nature and ambition as other humans. They are selfish, vengeful, deceitful, and afraid.

For this reason, this is where the role of the ruler must be able to curb and control these characteristics of his people, and this can all be done with the political ethics of a ruler who has firmness and a precise strategy in accordance with the conditions of his country (Muhammad & Hambali, 2021). So for this reason, ethics or morals in the political realm do not mean honesty, decency, or good values in life. Because ethics in such a sense will only weaken the State, then it is not necessary for its existence.

As stated in the previous chapter, the relevant ethical term from a political perspective is to build a social, economic, political and legal welfare. Therefore, ethics here are not only defined as manners, courtesy, customs, and values that are upheld by philosophers. In the history of political philosophy, philosophers such as Socrates and Plato have put forward ethical and political theories, which are often used as models of honesty and integrity.

Politics is understood as an art that contains politeness. Political politeness is measured by moral virtue (Mannuhung & Tenrigau, 2018). Politeness can be seen when there is reciprocal recognition and fair relations between the actors. This kind of understanding of political ethics is not sufficient because it is satisfied if it is identified with the moral quality of politicians, because it is not different from statements. "If every politician is honest, then a country will prosper." From the point of view of coherence, this statement is valid, indisputable.

But from the correspondence theory, the statement of the hypothesis is too far from reality (hypothetical idealist). Political ethics, which are only satisfied with the coherence of its norms and do not take into account real politics, tend to be barren and it is precisely this kind of normative ethical attitude that can actually destroy the state.

In this case Machiavelli does not agree with the theory of the State which was built by Aristotle and Plato where all of them are considered by Machiavelli as an unreal theory (real). Meanwhile, according to Machiavelli that a king must look at the reality and political conditions in his country, so that his political program is not just a mere utopian with theories that uphold subjective ethical values (Hakim, 2019).

And this is in line with Machiavelli's concept that ethical issues in the political realm are not the same as the views of ancient Greek political thinkers. However, good political ethics is where the people can feel prosperity, peace and justice, as well as the rulers who control the State, so that the State becomes strong. The concept of the Machiavelli State is not only to gain power, but a further goal is, this figure wants the rulers to prioritize the honor and happiness of their nation⁵.

Not infrequently a political expert, as well as a politician who was experienced so fiercely reviled as was experienced by Machiavelli. For years, he was cursed like a descendant of the devil (Old Nick), and his name was used as a synonym for falsehood and cunning. The criticisms leveled at Machiavelli on moral grounds do not, of course, show that he had no influence at all.

It can be said that the world's dictators have acknowledged the greatness of Machiavelli, this has been directly acknowledged by a Benito Mussolini. He was one of the few political leaders to have publicly praised Machiavelli, so there is no doubt that a large number of prominent political figures have read *The Prince* carefully. In fact, Napoleon always slept on a pillow beneath which was tucked the book *The Prince*, as people say was done by Hitler and Stalin. However, it is not clear that Machiavelli's tactics are more commonly used in modern politics than in the period before *The Prince* was published.

However, if the effect of Machiavelli's thought on political practice is not so clear, its influence on political theory is not debatable. Previous writers such as Plato and St. Augustine, has linked politics with ethics and theology. Machiavelli discusses history and politics entirely in human terms and ignores moral considerations in a normative perspective, even this figure further emphasizes that a state that stands on moral principles will collapse. A government does not know moral teachings, and it would be nice if all government activities are not related to morals. Morals have no effect on the State.

Some of the things that Machiavelli taught with his ethical concepts in controlling a country or city. This ethical problem is explained by Machiavelli in his literature *The Prince* and *The Discourses*. First, the most important practical advice for a head of state. The basic premise of this book is that, for any success, a Prince must abandon moral judgment completely and rely on everything, for power and cunning (Hakim, 2019). Second, Machiavelli also gave advice that in

being ethical in front of the people the prince must be able to get the support of the people, because otherwise he will have no source of facing difficulties. Of course, Machiavelli understands that sometimes a new ruler, to strengthen his power, therefore the ruler must be able to do something to secure his power,

This character illustrates, however, that in order to seize a country, the prince can set the steps of cruelty at once so that they do not need to experience every day leeway must be given little by little so that they can feel happy, at peace, and win their people. Third, besides the way to achieve success, a wise prince must be able to take the path to gain, and listen to the advice of capable and loyal ministers. And Machiavelli warned the prince to stay away from the sycophants and asked what was the right thing to do.

