

## Representation of Political Communication Without Morality Perspective of Modern Philosopher Niccolo Machiavelli

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Diterima: 16-09-2022

Direview: 04-10-2022

Publikasi: 30-04-2023

### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the representation of political communication without morality from the perspective of the modern philosopher Niccolo Machiavelli. The focus of this research is the concept of political thought without morality by Niccolo Machiavelli. Machiavelli's concept of thought is a completely new methodology in political studies. This change does not lie in its orientation to the analysis of real political behavior because in the previous centuries Aristotle had collected factual data as a requirement for political formulation. Instead, he seeks to completely separate the ethical context from political reality. This study uses a qualitative method with the type of literature study in which the researcher traces the important relevant works of the political philosopher Niccolo Machiavelli. The results of the study describe the representation of political communication in the concept of politics without morals along with the functions of the concept.

**Keywords:** political communication; communication philosophy; political; morality

### 1. Introduction

Niccolo Machiavelli is a modern philosopher who is well known in political science, including political philosophy. As a politician as well as a former government practitioner, he has brought about many changes, both through his thoughts and practical work. In fact, he is often referred to as the founder of Modern political philosophy. Machiavelli lived during the Renaissance, which was a time of rebirth of ancient Greek and Roman culture which was originally buried by medieval people under the leadership of the church (Roeck, 2015). He was one of the important figures at that time because of his sharpness in analyzing the political situation in his thoughts. If an intellectual odyssey into the realm of political thought during the Renaissance, one will find his sharpness, straightforwardness and expertise in responding to the political situation of that era.

One of his greatest works that can be said to be eternal in debate is *il principe* (Machiavelli, 1996) which has a great contribution to the process of changing the world as it is today. This monumental work is one of the mandatory grips on politics, state and power for many years. The emergence of Machiavelli's work is not a guide and guide for democratic and efficient government, but rather a source of reference for the ideas of dictators, so that his work is always sought after by everyone who is interested in politics and power. The theories in his work are often revered as ingenious methods that can be used by a ruler who is seeking power to gain the throne, or by a ruler to strengthen his power. Therefore, his work becomes one of the basic guidelines for potential rulers in carrying out their duties his power.

As an important person involved in the politics of his time, he formed a partnership with an ambitious and power-mad nobleman named Cesare Borgia. Machiavelli managed to learn everything about Cesare by being his personal observer, when this character wanted to conquer Italy which was ruled by Pope Julius II at that time. Machiavelli lived in a turbulent era in Italian politics. The divisions that occurred in the cities and the difficulties and jealousy between the cities led to wars, widespread violence and betrayal in public office as well as conspiracies to murder. Morality in the political space becomes the lowest field, because individuals and the

state compete for power. While domestic events are taking place, there are also many problems in dealing with foreign countries. Because they are powerless in the face of big countries, small countries like Italy use other ways to reverse the cards of their fate. By using deviant means such as immorality, they become experts at using trickery in diplomacy while trying to bring down several other city-states that are considered rivals.

Machiavelli at that time had the opportunity to observe everything firsthand even his teacher Borgia, not bothering about the murder of his brothers and sisters-in-law when it was done in his favour. It was against a background full of problems and violence that Machiavelli built his political philosophy. Machiavelli's concept of thought is a completely new methodology in political studies. This change not lies in its orientation to the analysis of real political behavior because in previous centuries Aristotle had collected factual data as a requirement for political formulation. Instead, he seeks to completely separate the ethical context from political reality.

Prior to Machiavelli, speculative political thought had one central problem, namely the goals of the state. Machiavelli ignores the issue of ethical goals. It studies the political process solely for the purpose of determining the appropriateness of the practices and institutional tools of stable political power. He does not care about the morality and immorality of political actions that deviate from human moral goals. He argues that the question of all means to get something, including victory or power, should be studied in scientific ways without including the good or bad of its goals and achievements. The main background of Machiavelli's thinking is the state of Italy at the time he lived. The situation in Italy at that time was full of chaos and power struggles, so it was on a mission to help a ruler named Cesare Borgia that Machiavelli began to design and publish all his thoughts in the form of a letter from a statesman to the leader of the Italian state at that time.

