

## Machiavelli and the Limits of Realism in International Relations

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### Abstract

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All through its history, realism, as articulated in various ways by its exponents such as Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Carr, Niebuhr, Morgenthau and Waltz, has been a highly contentious perspective on the nature of international relations. In the contemporary configuration of international relations, the *ding-dong affair* between realism and idealism centers on the realist assumptions regarding the selfish nature of man and the anarchic nature of the international system *vis-à-vis* the idealist prospect for peace and co-operation among nations. Our aim in this paper is to interrogate the claims of realism by considering Machiavelli's conception of International relations as articulated in *The Prince* and the *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius*. While there is a point to the realist pessimism regarding human nature and its potentials for co-operation as well as the realist correlation of politics, power and interest, it is arguable that the metaphysics and anthropology of human nature that undergirds the entire realist understanding of international relations is one-sided and this one-sidedness explains the apparent rift between realism and idealism, as evidenced by the debate between both perspectives. Our contention is that once we revise the metaphysics and anthropology that drives realism, to take into account some larger issues concerning the nature of reality and human existence, it becomes possible to reconcile the tension between realism and idealism, such as to allow for a more adequate conceptualization of the nature of international relations and its dynamics.

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### 1. Preamble

International Relations is a relatively young discipline, having begun at the turn of the century as an academic discipline in response to the challenges provoked by the First World War concerning the need to understand the root causes of the war and how to avert future occasions of war.<sup>2</sup> As the oldest and perhaps the dominant school of thought in International relations, realism, like other theoretical perspectives such as Idealism (Liberalism), Marxism and Constructivism, attempts to theorize the nature of the International system and proffer solution to the perennial problem of how best to guarantee a stable international system in which the various elements can co-exist harmoniously.<sup>3</sup> Realism assumes that nation-states are sole actors in international affairs and that the international system is anarchic in the sense that there is no supra-national authority to moderate the relationship among states.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> John Baylis, Steve Smith and Patricia Owens, *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 10-23. Cf. John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the Global Stage* (McGraw Hill, 2003), pp. 1-25

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Chris Brown and Kirsten Ainley, *Understanding International Relations*, Fourth Edition Revised and Updated (Macmillan: Palgrave, 2009), pp. 1-7

The anarchic nature of the system means that the basic principle of operation is self-preservation and each nation must fend for itself and not necessarily rely on another nation to take care of its interest.<sup>5</sup> Thus international politics is nothing more than interaction between sovereign nation-states in which each one is motivated by self-interest, so that relations among states are often driven by competition rather than co-operation.<sup>6</sup> Given the anarchic nature of the system and the principle of self-help that governs it, realism considers illusory the idealist emphasis on co-operation and rationalism in politics, believing, as it were, that prone to conflict as it is, the international system cannot be completely rid of war, so that the solution lies in balance of power and interest.<sup>7</sup>

All through its history, as articulated in various ways by its chief exponents such as Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Carr, Niebuhr, Morgenthau and Waltz, realism has been a highly contentious perspective on the nature of international relations.<sup>8</sup> In the contemporary configuration of international relations, the *ding-dong affair* between realism and idealism, for the most part, centers on the realist assumptions regarding the selfish nature of man and the anarchic nature of the international system *vis-à-vis* the idealist prospect for peace and co-operation among nations.<sup>9</sup>

Our aim in this paper is to interrogate the claims of realism by considering Machiavelli's conception of International relations as articulated in *The Prince* and the *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius*. While there is a point to the realist pessimism regarding human nature and its potentials for co-operation as well as the realist correlation of politics, power and interest, it is arguable that the metaphysics and anthropology of human nature that undergirds the entire realist understanding of international relations is one-sided and this one-sidedness explains the apparent rift between realism and idealism, as evidenced by the debate between both perspectives. Our contention is that once we revise the metaphysics and anthropology that drives realism, to take into account some larger issues concerning the nature of reality and human existence, it becomes possible to reconcile the tension between realism and idealism, such as to allow for a more adequate conceptualization of the nature of international relations and its dynamics.

For sake of convenient exposition, we develop our argument in terms of the following procedure. After a brief account of the emergence of Machiavelli's realism, we consider the credentials of his concept of International relations and its influence. The final moment of our reflection discusses the limits of realism in international relations and concludes with a brief remark on the contemporary relevance of Machiavelli. Let us begin then by focusing on the question of the emergence of Machiavelli's realism.

## 2. The Question of the Emergence of Machiavelli's Realism

Machiavelli is regarded as one of the fore-fathers of realism, one of the oldest schools in International Relations. Commentators generally believe that Machiavelli has had a tremendous impact on international relation.<sup>10</sup> The impact derives largely from two of his most important works, *The Prince* and the *Discourses*.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>5</sup> W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations" in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, First published Mon July 26, 2019; substantive revision Wed May 24, 2017

<sup>6</sup> Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki and Steve Smith, *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, Second Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 16-18

<sup>7</sup> E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939: An Introduction to Study International Relations* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 1-20

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Thucydides, *History of Peloponnesian War*; translated by Rex Warner (London: Penguin Classics, 1979), Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan with an Introduction by H. Morely* (London: 1887), H. J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: the Struggle for Power and Peace* (McGraw-Hill, 2006); K. N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. (Waveland, 1979) and Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study of Ethics and Politics* (New York: Charles Scriber's Sons, 1932)

<sup>9</sup> Cf. W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations" in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, First published Mon July 26, 2019; substantive revision Wed May 24, 2017

<sup>10</sup> See James Blackburn, "Realism in International Relations" <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/realism-international-relations-james-blackburn/December 15, 2015>

<sup>11</sup> George Bull sums up the relationship between the two books thus: "Almost all the observations and maxims in *The Prince* are to be found elaborated in the *Discourses*; but there is a marvelous difference of perspective between the two books. The *Discourses* were written with no less vehemence, but are more discursive and, crucially, constitute a commentary on all forms of government from the viewpoint of an ardent republican. From the pages of *The Prince* strides the figure of the autocrat, the new man, ruthless, efficient, and defiant, the literary forerunner of the new monarchs of the sixteenth century." See his "Editor's Introduction" in Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, translated with an Introduction by George Bull (London: Penguin Books, 1961), pp. 19-20

But the impact is by no means limited to these works, as Machiavelli's other works such as the *Art of War* and the *History of Florence* significantly reinforce Machiavelli's views on international relations; and so, are no less important as far as his overall contributions to international relations is concerned.<sup>12</sup>

### 2.1. Machiavelli's Realism as a Product of His Experience as a Politician And Diplomat

Born in 1469 in Florence, one of the Italian City States, Machiavelli was a politician and a diplomat. He served in the Florentine Republic for fourteen years as a *secretary* to the city council and as a diplomatic envoy. His time as secretary and diplomat saw him handle many matters, internal and external to the affairs of the state. Moreover, it afforded him a unique opportunity from a close range to observe and study the attitudes and behaviors of the political actors of his time, both within and beyond Florence; the interaction between the actors, but especially how they managed and conducted the domestic and foreign affairs of the state.<sup>13</sup>

When the Republican government was overthrown by the Medici family in 1512, Machiavelli lost his position and went into exile. While in exile Machiavelli preoccupied himself with writing and it was during this period that he wrote most of his works for which he is known. First he started with the *Discourses* but interrupted it in 1513 in order to write *The Prince* which he completed in December 1513. Machiavelli suspended work on the *Discourses* which he eventually completed in 1521 because he thought the publication of *The Prince* could serve to re-launch him into political reckoning by securing appointment for him in the new Medici government under the leadership of Lorenzo de Medici. Indeed as part of Machiavelli's strategy to gain the attention and patronage of the Medici family, he dedicated *The Prince* to 'His Magnificence Lorenzo de Medici.<sup>14</sup> But unfortunately, Lorenzo was not impressed and Machiavelli did not receive any appointment in the government. Similarly the reception from the general public was poor. Initially the reaction was indifference, but subsequently the book came to be criticized as "immoral, evil and wicked".<sup>15</sup>

Despite the negative reactions *The Prince* provoked on its appearance and subsequently, it is nonetheless the primary source of Machiavelli's realism. Consequently, Machiavelli's political realism cannot be understood without taking into account the context, motivation and assumptions behind the composition of *The Prince*.<sup>16</sup> Indeed it is arguable that Machiavelli's political realism is more or less a distillation of his practical experience as a politician and a diplomat, so far as drawing from this background of 'native wisdom', the *Prince* and to some extent, the *Discourses*, consists essentially of a series of advice that Machiavelli offers to the prospective Prince on the matter of how to attain power and sustain power in effectively managing the affairs of the state.<sup>17</sup>

Although the original and immediate context is Florence or the Italian city-states as a whole, Machiavelli intends that the lessons distilled from his experience are applicable to any ideal situation, so far as our concern is to understand how a prince should behave or not behave. To this extent *The Prince* and the *Discourses* articulate Machiavelli's views on the manner in which a state should be run and the manner in which inter-state relations should be conducted to achieve the best results for the state.<sup>18</sup>

### 2.2. Machiavelli's Realism as A Product of the Italian Renaissance

It is significant that Machiavelli's recommendations to the prospective prince are not *a priori* recommendations but empirical generalizations based on his practical experience. For, given the time and milieu in which Machiavelli wrote—namely, Italian Renaissance, still dominated, as it were, by the medieval culture and mentality—the empirical approach that underpins Machiavelli's political realism is revolutionary, so far as, in opposition to the medieval *status quo*, Machiavelli was not interested in basing his discourse on the state and political leadership on "what ought to be the case but rather on what is the case".