Fourth, a ruler must avoid corruption, and so should his assistants. because with corruption the State can experience destruction in all fields, be it laws that can be traded, political conditions become uncertain, people suffer, and most importantly the State will not last long (Harun, 2016).

But ironically, it is the political experts who echo ethics from time to time, as if they have forgotten to discuss the problem of corruption, and the aspiration to create a clean government. Corruption in a broad sense is increasingly rampant, and uncontrollable. even though the efforts of the State in eradicating this had been initiated, but they always met a dead end in the middle of the journey, and again the results were zero. So it is not an exaggeration to say that the efforts of a state government with a democratic system, or a monarchy, and others are just songs, where the regulations are only a distraction to fool and entertain the people. So this perspective is far from ethical when politicians only want positions, with what Machiavelli aspires to.

In the end, which one is ethical and moral in the political frame? Machiavelli or the philosophers and politicians who hum a humanist ethics!

Meanwhile, according to Mohamad Irfan, Machiavelli wrote that the ethics of a ruler in leading a country will survive if he applies the following methods: first, all methods are justified in seizing and maintaining power; secondly, to maintain the regime's power, the politics of sparring (divide et impera) is legal; and third, in the world of politics (which is equated with the life of a wild animal), the strong can certainly survive and win¹⁴. And it was all done just for the sake of his love for the country¹⁵. The struggle between ethics and power in the political realm will be even more fierce when Machiavelli presents a very different concept from his predecessors, and is far from the understanding of ethics they mean.

Some of these Machiavelli-style ruler ethics are collected in many ways by this character in two literatures, namely *The Discourses* and *The Prince*, as written above, but here only two concepts will be discussed clearly.

a. The king must be able to balance between being hated and being loved

Ruthless and firm are two different words, Machiavelli also suggests that a ruler is firm. Because this figure forbids a ruler from oppressing his people, so this concept is not calling for the cruelty of a ruler. Machiavelli said that he maintained that power with courage and dangerous wisdom. You can't say it's good to kill people who are good to him, betray friends without faith, without pity, and that's not a glory (Harun, 2016).

Whereas the cruelty that Machiavelli was referring to is for the sake of protect its people, from the emergence of chaos in the State. Because with this attitude the people will be loyal and the country will be safe. This is what Machiavelli wrote: "A rule can injure an entire community, but the execution of a ruler will only injure certain individuals. A new ruler can avoid a bad reputation, but a new nation is always in danger. As Virgil said through Dido's mouth; *res dura, et regni novitas me talia cogunt moliri, et late fines custode tuerri*. But he must be vigilant in believing, and acting, and must not be afraid of his own shadow. He must also remain in a restrained manner with wisdom and humanity. Too much trust will make him careless, while too much courage will make him tolerant.

In the eighteenth chapter entitled the way how a Prince holds his beliefs. Here Machiavelli says, a conscientious ruler should not hold his beliefs if the work is against his interests. He adds, because there is no official basis for blaming a Prince who apologizes for not keeping his promise, because man is so simple and easy to comply with the needs of his time, and that a cheater will

always find someone who allows himself to be deceived (Sudarmanto et al., 2020). As a natural result of that view, Machiavelli advised the Prince to always be wary of the promises of others.

From both of his literatures, Machiavelli emphasized that the balance between being feared and being loved does not mean that a ruler is oppressing his people, but the intention of being feared is so that no one can make the state chaos, and no colonialism dares to enter Italy. A ruler, it will all produce a synthesis with brilliant results both in terms of power, welfare, and stability, as well as the security of the country itself.

Machiavelli drew it all from the lessons of Rome's history in particular which was led by several successions. Because of that, the ethics he offers are not only in terms of humanism, but how a ruler can realize power with firmness, fear, and love by the people and even has to act like a lion and a fox because it is all for the sake of the safety and peace of the country itself.