In general, this is the background of his thinking, but more specifically in the process of studying in the world of politics, Machiavelli also became an accomplished thinker who was influenced by his predecessors and philosophers. These predecessors had good and good thoughts about the State, power and politics so that Machiavelli got a lot of contributions from them to design the concept of power and politics.

As a political philosopher, Machiavelli's thoughts on politics and power in a country cannot be separated from the role of predecessor philosophers such as Aristotle and Cicero. These two philosophers are philosophical figures who also in their thinking, have the basis for the development of thought for Machiavelli. The basis for the development of this thought is of course related to the state, power, and politics. In addition, these predecessors also described how a country must control all aspects of people's lives. Mastery of all aspects of life is what makes Machiavelli develop his thoughts on the absolutism of power. Realism of thought is also one of the things that Machiavelli holds in making subsequent works related to leadership and power.

Machiavelli has had political experience as a diplomat who has a special mission in state politics so that his mission is also called a diplomatic mission (Dietz & Winham, 2010). Machiavelli's official position involved him in two kinds of tasks. The first assignment was as a head of the administrative section of the Florence region and the second was as one of the six assistant secretaries of one. With this ability, he was again assigned to prepare ten commissions for war affairs, the commission responsible for diplomatic and foreign relations of the Republic of Florence. This meant that in addition to his day-to-day official duties, he also traveled abroad on behalf of the Tenth Commission on War affairs and acted as secretary to the members of this commission and helped send detailed reports on various foreign affairs.

First chance for participation in such a mission arose in July 1500, when he and Francesco della Casa were authorized to leave immediately for the court of King Louis XII in France (Black, 2013). The decision to send an ambassador arose out of various difficulties that Florence was experiencing in the war against Pisa. The Pisans had rebelled in 1498, and more than four years later they had crushed all attempts to destroy their quest for independence. However, in early 1500, the French agreed to help the people of Florence reclaim the city, and sent troops to lay siege to the city. But even this ended in a disaster. The Gascon mercenaries hired by Florence defected. The auxiliaries from Switzerland revolted for lack of pay, so the raid had to be disgraced.

Machiavelli's instructions were to "prove that this effort was futile not because of any weakness on our part" and at the same time, if possible, to give the impression that the French commander-in-chief had acted "evil and cowardly" (Berlin et al., 2015). However, as Machiavelli and Francesco della Casa learned at their first meeting with Louis XII, the King was not very interested in Florence's apology for her past failures. Instead, he wanted to know what help he could realistically expect in the future from a government that seemed so unkempt. This meeting set the tone for all their subsequent talks with Louis and his chief advisers, Robertet and the Archbishop of Rouen. The result is that although Machiavelli remained at the French court for almost six months, this visit taught him less about French politics to him than about the increasingly disintegrating situation in the Italian States. The mission to France ended in December 1500 and Machiavelli returned home.

For the next two years spent mostly in and around Florence, the signoria grew dismayed by the emergence of a new and fearsome military force in the frontier region of Cesare Borgia's. In April 1501, Borgia was made duke of Romagna by his father, Pope Alexander VI. After that, he launched a series of daring military actions that were planned to separate a territory for himself in order to conform to his glorious new title. He first captured Faenza and laid siege to Piombino, which he occupied in September 1501. Then his lieutenants mobilized the inhabitants of Val di Chiana to revolt against Florence in the spring of 1502, while Borgia himself moved north and took possession of the Urbino nobles in a lightning coup. Excited by this success, he then demanded a formal alliance with Florence and requested that an envoy be sent to hear its terms. The man chosen for this difficult task was Machiavelli, who accepted the task on 5 October 1502 and introduced himself before the duke at Imola two days later.