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Jene M. Porter, Editor, *Classics in Political Philosophy*, Second Edition (Ontario, Canada: Prentice-Hall, 1997), p. 223

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 13-17

<sup>14</sup> See Niccolò Machiavelli, "The Prince" in *Classics in Political Philosophy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition edited by Jene M. Porter, p. 224

<sup>15</sup> Even till this day, the name of Machiavelli continues to provoke negative sentiments and no one really loves to associate with Machiavelli on account of the bad reputation his views on political power and leadership has earned him. See Quentin Skinner, *Great Political Thinker* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 9-10

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> See George Bull, "Editor's Introduction" in Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, translated with an Introduction by George Bull, Penguin Books, 1966. See also Quentin Skinner, 'Great Political Thinkers', pp. 29-55

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Janice Leung, "Machiavelli and International Relations Theory", *Glendon Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 1. 2000, p. 3

That is why he follows the procedure of distilling the lessons from his practical observation and not on some *a priori* principle regarding how the business of the state should be conducted.<sup>19</sup> Indeed as he says in Chapter 15 of the *Prince* in intimating the empirical method that informs his approach: It remains now to consider in what ways a ruler should act with regard to his subjects and allies. And since I am well aware that many people have written about this subject, I fear that I may be thought presumptuous, for what I have to say differs from the precepts offered by others, especially the manner. But because I want to write what will be useful to anyone who understands, it seems to me better to concentrate on what really happens rather than on theories or speculations. For many have imagined republics and principalities that have never been seen or known to exist. However, how men live is so different from how they should live that a ruler who does not do what is generally done will undermine his power rather than obtain it... I shall set aside fantasies about rulers then and consider what happens in fact.<sup>20</sup>

While Machiavelli's realism is borne out of his political experience, and not based on "fantasies", as he says in the above passage, or *a priori* principles, as established by some philosophical or theological authorities, we should remark here that the empirical approach that underpins it is not original to Machiavelli in the sense that it was part of the broader innovations unleashed by the emergence of modern science.<sup>21</sup> Specifically the cosmological discoveries of the pioneers of modern science such as Copernicus and later, Kepler and Galileo introduced radical shift in attitudes concerning the nature of the universe and how best to study it.<sup>22</sup> Indeed the success and influence of the new scientific cosmology in supplanting the geo-centric theory of the universe that goes back to Aristotle and even further, and replacing it with a heliocentric conception, is at the heart of the collapse of the medieval synthesis and the emergence of the modern world.<sup>23</sup> The empirical method of investigation the new science embodied and the spirit of free exploration and discovery it fostered permeated all aspects of culture, challenging and upstaging received ideas and introducing new ideas and orientations that undermined the medieval outlook.<sup>24</sup>

Consequently, not only did the new cosmology prove successful in unlocking the secrets of nature and empowering man to dominate nature and harness its resources towards the development of the human condition, more importantly, the pragmatic success of the science of nature itself provided an impetus and at the same time became a justification to extend the empirical method to the study of other areas of culture such as art, literature, medicine, education, religion, philosophy and indeed politics, so that no area of human existence is sacrosanct.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, the reformation and the renaissance, two important moments at the core of the transition from the medieval to the modern world, are products of this whole development. Machiavelli and his theorization about the nature of the political and how best to manage it belong to this ethos and is representative of the renaissance wing of this entire development of the transition from the medieval to the modern world.<sup>26</sup>

In this context, therefore, Machiavelli is an innovator and his political realism is an attempt to apply the method of the new science of nature in studying the political just as Copernicus and Galileo had done with nature.<sup>27</sup> This is evident from the passage just cited, especially Machiavelli's claim to "set aside fantasies about rulers and consider what happens in fact".<sup>28</sup> Indeed, in maintaining that the best way to "make a useful sense" of the nature of the political, is to concentrate on what really happens rather than theories and speculations, Machiavelli more or less enunciates what will later become the cardinal creed of the enlightenment with respect to its attack on tradition.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> See Quentin Skinner, *Great Political Thinker* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 14-28

<sup>20</sup> See Niccolò Machiavelli, "The Prince" in *Classics in Political Philosophy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition edited by Jene M. Porter, p. 224

<sup>21</sup> In this matter it is arguable that Machiavelli was a pace-setter because this development will become more explicit subsequently.

<sup>22</sup> See W. T. Jones, *A History of Western Philosophy, Second Edition: Hobbes to Hume* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1969), pp, 73-117

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4

<sup>25</sup> Marvin Perry, Joseph R. Peden and Theodore H. Von Laue, *Sources of the Western Tradition*, Third Edition, Volume: From Ancient Times to the Enlightenment (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1995), pp. 395-404

<sup>26</sup> Cf. W. T. Jones, *Masters of Political Thought*, edited by Edward McCchesney Sait, Volume 2: Machiavelli to Bentham (London: George G. Harrap, 1947), pp. 24-6

<sup>27</sup> See W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations" in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, First published Mon July 26, 2019; substantive revision Wed May 24, 2017

<sup>28</sup> See Niccolò Machiavelli, "The Prince" in *Classics in Political Philosophy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition edited by Jene M. Porter, p. 224

<sup>29</sup> See Kant, "What is Enlightenment?" a tract in which he offers a definition of the enlightenment. See also W. T. Jones's account of Bacon's critique of Medieval Science, *A History of Western Philosophy*, pp. 77-85

To this extent Machiavelli's political realism is a product of renaissance and it is a subtle critique of medieval culture as far as it pertains to the received views concerning the nature of the political and how best to govern a state or to manage inter-state relations.<sup>30</sup>

From our account so far it is evident that apart from the fact that Machiavelli's political realism was borne out of his practical experience as a politician and diplomat in the Florentine Republican government it is also a product of the ethos and milieu in which Machiavelli was enmeshed, namely, the renaissance, so that if we are to properly understand the emergence of his political realism, both of these considerations need to be taken into account.<sup>31</sup>

### 3. Machiavelli's Concept of International Relations: The Question of Its Credentials and Influence

The pertinence of this point will emerge as we now turn our attention in what follows to Machiavelli's conception of International relations; for, the specific configuration Machiavelli's account assumes is a reflection of his unique approach to the political as well as a product of the assumptions that undergird the renaissance as a whole, so that it remains to be seen, in the final analysis, whether the question of the adequacy of Machiavelli's political realism can be determined independent of the question of the coherence of the assumptions that undergird it. Of course, this is a matter for the later part of our discussion. However, let us immediately consider the credentials of Machiavelli's conception of International relations and how his political realism has influenced the history of the International relations, beginning with a general clarification of the concept of international relations.

#### 3.1. The Concept of International Relations: General Considerations

Commentators are in agreement regarding the difficulties associated with defining the concept of International relations. While there is no single definition that adequately captures the meaning of the term, the general idea is that international relations refers to "the way in which two or more nations interact with each other especially in the context of political, economic or cultural relationship."<sup>32</sup> Understood in this sense international relations describe the interactions that takes place between different countries at various levels and to this extent, international relations are a form of human relations.<sup>33</sup>

But beyond the phenomena of *interactions qua interactions* and their mode of occurrence, international relations can be understood as a discipline that studies and explains these interactions or relationships between countries with a view to understanding their dynamics and excavating the logic that underpins them. Understood in this sense, International relations, is "a branch of political science concerned with relations between nations and primarily with foreign policy" and to this extent it "focuses on the study of the interaction of the actors in international politics, including state actors and non-state actors."<sup>34</sup>

The difference between the two senses of International relations at issue here is obvious but the continuity between them is also not in doubt. One is about the phenomena of interactions qua interactions, whereas, in addition to this, the other is an academic study of the phenomena of interactions, so that the former is the object of the latter, and to this extent, the latter is inconceivable without the former, so far as the *raison d'être* of the latter is to rationalize the former. Indeed, international relations as a discipline could not have any legitimate and coherent business without presupposing the reality of the phenomena of interactions between different countries, since the overall point of International relations as a discipline is to account for the phenomena of international relations. Like all facts, the phenomena of international relations require explanation and indeed exhibit an implicit logic. Yet the phenomena cannot account for itself, hence the necessity of International Relations as an academic discipline with the burden of rendering explicit what is implicit in the phenomena and thus account for the fact of international relations.<sup>35</sup> As human phenomena international relations understandably are as old as the human species, given, of course, that people and nations in various epochs of history from time immemorial have always interacted, beginning with the ancients and the medieval and continuing in the modern epoch with all the sophisticated technological innovations of the modern world. However, as a formal academic discipline, International relations, is of relatively recent origin.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Michael B. Foster, *Masters of Political Thought*, edited by Edward McChesney Sait, Volume 1: Plato to Machiavelli (London: George G. Harrap and Co, 1942), pp. 266-285