The ruler is better to be feared than loved, Machiavelli wrote, Either the prince is better loved or feared, or should he be feared more than loved. The answer is this, that one is to be loved as well as to be feared, but since these two things are difficult to coexist, it is safer for the king to be feared more than loved, if one of these two things is to be possessed. Then he continued, For often humans are generally called ungrateful, hypocritical, covetous, afraid of danger.

As long as the ruler gives benefits to the people, they are the property of that ruler completely, the people will give their blood, their property, their lives, and their children, and as I said before, when pressure and danger approaches, they rebel." Machiavelli reiterated, "Humans do not hesitate to defend the rulers they fear rather than they love because love is tied to a chain of obligations, because humans are inherently selfish, so when they have got what they want, the chain will be broken, but fear of being defended by dreadful punishments that never fail. However, the prince must make himself feared in such a way that if he is not loved then he is not to be hated,

This concept is clearly written in chapter seventeen of *The Prince*, Machiavelli discusses whether a Prince is better to be hated or loved. Machiavelli wrote that a ruler is one who should be feared and loved at the same time. But it is safer to be feared than loved, if we have to choose one. Because love is bound by obligations that make a person selfish, and that bond will break when dealing with his interests. But the fear of being driven by the fear of being punished never fails.

Rulers are obliged to act like foxes and lions, Machiavelli wrote, Therefore one must become a fox to recognize traps, and a lion to frighten foxes. Those who wish to be lions alone will not understand this. Continued with, and therefore a ruler must have a flexible mind that can change like the wind, and as the variations of luck show, and as I said before, not deviate from what is good, if possible, but can do evil. when required" (JONES, BRADBURY, LE BOUTILLIER, & SAIFUDDIN, n.d.).

b. Dignified and Have a Sense of Nationalism

The Prince reveals a prince who is firm and brave to take any action to justify any means to maintain the power and stability of the State (Dewantara, 2017). However, it is different from what Machiavelli wrote in *The Discourses*, that a prince must have character (Syaifuddin, 2016). This difference is not a strange thing, but this assumption indicates that Machiavelli was a brilliant politician who was able to realize his theory according to the conditions of the country at that time.

A king does not need to be generous to make himself famous, unless he puts himself at risk, because if he does he becomes greedy because he wants to escape poverty, so he becomes greedy and is hated by his people. Machiavelli further explained that the cruel attitude of the king was needed as did Cesare Borgia, because by his cruelty he made the Roman kingdom better.

With efforts to restore the security and strength of the people. If you look closely, he has a more compassionate attitude than the Florentines who wish not to be mentioned, but allow Victoria to be crushed. Therefore, the king need not worry about the criticism that will be caused for his cruelty as long as he unites and embodies the loyal people. Besides him, a king who leads an army doesn't have to worry about being called cruel, because without that title he will never be able to unite and organize an army for that long, in this way he will be increasingly feared and respected by his troops. Thus a king must rely on what is on him and not on someone else.

According to Machiavelli, that there are two ways of fighting, namely through law and violence, the first way is for humans and the second way is the animal way. Therefore a king must behave sometimes as a human being and sometimes as an animal, not unlike a fox and a lion (Adiwidjaja,

n.d.). In terms of keeping promises, according to Machiavelli, humans are vicious creatures who don't keep promises, so you don't have to keep promises to humans. Then for the defense of the country he is forced to act against people's beliefs, compassion, kindness, and religion knowing how to act evil if necessary.

Meanwhile the way to avoid hatred for the people, then a king must appoint someone else to carry out actions that are less pleasing to the people, and to carry out the distribution of awards to the people himself. The ruler must still respect the nobles, but not make himself hated by the people. Thus the evidence can be classified in the interpretation that Machiavelli is classified as a bad person.

And what is often forgotten from Machiavelli is that the ruthlessness in his theory must still have justice for the people by being like that makes the rulers feared and respected, but committing corruption against the state or touching their wives is an act of bastard, unethical.