This mission marked the beginning of the most formative period of Machiavelli's diplomatic career, a period in which he was able to play the role that most pleased him, namely as a direct observer and assessor of the intelligence of contemporary statesmen. It was also during this time that he came to his decisive conclusion about the vast majority of leaders whose politics according to his observations were in the process of being formed. Machiavelli's mission to the Borgia palace lasted almost four months. During that time, he had had many one-on-one discussions with the duke who seemed to have gone out of his way to explain his underlying policies and ambitions. Machiavelli's opinion about Borgia is that he is a suitable person to organize the government because in addition to being great at managing wars, he is also a person who should be considered as a new power in Italy that is able to liberate the nation. In 1512, after Machiavelli was released from prison on charges of treason by a ruler in the Florentine republic, Machiavelli then lived in a small village in San Casciano (Chapman-Schmidt, 2017). In this small village, then Machiavelli devoted his attention to scientific activities. One proof of scientific activity is to produce various kinds of writings.

## **2. Method**

This study uses a qualitative method with a literature study approach. According to Bungin (Bungin, 2005) the literature study approach is one of the data collection methods used in social research methodologies to track historical data. With this method, the researchers in this study will examine historical data in the form of the works of the political philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli that are relevant to this political study. These include the *il Principe* (the prince) which he wrote in 1513, and the *discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio* (a discussion of the first ten books of Titus Livius) which he wrote in 1527 (Pugliese & Ruffo-Fiore, 1984). In addition to these two works, another work that is also related to politics is the history of Florence (Skinner, 2019) which was written in 1525 which contains observations and searches related to the history of the city of Florence, and also the *Art of War* which he produced in 1520, it contains accurate strategies for the military world to be successful in war. As for other works he wrote as a humanist who produced literary works in the form of comedy such as *La Mandragola*, works in the form of the novel *Belfagor Arcidiavolo* and works in the form of satire *L'asino d'oro*.

## **3. Result and Discussion**

### **a. Political and Morality Perspective Machiavelli**

According to Machiavelli, politics is about the legitimacy of power in this case the state, and is also something that is directly independent of morality reflecting the concrete situation of the state that requires such action. The state is the real side of politics, thus in order to defend

the state, neglect of moral traits can be removed by a ruler. This opinion is reflected in Machiavelli's words about deep politics (Atkinson, 2008)

“You have to realize this: a king and especially a new king, cannot obey all the things that cause people to be seen as living well, because in order to defend his country, he is often forced to act contrary to people's beliefs, compassion, kindness and religion. And therefore, his disposition must be flexible, changing in rhythm with the guidance of luck and circumstances. As I stated above, he must not deviate from the good, if that is possible, but he must know how to act evil, if necessary.”

By saying this, Machiavelli actually intends to explain that politics is closely related to the legitimacy of power and therefore, the state must have top priority in politics. Efforts to defend the country with all the actions of a ruler is an effort that is pursued in politics even though it is later judged by many people as immoral. Machiavelli's words above also reflect Machiavelli's true intention that there is no need to question the moral legitimacy of power, because in political matters attention to moral norms is actually not in place and because of this, politics and morals are two separate fields that are completely irrelevant. has anything to do with it. Politics in itself can be the legitimacy of power and also all the elements that exist and regulate the course of that power. Politics is related to the struggle for power, the military and of course the people as part of the power within the State itself. then the main purpose of politics itself is to secure the power that is in the hands of a ruler.

Machiavelli's view of politics comes from the political realities that occurred in his time. Machiavelli captures and understands the political reality starting from a series of actions of nations that are colored by the interests of each nation. The interaction of international relations brought Machiavelli to a deep understanding of human nature according to his experience. In the context of international relations that manipulate each other for the national goals of each nation, the face of political reality can be found especially in the profiles of the nation's leaders at that time with the patterns of power management applied by each of the national leaders.

