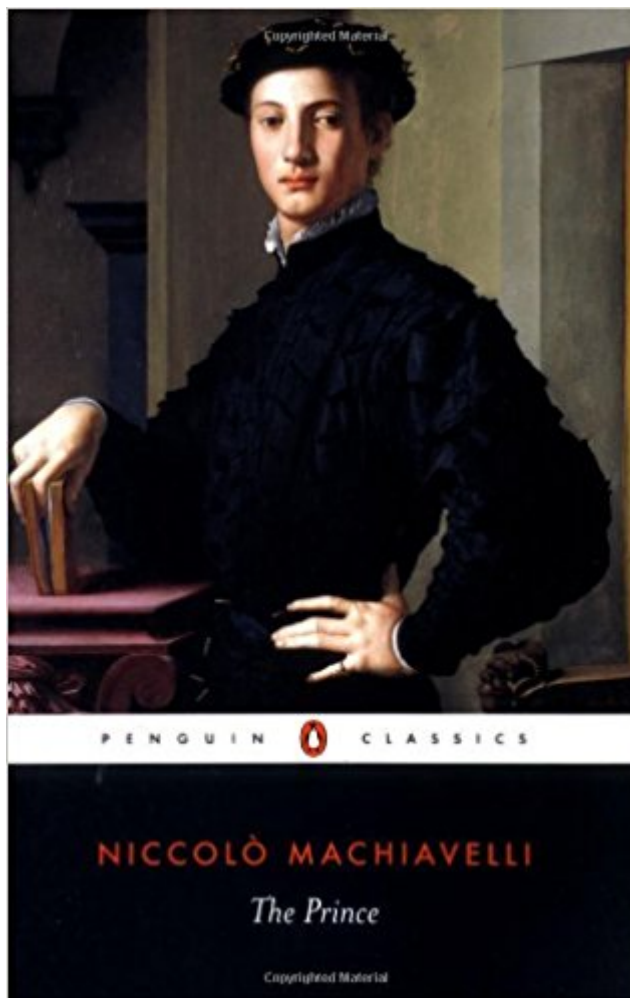


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# The Prince (Penguin Classics)



## Synopsis

Machiavelli's highly influential treatise on political power *The Prince* shocked Europe on publication with its advocacy of ruthless tactics for gaining absolute power and its abandonment of conventional morality. Niccolò Machiavelli drew on his own experience of office under the turbulent Florentine republic, rejecting traditional values of political theory and recognizing the complicated, transient nature of political life. Concerned not with lofty ideal but with a regime that would last, *The Prince* has become the bible of realpolitik, and it still retains its power to alarm and to instruct. In this edition, Machiavelli's tough-minded and pragmatic Italian is preserved in George Bull's clear, unambiguous translation. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

When Lorenzo de' Medici seized control of the Florentine Republic in 1512, he summarily fired the Secretary to the Second Chancery of the Signoria and set in motion a fundamental change in the way we think about politics. The person who held the aforementioned office with the tongue-twisting

title was none other than Niccolò Machiavelli, who, suddenly finding himself out of a job after 14 years of patriotic service, followed the career trajectory of many modern politicians into punditry. Unable to become an on-air political analyst for a television network, he only wrote a book. But what a book *The Prince* is. Its essential contribution to modern political thought lies in Machiavelli's assertion of the then revolutionary idea that theological and moral imperatives have no place in the political arena. "It must be understood," Machiavelli avers, "that a prince ... cannot observe all of those virtues for which men are reputed good, because it is often necessary to act against mercy, against faith, against humanity, against frankness, against religion, in order to preserve the state." With just a little imagination, readers can discern parallels between a 16th-century principality and a 20th-century presidency. --Tim Hogan --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

“[Machiavelli] can still engage our attention with remarkable immediacy, and this cannot be explained solely by the appeal of his ironic observations on human behaviour. Perhaps the most important thing is the way he can compel us to reflect on our own priorities and the reasoning behind them; it is this intrusion into our own defenses that makes reading him an intriguing experience. As a scientific exponent of the political art Machiavelli may have had few followers; it is as a provocative rhetorician that he has had his real impact on history.”  
—from the Introduction by Dominic Baker-Smith

It was so much more relevant to me after 35 years in the corporate world. The advice and warnings given to a prince can be easily made useful for any aspiring corporate executive. I read this book when I was in university, it was meaningless to me then, but now I understand its significance. The book is a difficult read, as the translation appears to have been made in a literal fashion from Italian, which was Machiavelli's everyday language.