Some of the ruling characters revealed by this character consist of several elements;

First, the greatest moral good is a state, which is virtuous and stable, and actions to protect the state, however cruel, can be justified, what is very important is that it does everything necessary to maintain its power,

Second, liberality and stinginess, liberality will make people start to hate and be less appreciated. a ruler must care a little about the stingy level, if he does not want to rob his people, if he wants to protect himself, avoid being poor and despised and not forced to be greedy. Miserliness is one of the qualities that allows him to rule. It is better to be called a miser who causes shame without being hated than to be called greedy who also causes disgrace and hatred,

Third, It's better feared than loved. It's hard to hate and love at the same time, it's safer to be feared than loved. Because if they are afraid, the people will offer their life, blood, children and property. And if the government is loved by the people, the people will always be loyal to their government. However, it is also possible that if a ruler is too close, they will rebel. He should not object to being considered cruel by his soldiers, because without this reputation he would not be able to keep his soldiers in solidarity and carry out their duties properly.

Fourth, the ruler may not take the property of his people. Because it is easier for them to forget the death of a father or son than their inheritance. Apart from having dignity, a ruler according to this figure must have a sense of nationalism. Because with this nature the State can be strong, and not weak. This sense of nationalism can be shown by Machiavelli, through a ruler, including the ruler trying to create peace in his country, not prioritizing personal gain, making the people united in one State integrity.

Virtue is not equal with moral virtue, a ruler should be praised if he has good qualities, but all qualities cannot be implemented because of human limitations. That the ruler must be wise, who governs for the public good not for his personal interests, or his descendants, but all his actions for the glory of the country. And do not hand over his leadership from generation to generation (inherited), because humans tend to do evil rather than good deeds, thus allowing the heir to use it for his personal ambition.

Machiavelli has an argument that to balance it all a ruler should not feel guilty for the crimes he has committed, because it is all aimed at saving the country. Here it appears that Machiavelli was a nationalist, who advocated the rulers to love their country.

3.2 The Power of Perspective Niccolo Machiavelli

Machiavelli's image in public opinion is as an unscrupulous politician. It was only based on the excuses that he was a bad teacher.

Actually, what he wrote actually wanted to give his thoughts from the results of his experiences and observations in analyzing the country, so he made a formula which included The Prince and The Discourses in seeing the country in real. Where this figure saw the political condition of the Italian state administration which at that time was in an unstable state, as well as many rulers, and their corrupt and worldly bureaucracy.

Therefore, in looking at Machiavelli, there are two things about his assumption of power; first seen from his work The Prince which was read by many people with bad assumptions about Machiavelli, second saw Machiavelli from The Discourses, in which he explained about the

procedures for managing the state starting from the actions of the ruler towards religious positions, the republican state system, the morals of a ruler, the army, corruption issues, etc.

a. Methods of Gaining and Maintaining Power

In setting the strategy to seize the power of a State and maintain it, it is not solely for self-interest, but it is all for the honor and welfare of the State, that is Machiavelli's principle.

There are several things that Machiavelli revealed to a ruler in seizing and defending the State. A ruler must respect the situation and condition of his country. Do not let a ruler do the wrong thing in taking political action. And he should pay attention to the following points; what is the position of religion, paying attention to the problem of corruption, as well as the importance of the army in the state, and how to choose the state apparatus.

3.3 Republic is the Ideal Form of a State

So clear what Machiavelli said about the republic. So this character also wrote it in two of his works, both in *The Prince* and *The Discourses*. However, from the two literatures, the views on republics and monarchies have differences. In *The Prince*, it shows that Machiavelli influenced his readers to implement a monarchical system, but in *The Discourses*, this figure prefers a republican system which according to him is the ideal form of a country.

This is due to Machiavelli's perspective on the political condition of a country, where he analyzes that a peaceful country is better applied to a republican system, and if the country is in a state of chaos and is indicated to be broken, then a good system is a monarchy.

a. Various Republics

Machiavelli describes the various systems of power in a republic into six parts, including three parts that are good, and three parts that are destructive to the state, which is the effect of the failure of the ruler to implement the first system he used.

First, the monarchy system, if this system fails, it will give birth to tyranny. Second, the aristocratic system, if it fails, the effect is to give birth to an oligarchic system. Third, the democratic system, if this system fails, it will give birth to mobocracy, meaning that the people who are freed to express their aspirations are actually contradictory between the people and the people, and with the authorities and their bureaucracy.