In Machiavelli's thinking, the discussion about morality is not carried out specifically and in depth because morality is a field that is used as a complement to the political goals of a ruler in perpetuating his power. Morality in Machiavelli's thought is only used as far as the political interests of a ruler are concerned, so the discussion of morality will be directly discussed in his politics in general. Machiavelli outlines the view of using morality only for political gain in chapter XXI of his letter to Lorenzo de' Medici, the Italian ruler of his day. The chapter of the letter is entitled How a Prince Should Conduct Himself so as to Gain Renown (Del Lucchese, 2015). In the chapter, Machiavelli says that

A king must show its appreciation of talent, actively encourages talented people, and rewards outstanding artists. Thus, he must encourage the people, enabling them to carry out their duties in peace, whether in commerce, agriculture or other occupations. People should not be afraid to increase their wealth, lest they will be taken away or do not dare to try for fear of heavy taxes. Instead, the king should give credit to those who would do these things and those who tried in various ways to increase the prosperity of their cities and countries.

Here it becomes clear that for Machiavelli, things that smell moral are only used by a ruler for the interests of the State which are also political interests. Respect for the community, motivating talented people and also providing opportunities for them to advance their work in all fields is a treatment that reflects the kindness, sincerity, humility and trust of a leader to his people. This immoral treatment is actually carried out by the ruler not for the benefit of his people, even though the results of the motivation of the ruler can be felt directly by the people themselves, but there is one thing and a further goal, namely, everything is done by the ruler to increase the prosperity of the city and state. Increasing the prosperity of the city and the state is the core of Machiavelli's political goals, so it can be said here that morality for Machiavelli is only used for political purposes, the rest cannot be guaranteed that this kind of morality is still carried out by the rulers or not, reflecting on the situation of the state which dynamic. Furthermore, in relation to the use of morality only to the extent of this political interest, Machiavelli in (Prince & Machiavelli, 2008) says that

And since every city consisted of guilds or family groups, he had to show his concern for those groups, meeting them from time to time and setting an example of his kindness and generosity. But he must always maintain his lofty dignity, for this cannot be defiled at all.

The important thing that can be learned from Machiavelli's words is that a ruler must act well and commendably for his people with the examples already mentioned such as holding parties and spectacles for his people, meeting them from time to time and setting an example of his kindness and generosity. All of these are things that are included in the practical moral treatment of the ruler, which of course has a real political goal, namely so that the dignity of the ruler can be maintained and is seen as good by the people, so that power can be maintained. Maintaining power here can also be interpreted by defending the country from the threat of attacks that come from within or from the people themselves. With this moral treatment, the people will love the ruler more so that his power will remain safe and sustainable.

The interest of the state is the real goal of politics in Machiavelli's thinking. Politics and real goals are everything to Machiavelli so that moral treatment here may or may not be used. Moral treatment can only be used to the extent necessary for the policy to realize its real goal, namely the realization of state security. Morality according to Machiavelli can be used only as far as political interests, without political interests, morality is actually not used anymore or is considered separate by Machiavelli.

#### **b. Representation of Political Communication Perspective Machiavelli**

It has been explained in Machiavelli's biography that his thoughts and understanding of politics and strategies to achieve power cannot be separated from the role of Cesare Borgia. Machiavelli, who during his life often "studied" with Cesare Borgia, certainly understood correctly the ideals and practice of power from Cesare Borgia. By imagining the ideals and practices of power from Cesare Borgia, Machiavelli says that the real task of government is to maintain and develop and expand power, even though the government will act contrary to morality

for Machiavelli, he says, it's never right wrong or right wrong, he prefers to boldly state that if security is their goal. There are occasions when the ruler must know how to act wrong (Pastor & Hörnqvist, 2006).

Therefore, power is needed as an integral element and the most essential element in politics, meaning that power becomes one of the important elements for the ruler and is also an important element contained in politics itself. Strength is needed because to carry out an immoral act, the ruler will certainly be opposed by various parties within the country itself and also outside the country, so that a ruler must have defense in the form of strength within himself and also outside himself. Regarding the interests of defense and expansion of power, Machiavelli argues that rulers are not rulers and are not the personification of moral virtues. Machiavelli embraced a kind of moral cynicism in political philosophy. The aim of all efforts by the authorities is to maintain the stability of a country, the state continues to exist, and if there is a threat, action is taken to save it from those threats.