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Quentin Skinner, *Great Political Thinkers: Machiavelli* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 9-10

<sup>32</sup> "International Relations" in *Merriam Webster Dictionary online*

<sup>33</sup> "International Relations" Wikipedia, *The Free Encyclopedia*, retrieved on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2016

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

It started in Britain in 1919 with the establishment of the Woodrow Wilson Chair at University of Wales, Aberystwyth and was associated with efforts to understand the nature and causes of wars, following the aftermath of the First World War.<sup>36</sup> It is also not unusual for scholars to date its origin much earlier, tracing it back to the Peace Treaty of Westphalia of 1648, which defined the concept of sovereign state.<sup>37</sup>

Indeed, since the Peace Treaty of Westphalia and the development of the modern-state system it introduced, with the twin category of sovereignty and territoriality as the hallmark of the state, the nation-state has been the central focus of international relations and its fundamental task has been to conceptualize the international system in such a way as to account for why states behave the way they behave and how they must behave in the international system in order to survive.<sup>38</sup> Of course, the idea is that as social entities as states are, like individuals, no state can exist in isolation but must interact with other states within the international system, so that if we are to understand the nature of international affairs and the dynamics of international politics we must understand the behavior of states, since states are the basic units of the international system.<sup>39</sup> It is not surprising, therefore that International Relations as an academic discipline focuses on inter-state relationship and how a state must conduct itself in the International system.<sup>40</sup>

Indeed theorizing the nature of the international system and inter-state relationship is a prime concern of the theoretical perspectives in International relations such as realism, idealism and constructivism. Thus in response to this challenge, political realism all through its history not only assumes that nation-states are the sole actors in international affairs, but more importantly, it also maintains that the international system is anarchic and competitive in the sense that there is no central authority, so that the basic principle of operation is self-help, as each state must struggle for power and act in pursuit of its own interest.<sup>41</sup>

But apart from the assumption that states must be concerned with their own security, realism also advocates “the pre-eminence of self-interest over morality”, meaning that the state must do whatever it must do to secure its interest even when it means resorting to unethical means.<sup>42</sup>

The realist emphasis on the conflicting and competitive nature of the international system as well as the emphasis on “pre-eminence of self-interest over morality and the struggle for power” contrasts with the idealist emphasis on co-operation and justice as basic principles of international relations.<sup>43</sup>

### 3.2. Machiavelli’s Concept of International Relations

Writing in the context of Italian Renaissance and with the Italian city-states, struggling for power and primacy among themselves, often with the support of foreign powers but at great cost, Machiavelli, like all realists, was particularly aware of the competitive and anarchic nature of the international system.<sup>44</sup> He knew from first-hand experience that the business of state-craft is precarious and requires tact and diplomacy.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, as a politician and diplomat in Republican government, Machiavelli undertook several missions on behalf of the state of Florence to other city states and great powers, including a mission to Caterina Sforza in 1499, countess of a small state of great strategic importance to Florence, a mission to France in 1500 to seek terms from Louis for continuing the war against Pisa, a mission to Casare Borgia in 1502, a mission to Rome in 1503 to watch and report on the election and policy of the new pope; to Nepi in 1506, to meet Julius II and discuss the aid demanded from Florentines for his campaign to

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. John T. Rourke, *International Politics on the Global Stage* (McGraw Hill, 2003), pp. 1-27

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> See James Blackburn, “Realism in International Relations” <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/realism-international-relations-james-blackburn/December 15, 2015>

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> See Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, edited and translated with an Introduction by George Bull (London: Penguin Books, 1966), Chapter 26

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

conquer lost provinces of the Church; and to Maximilian, in 1507, to negotiate on the payment which he had demanded from the Florentines to meet the expenses for his coronation as emperor of Rome.<sup>46</sup>

From these diplomatic missions Machiavelli came to understand that the interest of the state is supreme, so that, if a state must survive in the competitive and anarchic environment of international politics, a ruler must be shrewd and pragmatic in conducting the affairs of the state, but especially in negotiating and protecting the interest of the state in relation to other states. As noted, Machiavelli's political realism is practically a distillation of these political and diplomatic experiences and constitutes the bulk of the recommendations he offers to a potential rulers in the *Prince* and *Discourses*.<sup>47</sup> In what follows we consider some of the salient features of Machiavelli's realism and how they exemplify the key attributes of the realist understanding of International Relations.

### 3. 2. 1. Machiavelli's Political Realism and the Divorce of Ethics From Politics

Perhaps the most fundamental feature of Machiavelli's political realism is Machiavelli's divorce of ethics from politics and for this reason it is not unusual to view him as a "quintessential proponent of amoral approach to politics".<sup>48</sup> Given Machiavelli's conviction that morality and politics are two spheres that should be left alone, it is not surprising that he views as improper any attempt to import moral considerations into politics.<sup>49</sup>

It is easy to see how this attempt to keep morality out of politics is a reflection of Machiavelli's larger antipathy to the ideal of theory. Of course, the presupposition is that morality deals with ideal precepts—the "ought", rather than the "is", so that its prescriptivism is at once at variance with politics, where the overriding consideration is the actual behavior of people rather than what we imagine should be their behavior.<sup>50</sup> Understood in this light, it appears as if morality has nothing to do with politics; indeed this is the thinking of Machiavelli, so that, if we combine his overall antipathy to theory and his objection to the importation of morality into politics we begin to see the pragmatic thrust of his political realism.<sup>51</sup>

Instructively, in separating morality from politics, Machiavelli's purpose is strategic; for, his point, more or less, is to challenge the entire tradition that goes back to Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and indeed Augustine and Aquinas, according to which there is a basic synergy between ethics and politics.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, according the Theo-centric world view of medieval epoch, politics not only points back to ethics, but over and above all, politics as well as ethics look up to God for their fulfillment. W. T. Jones captures the core of medieval ontology and the synergy between politics, ethics and theology, when he writes:

For the middle ages, the centre from which all thoughts proceeded and to which it returned was the conviction that there exists a God, who is perfect, infinite and completely good, whose representatives on earth is the pope in Rome and whose heavenly kingdom finds an earthly counterpart in the holy and apostolic catholic Church...For the middle ages, the salvation of the soul is not merely man's primary concern, it is his only concern. Everything pales into complete insignificance in comparison with its terrible and pressing importance; the value of everything else in the world is appraised in terms of simply the degree to which it promotes or hinders the soul's salvation. Music, painting, and the other arts, for instance, are good so far as they induce piety; but generally speaking they are bad because delight in colors or sound for their own sake is a snare and delusion. Or, again, the whole problem of politics is conceived by St Thomas as being simply the task of discovering that form of organization which will most facilitate the saving of souls.<sup>53</sup>

### 3. 2. 2. Machiavelli's Realism and its Ontological Basis

<sup>46</sup> George Bull, "Editor's Introduction" in Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, translated with an Introduction by George Bull, (London: Penguin Books, 1966), pp. 14.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Quentin Skinner, *Great Political Thinkers: Machiavelli*, pp. 29-55

<sup>48</sup> See James Blackburn, "Realism in International Relations" <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/realism-international-relations-james-blackburn/December 15, 2015>

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Robert Garner, Ferdinand, Peer Ferdinand and Stephanie Lawson, *Introduction to Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 351-354

<sup>50</sup> W. T. Jones, *Masters of Political Thought Volume 2 Machiavelli to Bentham*, edited by Edward McChesney Sait (London: George G. Harrap, 1947), pp. 24-29

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations" in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, First published Mon July 26, 2019; substantive revision Wed May 24, 2017

<sup>53</sup> W. T. Jones, *Masters of Political Thought Volume 2 Machiavelli to Bentham*, pp. 26-27

The above quote helps us to see what Machiavelli is reacting to. But, as will become evident, it also points to the rift between medieval ontology and Machiavelli's naturalistic assumptions. Indeed in reacting to medievalism, Machiavelli's point is to replace its Theo-centric ontology with an anthropocentric ontology, a godless universe in which everything revolves around man.<sup>54</sup> In view of Machiavelli's determination to replace the Theo-centric ontology of medievalism with an anthropocentric ontology it is understandable that some commentators see his separation of ethics from politics as an innovation that "lays the foundation of modern politics", for the truth of the matter is that his critique of classical Western political thought as unrealistic has been replicated in several forms by subsequent thinkers such as Hobbes, Hegel and Nietzsche.<sup>55</sup> But what is evident is that his anthropocentrism not only breaks from medievalism but it also conditions every ramification of thought, so that if we are to understand the logic that underpins the series of recommendations he offers in *The Prince* and *Discourses* with respect to statecraft, we have to take into account the overall ontology that drives them.