First, the monarchy This type of power is centered on one person as the holder of power. The holder of this power is generally known as the king. Therefore, this type of government is usually in the form of a kingdom. In practice, the king was in full control of the state. However, in the current era, this model of government is usually supervised by parliament, such as in England, Japan, the Netherlands.

The monarchy system can be divided into two, namely absolute monarchy and constitutional monarchy. Absolute monarchy means that the head of state and government is fully controlled by the king. There is no prime minister election system and there is also no political party system in the running of the government. One country that is still running this system of government is Saudi Arabia. A form of constitutional monarchy occurs when the king shares power with the prime minister. That is, the king acts as head of state and the prime minister acts as head of government.

b. Monarchy implemented in the Chaotic Situation of Florence

However, if it is related to the conditions when Machiavelli existed, namely a condition where the political, social, economic, and legal conditions in Florence were very chaotic and irrelevant if the republic system was implemented at that time, and had the mentality of the rule of law. Therefore, Machiavelli demanded that society first be governed by the ruler with an iron fist.

That's why Machiavelli declared that the ruler must free himself from the bonds of traditional morality, and should not hesitate to take all necessary actions to eradicate all those who create chaos, disorder, corruption, cunning, selfishness or who threaten power.

Chapter fifteen of Machiavelli describes how a monarchical system was applied to Florence, in the book *The Prince* Machiavelli actually wanted a unified whole in Italy which was in chaos. And the appropriate way at that time was with the theory of the ruler. There was no other way, Machiavelli thought.

Machiavelli's Italian society, was a poor society of inter-city solidarity. Each wants to be the leader of the other. Such an unorganized and chaotic society will obviously not be able to create a republican state. Only by making the king or ruler as coercion, can Italy be unified.

So it should be seen that the concept of this ruler is a pioneer for the formation of a republican state. So between *The Prince* and *The Discourses* there is no contradiction. What exists is a tightly intertwined chain. A republic can emerge when the people are organized, ready with the awareness to become republics. Thus, Machiavelli's main goal of unifying Italy could only be realized by a monarchy system.

That Machiavelli is not as evil as political thinkers think, this is based on the evidence in *The Prince's* book, among others: Regarding cruelty, according to Machiavelli, it can be done in a good or bad way. Cruelty can be put to good use if it is done once, for the safety of a person or country. Because in that way his power will last a long time. Even though the ruler had difficulties, the king should not be cruel, because of the wisdom the king had shown his people. The king's kindness will be seen as something insincere or only limited.

For example, the law-abiding character of the French regime that Machiavelli put forward is to ensure security, but that security if necessary should not be mixed with freedom. This is the limitation of the rule of the monarchy, even for the best of kingdoms, will not be able to guarantee its people can be governed calmly and orderly.

c. Republic as the ideal form of a country

Although known for his cruelty, Machiavelli said that in a safe and peaceful country, the best system applied in that country is a republic. Because with a republic, the state will be perfect, and this republic can only be built if there is cooperation or unification between the people and their government bureaucracy in a peaceful situation.

This is exemplified by Machiavelli in the political space of Rome, when it was held by Horatii who contributed to the republic. But when he was found to have killed the prince Horotii was sentenced to life in prison. This does not mean that the people forget about their services, but the caution in a well-organized republic is to never cancel punishments to its citizens because of their services.

Providing services and punishing people for wrongdoing to the State must still be done. And a republic state that pays attention to this will be able to enjoy freedom and justice in its state body, but if what is applied is the opposite, then wait for its destruction.

However, what a ruler needs to pay attention to is where he has to be good at seeing the political conditions in his country. Where is the right time to implement a republic or a monarchical system. Because if someone implements a republic system in a country where the bureaucracy and its people make corruption their culture, then the republic is not a good way. But in a corrupt society, the monarchical system is the most appropriate.

Machiavelli gave an example of this situation when Manlius led Rome by implementing a republic system within Rome, even though at that time corruption was rampant. And finally despite the good intentions of this Manlius, but he met a stalemate where the nobles who held government positions in Rome in the end killed him.

