
The Renaissance Value Of Humanism In Tractate The Prince By Niccolò Machiavelli

As a leader living during the Renaissance, I am focused on the qualities of humanism, individualism and secularism based on Machiavelli's book. The Prince, written by Niccolò Machiavelli, is a guide for successful monarchical rule. From its origins in 14th-century Florence, the Renaissance spread across Europe adapted to local cultural thinking and conditions.

The Renaissance value of humanism greatly influences The Prince because Machiavelli, a humanist himself, targets human nature in portraying the ideal monarchy. Humanists of the Renaissance were promoters of human potential. The Prince is a handbook on political science describing how to run a state and do it successfully? What is so notable is that this is the first purely secular approach to political action. Before this, the political stage worked between feudal monarchs/servants who were from Church-related institutes. Any past essay was political idealism. The Prince is political realism and describes what is happening in actuality. Throughout The Prince, Machiavelli examines the dynamics of humanity. He understands that while a good ruler should possess some admirable qualities, it is impossible for any human being to be entirely good. Therefore, Machiavelli introduces the concept that characteristics like cruelty and dishonesty are necessary to effectively hold power over a state.

Based on The Prince, I would rather be a feared ruler than a loved one. Love is fickle whereas fear is forever. To be the successful leader, I learnt from Machiavelli, "The ends justify the means." Machiavelli is not saying to be immoral. He doesn't ask questions about good/bad. He is just realistic and writes what the leader must do to be successful. He leaves morality out of it. His point is that you, as the prince, must know your job, do it well, and leave your mark on society in the position in life you have chosen to embrace. As Machiavelli's prince, I am focused on political security, how to be successful as a leader. Unlike a leader during the Middle Ages, I, a prince living during the Renaissance, will not go on crusades which will leave my state floundering with no leader. Unlike other humanists of his time, Machiavelli was perhaps the first to creatively explore relatively unethical methods of rule while roaming within the intellectual bounds of humanism. The Prince is considered to be a great work from the Renaissance period: Machiavelli attempts to summarize human nature from an accurate and realistic standpoint.

Humanism places human beings, not God or faith, as the center of attention in life. Living during the Renaissance, I commissioned a painter, based on Renaissance ideals, to draw my portrait. This is radically different than medieval artwork which was purchased exclusively by or for the church. Italian Renaissance reveres the body and portrayed the human body as a thing of beauty in its own right. Similarly, during my lifetime, Raphael painted The School of Athens in accordance to the themes of Renaissance artwork. Raphael depicted a celebration of the scholars of ancient times. It shows the point of the renaissance campaign which is a revival of these glorious times. The School of Athens demonstrates how humanism had so captured the intellectual human life. Raphael painted faces of known Renaissance Men to be the ancient philosophers. Through this, Raphael is subtly saying the artists are the jewels of society now as opposed to the ancient philosophers.

Along those lines, Renaissance philosophers saw humans as intelligent creatures capable of

reason (and questioning authority) rather than mindless pawns helplessly manipulated by God. Even the term for Renaissance philosophers, 'humanists', shows how the focus of peoples' attention had shifted from Heaven and God to this world and human beings. It also described the group of scholars who drew upon the more secular Greek and Roman civilizations for inspiration.

Humanists redefined what it means to be educated. And not only that, but also what to do with that education. Civic humanism emerges during the Renaissance. Civic humanism is putting your efforts and talents into the service of the state so your mark should be felt in a broad sense. Participation in public affairs is essential and as a prince, I am doing my civic duty to the state. It is an era to use my education to have a *vita activa*. This is in contrast to the medieval scholar who lived and expounded a *vita conteplativa*. The civic humanists don't like the monks living a *vita conteplativa* because they aren't utilizing the knowledge in a curriculum that engages the individual. Civic humanists were all about using the individual prowess for a purpose. Trying to achieve virtue in the traits that are necessary to achieve great things – more than moral excellence – maximize your potential so that you impact society.

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