This is evident the moment we interrogate his concept of virtue; for, in Machiavelli's system, virtue is synonymous with fame, power and success, so that success is an absolute value. This obviously contrasts with the Christian notion of virtue where the emphasis is placed on goodness as absolute value beyond the demands of expediency.<sup>56</sup> This invariably is the result of the Christian conception of the ends of man, which is well summed up by the saying that "what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world only to suffer the loss of his self."

Clearly from the Christian standpoint, man's end is supernatural and in keeping with this he must use material things including power, fame and success such as to secure his final end. What we see in Machiavelli in keeping with his anthropocentric ontology is a direct opposite of the Christian emphasis as there is no transcendental framework that constraints the pursuit of power, success and fame as these apparently become absolute in themselves. In a famous passage which captures Machiavelli's trans-valuation of the concept of virtue, he argues that a wise prince is not compelled to be honest but it will be sufficient to appear to be honest. In his words:

A ruler, then, need not actually possess all the above-mentioned qualities, but he must certain seem to. Indeed I shall be so bold, as to say that having and always cultivating them is harmful, whereas seeming to have them is useful; for, instance, to seem merciful, trustworthy, humane, upright and devout, and also to be so. But if it becomes necessary to refrain, you must be prepared to act in the opposite way, and be capable of doing it. And it must be understood that a ruler, and especially a new ruler, cannot always act in ways that are considered good because in order to maintain his power, he is often forced to act treacherously, ruthlessly or inhumanely, and disregard the precepts of religion. Hence, he must be prepared to vary his conduct as the winds of fortune and changing circumstances constrain him and, as I have said before, not to deviate from right conduct, if possible, but be capable of entering upon the path of wrong doing when this becomes necessary.<sup>57</sup>

In a similar vein in respect of the pre-eminence of expediency to morality, Machiavelli resumes the same thesis in the *Discourses* when he says,

The other way of destroying envy is when either violence or a natural death carries off those of your rivals who, seeing you acquire such reputation and greatness cannot patiently bear your being more distinguished than them-selves. If men of this kind live in a corrupt city, whose education has not been able to infuse any spirit of good into their minds, it is impossible that they should be restrained by any chance, but they would be willing rather to see their country ruined than not to attain their purpose or not to satisfy their perverse natures. To overcome such envy there is no other remedy but the death of those who harbor it. And when fortune is so propitious to a man of 'virtue', as to deliver him from such rivals by their natural death, he becomes glorious without violence and may then display his 'virtue' to its full extent without hindrance and without offense to anybody. But when he has not such good fortune he must strive nevertheless by all possible means to overcome this difficult and relieve himself of such rivals before attempting any enterprise.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations" in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, First published Mon July 26, 2019; substantive revision Wed May 24, 2017

<sup>56</sup> Quentin Skinner, *Great Political Thinkers*, Machiavelli, p. 34-40

<sup>57</sup> *The Prince*, 20

<sup>58</sup> Niccolo Machiavelli, *Discourses*, 111, par, 30



### 3. 2. 3. Machiavelli's Political Realism and Its Anthropological Basis

Apart from the fact that Machiavelli's separation of ethics from politics is driven by his naturalistic ontology, the concept of human nature that undergirds his politics is also a function of his anthropocentrism. As Jones notes correctly, "the essence of Machiavelli's conception of politics lies in his conviction that most men are stupid and irrational, quite incapable of governing themselves intelligently".<sup>59</sup> So clearly then Machiavelli has a very negative perception of human nature, believing, as it were that, "most men are moved by passion rather than by reason, the greatest of which on his view is ambition. Men, as a result are moved by fear and envy and by the desire for novelty, by love of wealth, by hatred of any kind of restriction on their activity by their desire for security."<sup>60</sup>

Given Machiavelli's pessimistic conception of human nature it is not surprising that he advocates that the only feasible government is a strong monarchy.<sup>61</sup> In his negative conception of human nature Machiavelli is unquestionably a pace-setter, for subsequent thinkers in the tradition of Western philosophy of politics such as Hobbes, Marx and Nietzsche will adopt the same negative understanding of human nature.<sup>62</sup> Now Machiavelli is aware that the Europe of his time represents a certain fall as the reality of human nature is concerned. In fact, he believes that the ancient setting offered a better result. He blames the corruption of course on Christianity as Nietzsche later would do. He believes that Christian morality especially "its exaltation of meekness, humility and otherworldliness had gradually undermined the ancient civic virtues"<sup>63</sup>. In his words:

Reflecting now as it whence it came that in ancient times the people were more devoted to liberty than in the present I believe that it resulted from this, that men were stronger in those days which I believe to be attributable to the difference of education founded upon the difference of their religion and ours. For, as our religion teaches us the truth and the true way of life it causes us to attach less value to the honors and possessions of this world, whilst the pagans esteeming those things as the highest good, were more energetic and ferocious in their actions....Besides this pagan religion deified only men who had achieved great glory such as commanders of armies and chiefs of republics while ours glorifies more the humble and contemplative men than the men of action. Our religion, moreover places supreme happiness in humility, lowliness and a contempt for worldly objects, while the other, on the contrary, places the supreme good in the grandeur of soul, strength of body, and all such other qualities as render men formidable, and if our religion claims of us fortitude of soul it is more to enable us to suffer than to achieve great deeds. These principles seem to me to have made men feeble, and caused them to become easy prey to the evil-minded men who can control them more securely than the great body of men, for the sake of gaining paradise are more disposed to endure injuries than to avenge them.<sup>64</sup>

Obviously two questions lie at the heart of Machiavelli's conception of political theory. The first is the question as to what men aim at and whatever they aim at is their good. The second is what they must do to attain their end, and that is their virtue, whatever it is. To the first question he answers that "every man aims at maintaining and expanding his own power" and to the second question he contends that "political theory is nothing but the exposition of the best techniques for securing and maintaining power."<sup>65</sup>

So what is clear is that Machiavelli's conception of these virtues stems from his conception of human nature, the fact that "human beings are stupid and venial."<sup>66</sup> This is one respect in which his political theory diverges from classical humanist tradition which preserves the synergy between politics and morality. With Machiavelli, therefore there is a certain politicization of virtue in which the meaning of virtue is completely transformed into what is practically and pragmatically beneficial as far as the situation of the prince is concerned.

<sup>59</sup> W. T. Jones, *A History of Western of Philosophy, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition: Hobbes to Hume* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.1969), p. 27

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> However in the *Discourses* he is well disposed to Republican Government. Commentators note that his views in *Discourses* should be taken into account in order to have a full view of his position as he was concerned with the peculiar situation of Florence in *The Prince*

<sup>62</sup> See W. T. Jones, *Masters of Political Thought Volume 2 Machiavelli to Bentham*, pp. 24-27

<sup>63</sup> Cited in W. T. Jones, *A History of Philosophy 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition: Hobbes to Hume*, p. 27

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 27-28

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid

It is a type of trans-valuation of value that becomes more explicit in thinker like Nietzsche.<sup>67</sup> It is not surprising therefore that like Nietzsche, Machiavelli is very critical of traditional morality which understandably is a formidable rival as far as his concept of human nature is concerned.<sup>68</sup> In order to undermine traditional morality, Machiavelli, like Nietzsche will favor paganism.<sup>69</sup> But this only provides a foil for the politicization of those virtues in the name of addressing the issue of how best to govern, given the fact of human nature.<sup>70</sup>

#### 4. Machiavelli's Political Realism and International Relations Theory

From our account so far it emerges that Machiavelli's separation of ethics from politics and the naturalistic ontology and anthropology that undergirds it, is the lynchpin of Machiavelli's political realism. Indeed it is on account of this consideration that Machiavelli is widely regarded as the father of modern political theory, given that his revolutionary ideas breaks with tradition and prepares the ground for the emergence of the modern world.<sup>71</sup> Machiavelli may not have been a great political theorist, like Hobbes, Locke, Hegel and Marx after him, owing to the fact that his revolutionary ideas are hardly systematized. Yet part of the appeal of Machiavelli derives from the fact that his separation of ethics from politics, which translates into what has come to be known as "power politics", can be applied to virtually every context of life, where people have to engage themselves in all sorts of intercourse, social, political, economic, cultural or otherwise.

