



Machiavelli's Legacy: "The Prince" After Five Hundred Years

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Niccolo Machiavelli's *The Prince* is one of the most celebrated and notorious books in the history of Western political thought. It continues to influence discussions of war and peace, the nature of politics, and the relation of private ethics to public duties. Ostensibly a sixteenth-century manual of instruction on certain aspects of princely rule and behavior, *The Prince* anticipates and complicates modern political and philosophical questions. What is the right order of society? Can Western politics still be the model for progress toward peace and prosperity, or does our freedom to create our individual purposes and pursuits undermine our public responsibilities? Are the characteristics of our politics markedly different, for better or for worse, than the politics of earlier eras? Machiavelli argues that there is no ideal, transcendent order to which one can conform, and that the right order is merely the one that has the capacity to persist over time. The *Prince's* emphasis on the importance of an effective truth over any abstract ideal marks it as one of the first works of modern political philosophy.

Machiavelli's Legacy situates Machiavelli in general and *The Prince* in particular at the birth of modernity. Joining the conversation with established Machiavelli scholars are political theorists, Americanists, and international relations scholars, ensuring a diversity of viewpoints and approaches. Each contributor elucidates different features of Machiavelli's thinking, from his rejection of classical antiquity and Christianity, to his proposed dissolution of natural roles and hierarchies among human beings. The essays cover topics such as Machiavelli's vision for a heaven-sent redemptive ruler of Italy, an argument that Machiavelli accomplished a profoundly democratic turn in political thought, and a tough-minded liberal critique of his realistic agenda for political life, resulting in a book that is, in effect, a spirited conversation about Machiavelli's legacy.

Contributors: Thomas E. Cronin, David Hendrickson, Harvey Mansfield, Clifford Orwin, Arlene Saxonhouse, Maurizio Viroli, David Wootton, Catherine Zuckert

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Editorial Review

Review

"This collection of essays by some of the most renowned Machiavelli scholars of our time will be of interest and importance not merely to scholars but to graduate and undergraduate students who seek a deeper understanding of Machiavelli's thought and his importance for modernity."—Michael Allen Gillespie, Duke University

"Timothy Fuller has done a considerable service in orchestrating such a broad, balanced conversation about Machiavelli as a philosopher, and thus as teacher of both rulers and thinkers. This volume is a remarkable gift."—Paul Carrese, U.S. Air Force Academy

"*Machiavelli's Legacy*, an outstanding collection of essays by distinguished scholars of differing specialties and approaches, plumbs the depths of a wide range of issues that continue to perplex us about the wily Florentine: his stance toward the classical and Christian traditions, his Italian patriotism, his teaching about evil, his concepts of the state, reason, and fortune, and his relation to the American founding, international relations, and modernity generally. It will stimulate and enlighten both lifelong Machiavelli scholars and students encountering *The Prince* for the first time."—Nathan Tarcov, University of Chicago

"A genuinely illuminating collection of essays that brings out Machiavelli's profound and multifaceted impact on modern political life and self-understanding. Written from a variety of interpretive standpoints, the essays take up and provide fresh perspectives on many of the classic debates that have swirled around this most controversial of modern political philosophers."—Paul Franco, Bowdoin College

About the Author

Timothy Fuller is Professor of Political Science at Colorado College. He is the editor of many books, including *The Intellectual Legacy of Michael Oakeshott*.

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