3.4 The Character of Niccolò Machiavelli's Thoughts on Ethics and Power

"In understanding Machiavelli's thinking, the state should not be thought of from an ethical point of view, but from a medical point of view. At that time, Italy was suffering and miserable, while the Florentines were in grave danger. For this reason, the state must be made strong not by an ethical but medical approach. People who betray must be amputated before they infect the whole country (seditious people should be amputated before they infect the whole state). Machiavelli sees politics as a battlefield condition that must be conquered".

That's the assumption published by political historians against Machiavelli, where in essence they state that *The Prince* articulating a Machiavelli is unethical. But not a few of modern politicians are defenders of Machiavelli's work, assuming that the political discourse presented by Machiavelli in *The Prince* is due to the condition of Italy which is on the verge of collapse so that the formula for the political strategy needed is not from the theory of Plato, Aristotle, or even religious doctrines, all of which lead to state ethics. Where in Machiavelli's view it was not necessary in Italy which was experiencing a multidimensional crisis, what Italy needed at that time was a virtu, a wise and shrewd king who could control,

Fortuna according to him is malice and a source of human misery that cannot be tolerated. He described fortune as "one of a destructive river, which in a moment of anger will turn land into

lakes, tear down trees and buildings, take the world from one point and put it at another point, everyone flees before the flood, everyone is angry and no one is there." who can refuse." This anger and calamity does not mean that it is beyond human control. Before the rain comes, it is still possible to do something to divert or change the consequences. This description was put forward by Machiavelli to state that luck can be overcome by humans, but must be prepared with virtual and wisdom. Fortuna is like a girl who must be forced to submit, because by subduing him we can ask whatever we want from him. So never approach this girl gently, because it will only slow down time.

Meanwhile, The Discourses on the Ten Books of Titus Livy which is seen by many experts as representing Machiavelli's thoughts who have political commitments and beliefs, especially towards the republic, in which it teaches how a negraman or ruler must always be steadfast and strong, and not be weak, by having character loved by the people.

From the descriptions of these two works, it is indeed difficult to understand the true character of this figure in viewing the relevance between ethics and power. Because on the other hand in The Prince, portraying him as a bad person. But on the other hand (The Discourses) it looks like he is someone who wants his country to be led by a ruler who has character and dignity, and has a sense of nationalism. Thus, from these two works, views that seem to depict two different figures, even though the writing of these two major political works were done by a Niccolo Machiavelli, and what caught the attention the most was that Machiavelli wrote these two works at the same time.

Thus, according to Henry J. Schmandt, these two characters can be brought together by reconciling the two by understanding his theory of humans. This is in accordance with his gloomy experience of politics, he saw how bad the face of politics was full of moral depravity. But apart from that he also studied the history of the political man who ruled his country with wisdom and wisdom in Rome. It is not wrong if Thomas Hobbes states that humans are selfish, like to fight, greedy, evil, and can even be crueller than animals, this is what Machiavelli thinks so that this character provides a solution by managing humans in a way that atrocities calculated in order to solve the problems of the state of Florence.

But in addition to the evil caused by humans, humans also have instincts, reason, and the nature of surrendering themselves to God. So according to him, religion within the framework of the state is also needed as a tool or instrument to gain, enlarge and defend the state.

From Machiavelli's point of view above, it will be found that the character of this figure in viewing ethics and power which still has relevance to religion has several points; first, the relationship between power and ethics or morality According to Machiavelli in terms of the morality of a leader, he assumes that a ruler should be able to form public opinion that can control the behavior of his citizens. Therefore, to strengthen power, the ruler must be able to mobilize all the low desires of those who want to be controlled in order to achieve this goal. In this case, he likens a leader to be able to characterize both humans and wild animals. To achieve his goals, a ruler does not have to consider morals. On the one hand, a ruler must be able to act very morally, such as being honest, humble, but it is functioned when you want to get that goal. However, if the condition is urgent to maintain the stability of his hegemony, a ruler acts otherwise, namely immoral. Because it's all for the peace and prosperity of the country.