Indeed it can be can be applied to the ordinary life of everyday human relationship as it can be applied to the world of politics, whether domestic or international politics. In any of these contexts Machiavellism, as the doctrine has come to be known, is very popular as controversial as it is.<sup>72</sup> Yet while Machiavellism has many critics, the truth nonetheless is that many secretly court it; indeed many embrace it, whether or not they know it, as the philosophy of action that guides their actions in relating with the other and tend to justify it by saying it is a basic fact of human nature. Paradoxically, this irony and tension between creed and action sum up the realism of Machiavellism but it remains to be seen whether the justification is sustainable.

##### 4. 1. International Relations, Machiavellism and the Inter-Play of Domestic And Foreign Affairs

Instructively, it is a matter of debate among political theorists whether Machiavelli intended his doctrine for only the context of Florence or Italy as a whole. But it is arguable that he proposed his doctrine as an ideal theory that is applicable in all possible worlds, especially the context of politics, whether domestic or international politics. Any keen reader of the *Prince* and the *Discourses* must see that Machiavelli's recommendations take into account the situations of both domestic and international politics. Indeed, for Machiavelli, there is no separation, in the final analysis, between domestic politics and international politics.<sup>73</sup> Both are different sides of the same coin and mutually inter-penetrate, since the prince to whom the recommendations are addressed is ruler over a state with internal and international affairs, with one mutually conditioning the other, so that unless the prince could manage his relationship with other states effectively, he can hardly sustain him-self in power.

Similarly, unless the ruler manages the internal affairs of the state properly, it is bound to affect his effective handling of his relationship with other states, so that this scenario will likewise render him vulnerable and susceptible to losing his grip on power.<sup>74</sup> Consequently, while the ruler must pay attention to the internal affairs of the state, he must not neglect the external affairs of the state. Indeed in Machiavelli's conception of International relations, international relation is so much dependent on domestic politics such that a strong state always presupposes one with not only a vibrant domestic politics, but one with equally robust and strong foreign policy.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Cf. W. T. Jones, *Masters of Political Thought Volume 2 Machiavelli to Bentham*, 43

<sup>68</sup> W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations" in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, First published Mon July 26, 2019; substantive revision Wed May 24, 2017

<sup>69</sup> Ibid

<sup>70</sup> Cf. W. T. Jones, *A History of Western Philosophy 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition: Hobbes to Hume*, p. 28

<sup>71</sup> Cf. W. T. Jones, *Masters of Political Thought Volume 2 Machiavelli to Bentham*, 50

<sup>72</sup> W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations" in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, First published Mon July 26, 2019; substantive revision Wed May 24, 2017

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Janice Leung, "Machiavelli and International Relations Theory", *Glendon Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 1. 2000, pp. 3-13

<sup>74</sup> Ibid

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

That this is so is understandable; for, Machiavelli, like all realists, maintain that the state is the basic unit of international system just as he also maintains that the international system is anarchic and each state within the system must assert its interest and influence if it must survive.<sup>76</sup> For this reason the ruler must be strong at home as well as abroad, that is, relative to inter-state relation.

In this sense a strong domestic politics is a *sine qua non* for a strong international relation and the combined result is that the state as a whole is strong and the ruler is secure in his power. Indeed, part of the problem Machiavelli sees with Florence and indeed the whole of the Italian city-states is that they lack internal coherence, so far as they are ridden by all sorts of corruption, so that this breeds instability which invariably renders them vulnerable to foreign manipulation and domination with the result that neither the state nor the ruler himself is insecure in his position.<sup>77</sup> So his views clearly is that the rulers of Florence and indeed the other city-states have not always been exemplary in managing the state as well as in conducting inter-state relationship and this, in the end, explains the pathetic situation of Florence and Italy as a whole with its political instability and unnecessary dependence on foreign powers to maintain itself.<sup>78</sup>

Thus given Machiavelli's conception of international relations, especially his understanding of the correlation between domestic and foreign affairs of the state as mutually conditioning, there is no doubt that his doctrine of separation of ethics from politics has a broad scope as far as its applicability to the political is concerned. In other words, while the doctrine is applicable to domestic affairs, it is nonetheless applicable to international relations, so that Machiavelli is really proposing to the ruler that intends to be effective that he must be pragmatic in the manner in which he manages the affairs of the state, and not allow moral considerations to govern his actions but understand that it is imperative always to do what is needful as far as the security of the state is concerned.<sup>79</sup>

#### 4. 2. International Relations and Machiavellism: Diplomacy, Alliances and Treaties

Apart from Machiavelli's insistence on the correlation between domestic and foreign affairs and their mutual interdependence, Machiavelli's stress on the need for the ruler to be pragmatic in his approach to the business of statecraft can be seen in several other areas of international relations such as the area of diplomacy, alliance formation and the use of the military and state security. With respect to diplomacy, for instance, Machiavelli believes that the practice of diplomacy is essential for the state to maintain its power and build a strong reputation at the international level.<sup>80</sup> In fact, without diplomacy, a state cannot aggrandize itself and assert its influence among other nations; hence Machiavelli maintains that diplomacy is a tool a wise ruler cannot afford to neglect, if he wants to maximize the benefits of international relations as well as avoid its pitfalls.<sup>81</sup> As a diplomat in the Florence Republic, Machiavelli himself was aware of the importance of diplomacy. He was aware that international relations are never free of conflicts, so that surviving in the anarchic world of international affairs, requires skillful diplomacy. It is not surprising therefore that he advocates diplomacy as an essential practice of the state. Indeed on several occasions Machiavelli was engaged in diplomatic negotiations with other Italian states and foreign powers on behalf of the Florentine government.<sup>82</sup>

Another aspect of inter-state relations that Machiavelli stresses is the role of treaties and alliances in international relations. Because no nation can exist or operate in isolation, she will need the assistance and support of other nations from time to time just as other nations will also require her assistance and support from time to time.

For this reason therefore, nations cannot avoid entering into alliances with themselves, or signing one treaty or the other to confirm their commitments to one another.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Niccolo Machiavelli, "The Prince" in *Classics of Political Philosophy*, edited by Jene M. Porter, Chapter 26

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. See James Blackburn, "Realism in International Relations" <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/realism-international-relations-james-blackburn/December 15, 2015>

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Janice Leung, "Machiavelli and International Relations Theory", *Glendon Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 1. 2000

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> George Bull, "Editor's Introduction" in Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, translated with an Introduction by George Bull, (London: Penguin Books, 1966), pp. 14

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Janice Jeung, "Machiavelli and International Relations Theory", *Glendon Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 1. 2000, pp. 3-9

However, while Machiavelli recognizes that a state must inevitably enter into treaties and alliances with other nations, his overall point is that a wise prince must always think, first and foremost, of the interest of the state in the context of such alliances and treaties; for, unless it is recognized that such treaties and alliances are pragmatic affairs, other nations can easily take advantage of one.<sup>84</sup> If it is pointless to enter into alliances or sign treaties that do not benefit the state, then the wise prince must be shrewd and pragmatic and not allow sentiments or anything thing other than the interest of the state to dictate his actions in such practices or other similar diplomatic negotiations.

At all times the interest of the state is supreme and the wise ruler cannot take this for granted without hurting himself and undermining the fortunes of the state.

### 4. 3. International Relations and Machiavellism: Nationalism and Patriotism

This point is particularly evident in Machiavelli's account of nationalism and patriotism. In fact, in discussing both subjects in *The Prince* and the *Discourses*, he establishes a strong link between patriotism and nationalism on the one hand and the interest of the state and nationalism on the other hand with patriotism as the mediating prism.<sup>85</sup> Machiavelli believes it is important to create a feeling of patriotism and nationalism within a state. People should be encouraged to see that love of one's country supersedes any other consideration, so that they should be always ready to transcend narrow and selfish interest and make sacrifice for the nation. Indeed in pursuit of the interest of the state the wise ruler must be proactive in manipulating sentiments of patriotism and nationalism in order to achieve his purpose.<sup>86</sup> Because the interest of the state is supreme and nothing supersedes or should be allowed to supersede it, the ruler, on Machiavelli's account, is justified in employing whatever means he wills in order to secure the interest of the state even if such means are unethical.<sup>87</sup>

### 4. 4. International Relations and Machiavellism: Security, Defense and Military Formation

The importance of prioritizing the interest of the state is also evident in Machiavelli's account of the issue of national security and defense. Indeed there is seemingly a one-to-one identity between the interest of the state and the security of the state such that one can be defined in terms of the other.<sup>88</sup> In view of how the security needs of a state defines its interest, Machiavelli maintains that a wise ruler must invest heavily in defense by building a formidable military; for, without a powerful military no state can sustain its power and influence in the comity of nations nor can such a nation defend itself against foreign threats or expand its dominion.<sup>89</sup>

Instructively the interplay between national interest and patriotism and nationalism feeds into Machiavelli's account of military formation of a state. In this context Machiavelli argues for the superiority of national army to mercenaries.<sup>90</sup> Indeed, Machiavelli advocates that, as much as possible, the wise ruler must build his own army and not rely on mercenary for the simple reason that there is always a limit to the commitment and sacrifice of mercenary.<sup>91</sup> On the other hand one can always guarantee that a national army, for patriotic reasons, will be more ready to sacrifice anything for the nation, even their very life, since this is considered as the highest service to one's country.<sup>92</sup> Thus Machiavelli links military service to devotion and loyalty to the state.<sup>93</sup>

### 4. 5. Machiavelli and Specific Recommendations on the Matter of Statecraft

What emerges from our discussion is the fact that the interest of the state is of paramount importance and this consideration informs and shapes Machiavelli's outlook on virtually every ramification of international relations and what he has to say about how best to conduct the business of statecraft. This is clear from the specific recommendations he offers to the would-be prince on these topics in *The Prince* and the *Discourses*.