I like the cloth wrapped cover, the ribbon marker, the quality of the paper and typography, and the merit of the translation. As I usually do, I took off and threw away the dust jacket. I can't stand dust jackets. Another reviewer preferred the translation by Daniel Donno in the Bantam paperback edition, which I also own, a preference with which I do not agree. For instance, the Marriott version has: "God is not willing to do everything, and thus take away our free will and that share of glory which belongs to us," which compares favorably to the Donno version's "God is unwilling to do everything Himself lest He deprive us of our free will and of that portion of glory that belongs to us."

"Take away" is better than "deprive of," and "share" is better than "portion." Also "that...which" sounds better here than "that...that." Marriott seems, at least in this passage, to share my liking for plain Germanic words. The only problem with this edition is the introduction, which was not written by Machiavelli, but by some silly person named something like Dominic Baker-Smith, whose pseudoscholarly essay totally fails to understand Machiavelli's importance: "As a scientific exponent of the political art Machiavelli may have had few followers; it is as a provocative rhetorician that he has had his real impact on history." Pure banana oil, and pompous at that.

When I was in high school (1962), I was assigned this book to read and report. At the time I still didn't enjoy reading, and made no effort to even find the book. Having just read it (at age 65), I'm glad I delayed it for so many years, for I found it ponderous and plodding. While I enjoy reading much more now than I did in '62, I still found it a chore to read *The Prince*. Having said that, I suspect I missed out on some important formative education toward the subject of Government, and have gained from it some measure of understanding as to our system of government and why it has become the way it is.

Luckily it's not too many pages because I look forward to spending some undisturbed time reading it again. I am very far from an historian but kept hearing about Machiavellian plots so I was intrigued. I read through it in very distracting circumstances at work here and there. But, what I did grasp is that many documented historical examples show that princes (people/governments/religions) are warlike, evil, ambitious, and unbelievably devious to further their own positions and possessions. It also chronicles how the Church/Popes weave into history as being no better (exactly the same) as Princes. A good read. Definitely recommend. Read prior to this: *The Church in History* by Episcopalian Theologian John E. Booty. Currently reading: *Dante's Divine Comedy*.

A quite interesting book to understand our behavior as civilization with an unsettling appetite for power and dominance. Most of its concepts, although quite old, are and will be applicable to many aspects of our lives as individuals and as a civilization (sadly)

Great price, great shipping cost. good quality book. great translation. BUT! I am removing 1 star for one of the most mind-numbingly stupid things one could do to a collectible book. someone slapped a BIG BLUE STICKER right smack-dab on the middle of the front cover!!!!!!!!!! I was able to peel it off very carefully and it is all, but completely gone. to the untrained eye, it has never been there, but I

see it everytime I look at the book and so will anyone else who knows a bit about books. It damaged the cover and while the book is still very much readable and in that sense its value has not been damaged. it DID damage its collection value and that is very sad.all in all I am happy, aside from that sticker-business. STOP THAT!

The Prince is advice to he who would be king of Italy, during the disturbed turbulent age it was written in, with every hand striving to rule the entire Italian peninsula.. Cynical and worldly, this is how they perceived a good prince must act to achieve power. Such a man today does well to read it, then go beyond it.Also, go into history and read about Cyrus the Great.

I knew what I was getting into before buying this. The truth is I saw a documentary on Nikki Barnes (the drug dealer) which said that he read this book. Naturally curious, I did some research and found that some feel this book and its lessons are cruel and unusual. Yet you have to remember that this book was written in the 1500's which, the last time I checked, you were able to get away with murder if you were of high class. With that being said, I did find the book very informative in that it shows you how some people of power can think and some of the reasons behind their actions. My suggestion: read between the lines. Substitute murder for blackmail or extortion. Notice how the process of gaining allies in The Prince is very similar to how it is done today. The book is only 71 pages and for the price it's worth sitting down for a night or two to see how someone 50 years ago would think.

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