In taking an action, the considerations made by the authorities, first of all, do not start from the will of the people, whether the action to be taken is judged by the community as good or bad, but based on political efficiency. The choices of a ruler's actions depend on the circumstances and the urgency of the social situation. One who has adopted a new pattern of power management, and separated political action from the framework of moral judgment is Cesare Borgia. Borgia's political actions are an ideal illustration of the correct procedure for establishing power for rulers, for example for the way a new ruler establishes power. "And to keep them safe, it is enough to destroy the ruling princely family" (Worthy & Quinn, 2017).

Cruelty can be used and practiced by the authorities at the pressure of the situation and the demands of the situation to completely control a new territory because all threats to power can be overcome and eliminated. If properly researched, political philosophy Machiavelli departs from the urgency of the situation and the demands of a chaotic situation (Pocock, 2009), which raises the possibility of an instability of power. So, the main purpose of politics is to secure the

power that is in the hands of a ruler. the issue of power that is prioritized is not a matter of moral legitimacy, but how unstable power becomes stable and sustainable so that Machiavelli explicitly makes a separation between politics and morality. Politics and morality are two separate fields. In political matters, there is no place to talk about moral issues. The strict separation between moral, ethical and constitutional principles is based on the differences between the three. Moral and decency is an expected possibility, while state administration is a reality experienced in everyday life. A reality must be distinguished from an expected possibility. Therefore, the political field does not need to pay attention to things that smell like morality, because political goals are far more real than moral goals.

Here it is clearly explained that the question of politics and morality is only an abstract and concrete comparison. However, it is undeniable that it is precisely from this simple comparison that a slightly selfish thought emerges to abandon one of them, namely morality as an abstract thing, the basic reason is because the glasses of realism are used to see the comparison between the two. In Machiavelli's view of contemporary politics, it is said that the interests of a ruler in this case the government that has the highest authority in a government system are to acquire, maintain and expand the territory. his political power. If this interest is the absolute goal of Machiavelli, then morality is no longer needed because the political interests that Machiavelli wants to achieve will certainly be hampered, or even delayed if morality comes first. As a Realist, of course Machiavelli does not expect that the goals to be achieved for the benefit of a State, are delayed only for moral reasons that are not even real to him. Politics must be separated from morals because although both are necessary, still morals are abstract and will only get in the way of real political fulfillment. On the other hand, the moral treatment given by the government (ruler) to the people is also recommended by Machiavelli. "Moral treatment" here is within the framework of thinking to achieve the ruler's goals such as getting sympathizers, attention, love and trust to continue to be a leader, even though all of these are grouped in a political and moral realm that is tasked with pursuing personal interests. It is very confusing if we are forced to look to the right as well as to the left because Machiavelli's thinking insists not to attach importance to morality but moral action is needed for the same purpose as its goal of abandoning morality for political purposes. Thoughts generated by Machiavelli about politics can be said to be extreme thoughts that can only be applied by the rulers or governments of today, if they put aside conscience and compassion. Because for Machiavelli manipulation is the best way for a ruler to get an award or respect, so the following tips. What can be taken is to actively show respect for people who carry out their civic functions well and excel so that they can be consistent in that attitude. It is clear that morals in this case become an area that is removed from the thoughts of a ruler because it is only used as an excuse for the ruler's personal interests or in other words immoral activities are used to pursue beliefs, be it in politics or in other important purposes.

Machiavelli always describes the political situation as a war, for the sake of victory for the prince or ruler, then anything must be sacrificed or abandoned, including morality and everything related to ethics and morals. The description of this situation is clearly seen by Machiavelli's statement that he knowingly and willingly will kill the person he loves if it becomes a condition to submit to what he needs to fear because love and everything related including morals and virtues are only bound by a chain of obligations, so that if what he wants is obtained, sooner or later, the chain can be broken.

On this statement, Machiavelli himself wants to illustrate that although morality is important and is "innate" from every human being, including the rulers, it is still a relative need, meaning that there is still the possibility to use it or not at all, depending on the needs. arising from political interests. However, politics itself is an absolute thing because it is concrete, can maintain real power, and can generate trust from the people being led even though it is through a "way" that is not should be passed, so that Machiavelli has priority over political matters over moral matters.