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations" in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, First published Mon July 26, 2019; substantive revision Wed May 24, 2017

<sup>88</sup> Ibid. See also Janice Jeung, "Machiavelli and International Relations Theory", *Glendon Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 1. 2000, p. 8

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, 4-9

<sup>90</sup> Quentin Skinner, *Great Political Thinkers: Machiavelli*, 41

<sup>91</sup> Ibid

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

Because Machiavelli thinks the interest of the state is supreme and so justifies any means employed in securing it, he does not see anything wrong in use of force as tool of statecraft. Consequently he says explicitly in *The Prince*, Whoever becomes the ruler of a free city and does not destroy it, can expect to be destroyed by it, for it can always find a motive for rebellion in the name of liberty and of its ancient usages, which are forgotten neither by lapse of time nor by benefits received...

In taking a state the conqueror must arrange to commit all his cruelties at once, so as not to have to recur to them every day, , and so as to be able, by not making fresh changes, to re-assure people and win them over. Whoever acts otherwise, either through timidity or bad counsels, is always obliged to stand with knife in hand, and can never depend on his subjects, because they, owing to continually fresh injuries, are unable to depend upon him. For injuries should be done all together, so that being less tasted, they will give no offence. Benefits should be granted little by little, so that they may be better enjoyed. And above all a prince must live with his subjects in such a way that no accident of good or evil fortune can deflect him from his course; for necessity arising in adverse times, you are not in time with severity, and the good that you do does not profit, as it is judged to be forced upon you, and you will derive no benefit whatever from it.<sup>94</sup>

Apart from not seeing anything wrong in using force as instruments of statecraft, Machiavelli also believes that the ruler can resort to lies and deception or any other propaganda in pursuing his interest. Indeed he maintains that the prince must not consider himself bound by his words. As he says,

How laudable it is for a prince to keep and live with integrity, and not with astuteness, everyone knows...A prudent ruler ought not to keep faith when by so doing it would be against his interest, and when the reasons which made him bind him-self no longer exists. If men were all good, this precept would not be a good one, but as they are bad, and would not observe their faith with you, so you are not bound to keep faith with them. Nor legitimate grounds ever failed a prince who wished to show colorable excuse for the non-fulfillment of his promise. Of this one can furnish an infinite number of modern examples, and show how many times peace has been broken, and how many promises rendered worthless, by the faithlessness of princes and those that have never being able to imitate the fox have succeeded best. But it is necessary to be able to disguise this character well, and be a great feigner and dissemble; and men are so simple and so ready to obey present necessities, that one who deceives will always find those who allow themselves to be deceived.<sup>95</sup>

On the uselessness of relying on mercenary, Machiavelli says in the Prince:

The arms by which a prince defends his possessions are either his own, or else mercenaries, or auxiliaries or mixed. The mercenaries and auxiliaries are useless and dangerous, and if anyone supports his state by the arms of mercenaries, he will never stand firm, or sure, as they are disunited, ambitious, without discipline, faithless, bold among friends, cowardly among enemies. They have no fear of God, and keep no faith with me. Ruin is only deferred as long as assault is postponed; in peace you are despoiled with them and in war by the enemy. The cause of this is that they have no love or other motive to keep them in the field beyond a trifling wage, which is not enough to make them ready to die for you. They are quite willing to be your soldiers so long as you do not make war but when war comes, it is either fly or decamp altogether. <sup>96</sup>

## **5. How Does Machiavelli's Political Realism Compare With Other Species Of Realism Within The Realist Tradition**

These few examples we have considered should be sufficient to illustrate the importance that Machiavelli attaches to the interest of the state in the architectonic of his concept of international relations and the fact that the wise ruler must prioritize it over and above other consideration, including morality, if he is to sustain himself in power and secure the state. As we have seen the core of Machiavelli's political realism lay in this pre-eminence of expediency over morality and it is with respect to this side-lining of morality in favor of what ought to be done to achieve one's aim that his thought has been most revolutionary and he is considered the father of modern Western political

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<sup>94</sup> See Niccolo Machiavelli, "The Prince" in Classics in Political Philosophy, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition edited by Jene M. Porter, Chapters 6 and 8

<sup>95</sup> Ibid

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

thought.<sup>97</sup> Although Machiavelli's ideas echo those of Thucydides and Chanakya before him, as commentators have noted, credit nonetheless belongs to Machiavelli for popularizing the doctrine of pre-eminence of self-interest in politics and the fact that politics has to do with power.<sup>98</sup>

Indeed, beginning with Hobbes, who, like Machiavelli, paints a negative picture of human nature and then takes it as a justification for advocating an absolute government to commensurate with the situation, many subsequent political thinkers, especially in the tradition of realism largely follow in the footsteps of Machiavelli's pragmatic approach to politics.<sup>99</sup> This goes a long way to underscore the influence of Machiavelli which is well illustrated in the work of Twentieth century classical realists such as Morgenthau, Carr, and Niebuhr and the later works of neo-realists such as Kenneth Waltz. The critique of utopian idealism which we find in the works of these theorists as well as the correlation of politics and interest, especially the emphasis on national interest as the chief motivation of foreign policy, all draw their inspiration from Machiavelli.<sup>100</sup> Same is true of the notion that states are sole actors in international affairs and that the international system is anarchic, so that states have no choice but to enter into alliance and treaties with other states as a way of survival in the precarious world of international politics.<sup>101</sup>

These ideas and several others which define the odyssey of classical realism and contemporary political realism can be traced back to the works of Machiavelli and show clearly that with respect to many ideas that dominate the foreground discussions today in international relations, Machiavelli was far ahead of his time. As one commentator rightly observes, "Machiavelli's analysis of the behavior of the state, and its action and reaction in relation to other states is still as relevant as it was during the time that he was writing...Many of the concepts that he discusses are now part of the core values and ideas found in the realist school of thought."<sup>102</sup> Yet despite the affinity between Machiavelli's political realism and its successors in the twentieth century we should not be oblivious of the divergences between the various species of realism we find in the realist tradition. Perhaps the sharpest area of divergence is on the matter of the separation of ethics from politics and the extent to which this is sustainable.

Perhaps the sharpest area of divergence among the exponents of realism is on the matter of the separation of ethics from politics and the extent to which this is sustainable as well as the question of the role of moral judgment in the conduct of inter-state relations. Is morality and politics separate spheres that have nothing to do with each other and so should be left each to operate on its own or can international politics be predicated on an objective moral principles of justice, in which case, political action is answerable to moral approbation?<sup>103</sup>

While realists generally are sympathetic to the pragmatic flavor of Machiavelli's approach to politics, classical realists like Morgenthau, and Carr do not want to draw any final wedge between political action and morality as such, so that morality retains a modicum of voice in constraining and moderating political actions.<sup>104</sup>

This position contrasts with those of neo-realists, like Kenneth Waltz who believes that there should be no place for morality in international relations and in this sense echoes and approximates the *realpolitik* associated with Machiavelli in which traditional ethics is denied.<sup>105</sup> In not denying that "political actors on the international scene are subject to moral judgment nor endorsing Machiavelli's contention that "the end justifies the means"—so that the interest of the state legitimates all political actions even when they are morally reprehensible—Morgenthau, like Thucydides, points in the direction of an alternative type of realism that is neither amoral or immoral but tries to harmonize between the claims of morality and the claim of politics without reducing one to the other.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> See James Blackburn, "Realism in International Relations" <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/realism-international-relations-james-blackburn/December-15-2015>

<sup>98</sup> W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations" in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, First published Mon July 26, 2019; substantive revision Wed May 24, 2017

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Janice Jeung, "Machiavelli and International Relations Theory", *Glendon Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 1. 2000, pp. 3-9

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations" in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, First published Mon July 26, 2019; substantive revision Wed May 24, 2017

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

## 6. The Question of the Limits of Realism in International Relations

What the various species of realism within the realist tradition indicate is that political realism is a highly complex position on the nature of international relations and how to conduct the delicate business of statecraft. But we have also seen from our discussion that Machiavelli has been pivotal in shaping and defining the inheritance of political realism, so that we can hardly do justice to the claim of political realism without reference to the case that Machiavelli makes on behalf of it.