Second, the relationship between power and religion as stated earlier, a ruler should make religion a tool or instrument of power. For Machiavelli, religion has pragmatic values and practical political interests to integrate the state, foster loyalty, obedience and submission of the people to the authorities. This he exemplified in the Roman republic with his religion at that time was the religion of Ancient Rome.

Religion can also help in controlling the state, growing people's hope and spirit, producing good people and embarrassing bad people, and so on. Therefore, where there is religion, it will be easy to teach the people about weapons. However, without religion, it will be difficult to introduce weapons to the people.

Machiavelli also thinks that religion is only an institution in social life that can be functioned. In this sense, his ideas about religion are secular.

Because religion is one of the important instruments in obtaining, enlarging and maintaining power, therefore, the state should be able to intervene in religion. From Machiavelli's view of religion, we can categorize Machiavelli as adherents of utilitarianism and pragmatism.

3. CONCLUSION

Machiavelli has argued his ideas in a work that does have an important role in the world of politics. Because with his work, he has freed politics from the grip of the Church. But on the other hand, Machiavelli with all the methods he taught about the behavior of a ruler has justified all the ways to maintain power and his country. So if it is taken in the sense of "ethical humanism" to justify all means in the actions of a ruler, then it can still be said to be unethical.

Seeing objectively that the contents of *The Discourses* and *The Prince* have opened wide our eyes, hearts and minds that there are many positive sides contained in it such as what he said about the prohibition of acts of corruption, the importance of the position of religion in a country, the position of the military in the country, and ways in which the government can be stable.

The Discourses and *The Prince* are really stated on the facts that aim to conclude some foundations based on their observations of history, and the life of the state in other words the book presents selected cases from the history of government by referring to a number of issues concerning: "how to govern towns or small States which had their own laws before they joined the great powers" or concerning "cruelty or mercy, and whether it is better to be loved than to be feared" or which deal with matters concerning "raids". the rulers of the State and why the Italian rulers lost their States" and so on. The book has nothing to do with the philosophical system of political science.

The Prince can be considered the most important practical advice for a head of state. The basic premise of this book is that, for any success, a Prince must abandon moral considerations completely and rely on everything, for strength and cunning. Machiavelli stressed that above all else the most important thing is that a country must be well armed. He argues, only with soldiers who are conscripted from the citizens themselves can be trusted. Countries that depend on mercenaries or soldiers from other lands are weak and dangerous.

Machiavelli advised the Prince to get the people's support, otherwise he would have no source of facing trouble. Of course, Machiavelli understood that sometimes a new ruler, in order to strengthen his power, had to do something to secure his power, was forced to do things that displeased his citizens. He suggested, however, that in order to seize a country, the King should set the stage for cruelty at once. But they do not need to experience every day slack must be given little by little so that they can feel happy. To be successful, a Prince must be surrounded by capable and loyal ministers. Machiavelli warned the Prince to stay away from sycophants and asked his aides what was appropriate.

In *The Prince* and *The Discourses* as well, there are two important things to note, namely: the principality and the republic. Machiavelli gives advice on how to get and keep a principality. To do so, a wise ruler should follow the path put forward based on the needs, glory and goodness of the country, the ruler must combine machismo (soldier spirit) with political considerations. *The Prince* describes the qualities of a wise ruler, including: having the ability to be both good and bad, both loved and feared; traits such as assertiveness, cruelty, independence, discipline, and self-control; a reputation for generosity, forgiveness, trustworthiness and sincerity. Machiavelli advised rulers to do whatever was necessary, however despicable it may seem because in the end the people only care about the result, namely the good of the country. He was judged as 'Machiavellian' for separating political behavior from all its relation to justice and morality; rulers must run the government in the manner or character of humans and animals. The way of humans with their humanism, the way of animals with power. Man must learn to imitate the cunning lion and fox.

Both of these literatures have a balance in the political frame of a King. Because the concept in it requires a head of state to intelligently choose what path should be chosen in managing the country. Because the country does not need a gentle leader in a chaos state situation and condition. Likewise, the state does not need the cruelty and cruelty of a head of state who oppresses his people, because it will cause rebellion within the state.

Therefore, the substance in the two literatures needs to be digested properly. Because it will be fatal if this concept is realized only with a textual understanding.

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