### **c. Political Communication Without Morality Function**

#### **1) For the Government**

For a ruler, politics without morality has the function of making him an expert in exercising his power. Becoming an expert in this power is a must, reflecting the dynamic or volatile state situation; sometimes it is safe and peaceful, sometimes it will also experience the possibility of falling and being destroyed by outsiders and within the country itself. Although politics without morality will not be carried out at the same time because it will experience contradictions, at

least a ruler already has the provisions to anticipate urgent situations that can occur at any time in the country itself.

## **2) For the Country**

As already mentioned in one of the goals of politics that the state cannot be separated from power, politics without morality has a function for the state according to its function for rulers and power. In addition, politics without morality also serves as a tool that can be used at any time by the state. Politics without morality here is something that must be applied when the country experiences the possibility of being destroyed in the political game of the big countries around it, or the colonial countries. With politics without morality, the country will be safe from internal attacks (the people themselves) and also from outside attacks (other countries) that try to threaten the integrity of the country.

## **3) For Political Existence**

It is actually quite confusing when examining the function of politics for politics itself. However, it is undeniable that with politics without morality, politics that was previously impure because it is still mixed with matters of morality, has now become clean and pure. Clean and pure here is in the sense that politics which has one definition as the legitimacy of power, can directly apply that understanding to the existence of the state itself. Morality only hinders the legitimacy of that power, and thus hinders the real goals of a state. Suppose the state has a goal to execute all drug dealers which is basically a direct threat to the state and society. The death penalty is one of the state policies that must be carried out for the survival of society and the state. When morality interferes with the goals of this country, it is possible that the sentence will be annulled because of the drug traffickers the state is pitied, in this case some politicians and the public, with this, political goals can be hindered by the morality, then politics must be cleaned of things that smell of morality; that is the function of politics without morality for politics itself.

## **4. Conclusion**

All of Machiavelli's thoughts on politics without morality are completed in a letter with several chapters to Lorenzo de' Medici, the Italian ruler of his time. Machiavelli hopes that Lorenzo can become a formidable ruler, strong, and able to continue his ideals to free the Italian nation from the oppression of the great nations around him at that time. Everything that Machiavelli writes is a political thought which, if seen at a glance, it will appear an assumption that politics is completely detached from matters of morality. Things that smell of morality such as kindness, love, attitude of loving and loving are things that are completely separate from his political thinking. However, Machiavelli's thinking has a bigger goal, namely the security of the state and the stability of power. This goal is the reason why Machiavelli's political thought without morality was considered correct in his day. Reflecting on the situation in Italy which is full of chaos, the state and power need a direct and concrete action that can secure it, this concrete action is a political action that is independent of matters of morality.

Machiavelli in an effort to save the country and power, entrusted a Humanistic spirit, namely that all personal interests and the individual must come second. The interests of the state and the common interest are the priority of everything. This does not mean that Machiavelli abandons self-interest and private interests altogether. Instead, he seeks a larger interest, which includes all individuals in a larger scope, namely the state. Because the state and power cannot be separated, Machiavelli's efforts include efforts to stabilize power which at that time was indeed less stable. In addition, Machiavelli proved that he was a true statesman and patriot who throughout his life devoted himself to state affairs such as being a diplomat and political observer. This statesman and patriot attitude also appears in the last chapter of his letter to Lorenzo de' Medici which contains a desire to liberate the Italian state from colonial nations so that Italy can become a free and whole country without the possibility of falling or being divided, let alone destroyed.

In the end, the author came to a conclusion that this politics without Machiavelli's morality actually leads to a state interest and security of power. Politics like this even though there are no matters related to morality, but this kind of political treatment is actually a correct and realistic treatment in accordance with the needs of the state and power. Without this kind of political treatment, a country that is experiencing power instability, such as Italy during Machiavelli's life, may experience collapse, division and even destruction

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