### 6.1. Separation of Ethics from Politics Is Pragmatic But One-Sided

All through its history commentators have been cognizant of this fact in considering the place of realism in international relations. Machiavelli's strong theses in divorcing ethics from morality and arguing for the pre-eminence of expediency to morality makes it difficult to ignore his contributions in adjudicating the fate of realism. Despite its controversial claim, Machiavellism, as Machiavelli's distinctive version of realism has come to be known, has been a recurring decimal in discussions regarding the nature and dynamics of international relations. Even critics of Machiavelli are quick to admit that the influence of Machiavellism has been considerable and remain pervasive in contemporary international relation. There is no doubt that part of the appeal of Machiavelli's political realism derives from its pragmatic thrust, so that hate or love it, the appeal is seductive. While we cannot deny that Machiavelli's political realism is pragmatic and helps us to look at situations of things realistically, we cannot also deny that it is extremist in its interpretation of the meaning of what we see and how we are to realistically address the situation. Indeed, it is one thing to acknowledge that a situation is bad, it is another thing altogether how we deal with it. We cannot deny that as much as Machiavelli's political realism is realistic in its analysis of the human condition, the solution it urges in response to the situation is pessimistic and it cannot be implemented rigorously without making a situation that is already bad to become worse.

In this sense perhaps, Machiavelli's political realism is not "realistic" after all despite its obviously and widely acknowledged realist thrust. If indeed we follow Machiavelli and say that political actions of actors in the international system that is anarchic should not submit to any moral approbation, each state not only becomes a master unto itself but the fact that there is no way of subjecting their claims to moral approbation means that there can be no end to the conflicts that bedevil international relations and there is a real prospect that the human species can become the cause of its own extermination; for, if nothing but force can constrain force, in the final analysis, it means we are dealing with a situation of "might is right" and should it happen that trust cannot subsist between two warring parties and it is difficult to judge how one's opponent might react one may pre-empt the other's move by first striking in order to eliminate the other.

Of course, such an order that does not submit to moral approbation, no doubt will destroy itself in the final analysis. I think the bleak picture that Machiavelli's political realism paints not only about the human nature but also about the international system and the wider reality as a whole, is its *Achilles heel*, in the final analysis, and it perhaps explains why persistent attempts have been made within the realist tradition to domesticate his realism such as to make it more hospitable to inherent values. We only need to look at the situation of things in the International community to see that to follow the recommendations of Machiavelli concerning statecraft and how it should be conducted can only mean that things are sure to become worse; for, accepting the assumption that the inherent nature of man and the international system makes illusory the quest for peace and co-operation can only mean that every state has to arm itself and should it happen that a state lacks the resources to do so, such a state inescapably has to live at the mercy of the other or others, so that what we have, in fact, is a state of nature in which "life is short, brutish, nasty and poor" as Hobbes would later contend in the *Leviathan*.

We may say that Machiavelli is right in drawing attention to what is really the case. But the question is does this admission necessarily foreclose or should it foreclose any real effort to consider how things ought to be and actually make effort to make things the way they ought to be? If we assume that the situation cannot be helped then such skepticism undermines our ability to even do anything to help the situation, for since there is a basic correlation between belief and action, no nation will genuinely work towards peace and co-operation with others, if she believes that such initiative was impossible. Or, again, if we make any effort at all, it could be no more than a merely politically correct initiative since we know in accordance with our assumptions that it is not really anchored in the nature of things and so will not meet the matter as it is.

I think this is a basic dilemma of international relations and the dilemma is fundamentally anchored in the sort of extremely pessimistic pictures of the nature of things that Machiavellism encourages. If we accept the

assumptions, then the panacea seems to make sense. But, if we question them, then Machiavellism seems problematic and indeed is deeply problematic, for it completely lowers the moral status of man and makes him nothing more than a brute, far from Aristotle's submission long ago that man is a rational animal, with rationality as his distinctive attribute.

Indeed, on this reading it is because man is rational that man is capable of morality but without prejudice to the fact that he is also ruled by passion. Obviously were it the case that he was wholly susceptible to passion as Machiavelli makes him out to be then he will not be capable of morality which is simply false and exaggerated.

## **6. 2. Separation of Ethics from Politics and Its Evil Consequences: International Politics and the Prospect of Nuclear Armageddon**

But aside from the fact that the assumptions that underpin the pessimism are questionable the evil consequences they lead to also underscore their one-sidedness. To see this we only need to look at the state of affairs in international politics, especially the issue of arms race nuclear proliferation that dominated the entire period of the cold war and so threatened the human race incessantly with a real possibility of a nuclear Armageddon.

The threat may seem to have abated with the end of the cold war, but inarguably the threat is not really over; for, despite the increasing call for disarmament and concrete initiatives in view of the ideal of disarmament, following the end of the cold war, there are signs of resurgence of a new arms race in the post-cold war era, inspired largely, as it were, by the skepticism that the way to make peace among nations is not by dialogue but fundamentally by using force to force one's opponent to submission and negotiation, so that the overall perception is that no nation could really be strong and influential in the international system unless it is militarily strong.

Understandably therefore if a nation has any ambition for hegemony, it is not likely that such a nation will subscribe to the clarion call to disarmament or any arrangement that will deter it from building up its nuclear arsenals and military might. With this scenario created as it were by the realistic perspective on international relation the floodgate is thrown open for all nations to amass nuclear arsenals and buildup their military strength or remain dependent and fearful of other nations that might be militarily superior to it.

We see this dilemma clearly in the current face off between America and North Korea, which indeed represent a current pattern in international relations. In the face of the real possibility of nuclear confrontation and the havoc and evil it will wreck for the international community we cannot fail to sympathize with the idealist emphasis on the need for dialogue and diplomacy as the pathway to peace and co-operation among nations and the associated presupposition that as rational beings, human beings are capable of rational co-operation and working for the universal interest of peace and progress for mankind.

## **6.3. The Realism-Idealism Debate and Need for Rapprochement**

Yet while the idealist intuition and recipe for peace and co-operation among humankind as a way of dealing with conflicts in the international system is not counter-intuitive we cannot deny that the situation is not as simple as it looks and perhaps this is what gives realism its enduring appeal for it seems to be in consonance with common sense when it preaches that with the real prospect of war, one must arm himself and position oneself to fight and win rather than fold one's arm and appeal to the sense of justice of one's opponent and expect that he will be reasonable and back down in the name of fairness and justice and ensue for peace.

In other words, the point is that it is utopian to ignore the reality of power in international relations and the fact that nations are motivated by self-interest as realists consistently maintain.<sup>107</sup>

Yet it is equally blind to rely on power alone and glorify expediency over morality as some versions of realism seem to do, so that it emerges that either of the two are extremes which are hardly true to the nature of things or could bring lasting panacea to the situation, so that they are not without limits or beyond mediation. Indeed what is needed for an adequate conceptualization of the nature and dynamics of international relations is a balance between realism and idealism; for come to think of it each appears to capture something true of the situation of things but then it is inclined to absolutize it, to the point of ignoring other perspectives and legitimate considerations.

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<sup>107</sup> Cf. W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations" in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, First published Mon July 26, 2019; substantive revision Wed May 24, 2017



If, in fact, there appears to be a *ding-dong affair* between realism and idealism in International relations, the tension is largely due to their differing assumptions concerning the nature of the universe, the nature of human nature, and indeed the nature of the international system and the place and limits of ethics in international politics. But that is not all.

Above all else the tension is due to the fact that either of the perspectives elevates to absolute truth what is true in its perspective without recognizing the relative truth in the other perspective and harmonizing it with its own truth such as to derive a more holistic perspective. Once it is like this it is difficult for the perspectives not to collide and in the process of the collision to obscure the whole truth about the situation in question.

It seems this is what has happened in the case of the hegemony of realism all through its history and particularly in its resurgence against the backdrop of the excesses of idealism in the opening decades of the Twentieth century. But virtually the same case could be made in respect of the odyssey of the idealist tradition all through its history beginning in the ancient epoch and stretching through the medieval, modern and the contemporary epochs of human history. The basic truth is that each time one perspective gained ascendancy and exaggerated its claim the other perspective has risen to checkmate it and redress the balance even though the common spectacle is that the resurging perspective soon replicates the ill it sets out to correct.

We have seen this happen several times in the history of human civilization. At the start of the Twentieth century, for instance, realism resurged to challenge the excesses of idealism following the inter-war years and the crisis it unleashed. But since the end of the cold war realism which appeared to reign supreme during the cold war has somehow dwindled in its fortune as should be evidenced by various efforts to recast the realist paradigm in the Twentieth century.

Indeed, for those sympathetic to the cause of realism, the end of the cold war has seen efforts within the realist camp to refurbish realism after its poor showing, following the ascendancy of scientific realism. Indeed the whole neo-realist upsurge is in view of clipping the wings of scientific realism in order to make realism more resourceful in engaging with contemporary realities in the International Relations theory. In a way this resurgence of realism proceeds by attempting to reconnect the realist discourse back to the inheritance of the realist tradition in order to secure its anticipated renewal and reinforcement. But it remains to be seen how enduring and resourceful it will be in re-asserting the influence of realism.

#### **6. 4. Machiavelli's Political Idealism As A Moment In The Ding-Dong Affair Between Realism And Idealism: Need To Revise The Ontology And Anthropology That Undergirds Political Realism**

It is arguable that Machiavelli's political realism is a moment in the *ding-dong affair* that has defined the relationship between realism and idealism all through their history and to this extent it is not an exception to what we have said about the basic dynamics of the tussle between idealism and realism, that is, the fact that, when one perspective over-reaches its claim the other perspective has always arisen to checkmate it even if in many cases the corrector then goes on to commit the same fallacy of abstraction, so far as it absolutizes its own claim to the utter neglect of the legitimate claim of the other. I think this is one way to look at what is inherently appealing in Machiavelli's political realism as well as what is inherently problematic about it. Indeed, as we have seen from our account of the emergence of Machiavelli's political realism.

Machiavelli is a child of the renaissance and so is his political realism.<sup>108</sup> We cannot understand its claim or adequately adjudicate its adequacy unless we take into account its milieu and assumptions. It is evident from our account that what drove Machiavelli to divorce ethics from politics and advocate the pre-eminence of expediency over morality is the desire to overcome what he saw as the excesses of medieval ontology and anthropology which invariably makes God everything and man nothing, to the effect that it makes nonsense of human agency and creativity. To overcome this obviously one-sided account of the nature of divine reality in its relation to the natural and human domain which represents a moment of *hubris* in the odyssey of medieval mentality and culture, Machiavelli disconnects the human from the divine, the natural from the supernatural and substitutes the Theo-centric assumptions of medievalism regarding God, man and politics with anthropocentric assumptions that not only restores man to his pride of place in the universe but also squarely places his destiny in his own hands, so that man becomes

<sup>108</sup> Cf. Jones, *Masters of Political Thought Volume 2 Machiavelli to Bentham*, pp. 26-30; Michael B. Foster, *Masters of Political Thought Volume 1: Plato to Machiavelli*, 266-275

the centre and object of his self-transcendence. Yet while Machiavelli's move is a counter-point to the excesses of medievalism, it has equally taken refuge in a one-sided position by separating what, in fact, is inseparable, namely, the natural harmony between the divine and human, the natural and supernatural, God and man.

That medievalism degenerates into an extreme in its moment of hubris and fall is not a license to replicate and enthrone a no less one-sided position in its place. If medievalism over-blew its claim, it is in need of correction but the correction cannot do if it repeats the same mistake in a different context by offering us an absolute position that does not take other considerations into account except its own claim. I think this is what we have in Machiavelli's so called revolutionary ideas that dismissed traditional morality and prepared the ground for the emergence of the tradition of modern western political thinking as we know it today. I think this is the conclusion we must come to if we consider that Machiavelli's problematic naturalistic ontology and anthropology, which purportedly rivals and corrects medieval ontology and anthropology, is the lynch-pin of his political realism. As we have seen this ontology and anthropology is what legislate Machiavelli's problematic separation of the sphere of ethics and the sphere of politics, or even the reduction of ethics to politics as some have argued.

To my mind, if there is a tension between realism and idealism, the tension has to be located in their differing ontology and anthropology. Indeed, it is easy to see that Machiavelli exaggerates his case; for, obviously, properly speaking, there is nothing that forbids the thinking-together of both spheres unless one privileges one and sacrifices the claim of the other at the altar of the privileged. True one could reject the excesses of medievalism in not balancing sufficiently between the claims of divine providence and the claims of human agency and creativity without endorsing the equally problematic naturalistic ontology and anthropology that makes man the end and all of his destiny at the same time it reduces him to wholly a product of nature without any supernatural destiny.<sup>109</sup>

If one rejects the excesses of medievalism as Machiavelli did and refrains from throwing the baby away with the water bath as he certainly did not, we will have a more balanced understanding of the nature of things and within such broad framework there is no reason why there cannot be a rapprochement between realism and idealism. But it appears that from the way Machiavelli approached the matter from the outset already, albeit misguidedly, set up idealism and realism as irreconcilable opposites, thus making it look as if Machiavelli is an hero while, in actual fact, things appear so only because he began by blackmailing idealism and refusing to let its relative truth shine forth. Paradoxically, realism with all the sophistications it has assumed with its various configurations in the Twentieth century is still unable to finally shake off its weakness. If this is the case, it is largely due to the fact that it is still stuck in the assumptions with which it was revived at the Renaissance by Machiavelli.

Indeed, it is not realism alone that is stuck in this hole but the whole the tradition of Western political theory to the extent that it is arguably a child of Machiavelli's revolutionary ideas. Indeed, given that Machiavelli's rebellion is at the heart of the foundation of Western modern political theory and Western political theory continues to perpetuate Machiavelli's original but controversial separation of the divine from the human and the supernatural from the natural, it remains to be seen how there can be any enduring reconciliation between idealism and realism.

Indeed as if to repeat the mistake of Machiavelli, one of the challenges of classical realism and other forms of contemporary realism is the naturalism that drives it, one that does not allow us to see how we can possibly think together the natural and the supernatural, so that in its bid to secularize every sphere of human existence, it invariably renders itself inhospitable to metaphysical and transcendental values.

Thus the *ding-dong affair* between realism and idealism in contemporary International Relations theory is part of the crisis of metaphysics in our day. One way to illustrate this is to see immediately that at the heart of the debate between idealism and realism regarding the place of morality in politics and whether political actions are susceptible to moral approbation is the age long metaphysical problem of the relation between universal and particular. If the realist challenges the idealist concept of the harmony of interest and installs in its stead the idea of conflict of interest, it is all because he thinks that there are no universal moral values.

## 7. Summary and Conclusion

What is clear therefore from our account is that the rift between realism and idealism cannot be healed unless we revise the metaphysics and ontology that drives realism such as to take into account the larger issues concerning

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<sup>109</sup> W. T. Jones, *A History of Western Philosophy, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition: Hobbes to Hume*, 27

the nature of reality and human existence it glosses over. Once this revision is effective, it becomes possible to reconcile idealism and realism; for, come to think of it, it is not correct to say that human beings are not capable of co-operation nor is it correct to say universal values are non-existent just because the concept itself is susceptible to abuse or because it is not perfectly realizable.

Similarly, it is not correct to assume that human beings are perfect, so that co-operation comes to them easily. This is yet another fallacy and it fails to take into account the importance of power in politics and the fact that human beings are selfish and always relate in terms of their self-interest.

The truth lies somewhere between the extremes, that is, between naïve realism – that fails to take into account the rationality of humans and their ability to sustain co-operation beyond mere competition despite all the challenges involved—and naïve idealism that fails to take into account the factor of politics in human relationship and the complications it creates for human relationship and indeed international relations. In truth nothing is perfect under sun nor is it the case that perfection is necessarily alien to the human milieu.<sup>110</sup> Yet, if we are to undertake any endeavor and do it well it will always involve effort and struggle and our effort and struggle is part of the story of our success. There is no absolute success or absolute failure so that even in failure our effort still counts and what is imperative is that we continue to make effort with the hope that our optimism is not illusory or misplaced.

I think this is a dimension of the dynamics of international relations that need to be stressed, since, like the interaction between two individuals, inter-state relations is a basic human phenomenon, and, as such, is never free of ambiguities and equivocations. I think this is one area where the emergence of non-state actors and their increasing importance in the conduct of international relations is so pertinent. The security of the world and humanity as a whole is too important to leave in the hands of politicians and diplomats alone. Similarly security cannot be conceptualized merely in military or diplomatic terms. Truth has many faces and I think the involvement of non-state actors in International relations will not only help to improve the quality of public opinion but it will also serve to provide the needed balance between idealism and realism and ensure that we remain open to what is fully at issue in the ontological situation of international relations and not merely what is pragmatically convenient, as Machiavelli's political realism appears to suggest.

Realism and idealism has to be harmonized just as metaphysics and pragmatism has to be harmonized in order to guarantee the lasting security of the human race. Despite all its pragmatic appeal, it may well be that Machiavellism does not offer us a conceptual framework that allows for the harmonization all the legitimate strands within the phenomena of international relations, so that the story it tells about international relations and statecraft is partial and, as such, is in need of supplementation, if we are to fully capture the true nature and dynamics of International relations. But this does not in any way detract from what is positive in Machiavelli's political realism. It only means we cannot take it as fully representative of the true nature and dynamics of international relations. Be that as it may its enduring pertinence to the discourse on the nature of international relations in our time is beyond question.

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid