

DOWNLOAD PDF MACHIVAEELS DISCOURSES UPON THE FIRST DECADE OF T. LIVIUS

Chapter 1 : Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius: The Discourses on Livy by Niccolò Machiavelli

Discourses upon the first Decade of T. Livius translated out of the Italian; With some marginall animadversions noting and taxing his errors. By E.D. London: Printed by Thomas Paine for William Hills and Daniel Pakeman,

Outline[edit] Discourses on Livy comprises a dedication letter and three books with numbered chapters. The first two books but not the third are introduced by unnumbered prefaces. Rucellai had died in , but this did not lead Machiavelli to find a new dedicatee, as he had with the Prince. Machiavelli justifies dedicating the Discourses to his two friends because they deserve to be princes, even if they lack principalities, and he criticizes the custom which he had adopted in the Prince of dedicating works to men who are princes but do not deserve to be. He says that he will restrict himself in Book I to those things that occurred inside the city and by public counsel I 1. He notes that he brings new modes and orders, a dangerous task given the envy of men, but one motivated by the desire to work for the common benefit of everyone. He also notes that while his work may not be perfect, it deserves to be heard, because it will aid others after him in fulfilling his vision. He complains that the Italian Renaissance has stimulated a desire to imitate the ancients in art, law, and medicine, but that no one thinks of imitating ancient kingdoms or republics. He traces this to an improper reading of history that suggests that imitation of ancient political virtue is impossible. He declares his intention to overcome this view of the ancient world by examining Livy and modern politics. Book one begins by explaining how a city is formed, which is done by either natives to the area or foreigners, citing specific examples such as Athens and Venice. Machiavelli then explains this idea and states that this greatly changes the way a city is viewed, in particular for Rome. Each, however, is remarkably similar to a malevolent twin, called tyranny, oligarchy, and anarchy, and they quickly deteriorate into the bad systems. Machiavelli then delves into more historical events. Once the Tarquins left Rome there seemed to be peace and alliance between the patricians and the plebs, but this in fact was untrue. This disunity resulted in Rome evolving into a Republic. Moving on, he says that a republic has the opportunity to emerge as an empire, like Rome, or just maintain what it is. Also, allowing people to accuse citizens of sins is necessary in creating a republic, but calumnies, whispered allegations that cannot be proven or disproven in a court, are harmful because they cause mistrust and help create factionalism. Machiavelli ranks then which rulers are most praiseworthy, the first of which being leaders who lead due to religion, then those who lead because they created a republic or kingdom. Religion in Rome was cited as a primary cause for joy in the city as it is truly an important element. He also states that Livy gives many examples of when religion was utilized to restructure the city. The Samnites were defeated by the Romans several times and in order to change this they decided find a new approach to their religion. Discussing then freedom, Machiavelli explains that freedom becomes an issue once a type of government shifts. He explains that the Romans were not corrupt when they regained their freedom and could thus keep it. Questioning what mode a free state can be maintained in a corrupt city, he states that Rome had orders, which kept the citizens checked. He then goes into a discussion of the rulers of Rome and how a strong or weak Prince can maintain or destroy a kingdom. He continues, to say that after a weak prince a kingdom could not remain strong with another weak prince. Luckily, the first three kings each had a certain strength, which aided the city. Romulus was fierce, Numa was religious, and Tullus was dedicated to war. The book then slightly shifts focus to discussing the reformation of a state. Machiavelli explains that if one wants to change a state they must keep some elements of the previous state. Also, he says that a Prince or republic should not deny citizens necessities. He then conveys that having a dictatorial authority was beneficial for the City of Rome because a republic cannot always make the quick decisions demanded by a crisis, and in these cases one person can do a better job than the rest. Rome benefited because the office of Dictator was written into the constitution so it could be exercised legitimately and then retired during the emergency. Continuing with this, weak republics are not truly able to make important decisions and that any change will come from necessity. The themes of pride and corruption appear many times throughout The Discourses and Machiavelli

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believes that it is very easy for a person to be corrupted. It is also good for a soldier to have the desire to fight for personal pride and glory. Towards the end of Book One, Machiavelli adds that great accidents that occur in a city usually come with some kind of sign. This sign could be divine or seen through a revelation. Also, Machiavelli explains that Livy stated that people are strong together, but weak when alone giving the example of the Roman plebs. Livy additionally feels that the multitude is wiser than the one prince. Thus, Book One examines a variety of issues that occur when creating a state, and looks at it with specific examples from Rome and other parts of Italy. There were many opinions equally distributed to both sides, and there is not final consensus on which had more of a cause, virtue or fortune. Chapter two discusses what people the Romans had to combat, and that they obstinately defended their freedom. He believes that we have lost our love of freedom, and we need to get it back. Chapter three talks about how Rome had its rise to power through their ruining of surrounding cities, making Rome the primary power of the region. Chapter four lists the three modes of expanding that republics have taken. Also, Machiavelli gives the reasoning and background information for why these three modes of expanding that the republic took were necessary. Chapter five talks about how memories can be lost due to issues such as language barriers, floods, or even plague. Chapter six talks about how the Romans went about making war. He claims that their goal for war was to be short and massive. Chapter seven talks about how much land the Romans gave per Colonist. He claims that this would be tough to determine because it depended on the places where they sent the colonists. Chapter 8 discusses the cause why peoples leave their ancestral places and inundate the country of others. He blames it either on famine or on war that has taken over their land and they must move on to something new. Chapter 9 he talks about what factors commonly cause wars. He says there are many different reasons for disputes. Chapter 10 talks about how the common opinion of money being the sinew of war is actually incorrect. Faith and benevolence of men is what makes war what it is. Chapter 11 talks about the idea that becoming friends with a Prince who has more reputation than force is not something that would go unnoticed. People were looking for good connections, and the prince who has a better reputation is better off than the one with better force. Chapter 12 talks about whether it is better to wait to be attacked if you feel it is coming, or if you should make the first move. Chapter 13 talks about how a person comes from base to great fortune more through fraud than through force. He thinks that fraud is just quicker and easier, so force is not needed. Chapter 14 talks about how men confuse themselves into believing that through humility, they will conquer pride. Claims that humility and pride are two separate things and do not go hand in hand. Chapter 15 claims that the resolutions of weak states will always be ambiguous, and that slow decisions, no matter who or what is making them, are always hurtful. Chapter 16 talks about how much the soldiers of his time did not conform to the ancient orders. Values and ideologies were being lost, and soldiers just were not the same as they used to be. Chapter 17 talks about how much artillery should be esteemed by armies in the present times, and whether the opinion universally held of it is true. Many different opinions are voiced in the chapter, and each has a valid argument to go along with it. Chapter 18 talks about how the Authority of the Romans and by the example of the ancient military infantry should be esteemed more than the horse. Claimed that the military esteemed the military on foot much more than military on horseback. Chapter 19 talks about how the acquisitions by Republics that are not well ordered and that do not proceed according to Roman virtue are for their ruin, not their exaltation. Chapter talks in detail about the different outlooks people have. Chapter 20 talks about and asks what danger the prince or republic runs that avails itself of Auxiliary or mercenary military. Says that having these services admits you are weak and is not something that is necessarily respectable. Chapter 21 says the first praetor the Romans sent anyplace was to Capua, four hundred years after they began making war. Claims that the Romans were changing things and were acting differently from past precedents. Chapter 22 talks about how false the opinions of men often are in judging great things. Says that the best men are treated poorly during the quiet times because of envy or from other ambitions. Chapter 23 talks about how much the Romans, in judging subjects for some accidents that necessitated such judgment, fled from the Middle Way. Chapter 24 claims that fortresses are generally much more harmful than useful. They did not build fortresses to protect them

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because they were of another virtue to that of building them. Chapter 25 says to assault a disunited city so as to seize it by means of its disunion is a contradictory policy. He is saying that taking advantage of someone while they are already down is something that should not be done. Chapter 26 claims vilification and abuse generate hatred against those who use them, without any utility to them. He is saying that the abuse that men do to women is something that brings hatred not only from the victim, but from everyone who hears about it as well. Chapter 27 says for prudent princes and republics, it should be enough to conquer, for most often when it is not enough, one loses. He is saying that people should be happy with what they get, because if they try to get more than they can handle, they end up losing it all. Chapter 28 says how dangerous it is for a Republic or a Prince not to avenge an injury done against the public or against a private person. Chapter 29 claims that fortune blinds the spirits of men when it does not wish them to oppose its plans. This means that fate will take its toll on what men do and do not do. Chapter 30 says that truly powerful Republics and Princes buy friendships not with money, but with virtue and reputation of strength. Chapter 31 talks about how dangerous it is to believe the banished. He is talking about how there should be no circumstances in which someone should believe another individual who has been kicked out of the country. Chapter 32 talks about how many modes the Romans seized towns. He talks about the different advantages to seizing towns in different ways, both weighing the pros and cons such as cost and efficiency. Chapter 33 talks about how the Romans gave free commissions to their captains of armies.

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Chapter 2 : Discourses of Niccolo Machiavelli.

Machiavels Discourses. upon [sic] the first Decade of T. Livius translated out of the Italian; With some marginall animadversions noting and taxing his errors. By E[dward]. D[acres].

Niccolo Machiavelli to Zanobi Buondelmonte and Cosimo Rucellai, Greeting With this I send you a gift which, if it bears no proportion to the extent of the obligations which I owe you, is nevertheless the best that I am able to offer to you; for I have endeavored to embody in it all that long experience and assiduous research have taught me of the affairs of the world. And as neither yourselves nor any one else can ask more than that of me, you cannot complain that I have not given you more; though you may well complain of my lack of talent when my arguments are poor, and of the fallacies of my judgment on account of the errors into which I have doubtless fallen many times. This being so, however, I know not which of us has the greater right to complain, "I, that you should have forced me to write what I should never have attempted of my own accord, or you, that I should have written without giving you cause to be satisfied. Accept it, then, as one accepts whatever comes from friends, looking rather to the intention of him who gives, than to the thing offered. And believe me, that I feel a satisfaction in this, that, even if I have often erred in the course of this work, I have assuredly made no mistake in having chosen you above all other friends to whom to dedicate these discourses. In doing this, I give some proof of gratitude, although I may seem to have departed from the ordinary usage of writers, who generally dedicate their works to some prince; and, blinded by ambition or avarice, praise him for all the virtuous qualities he has not, instead of censuring him for his real vices, whilst I, to avoid this fault, do not address myself to such as are princes, but to those who by their infinite good qualities are worthy to be such; not to those who could load me with honors, rank, and wealth, but rather to those who have the desire to do so, but have not the power. For to judge rightly, men should esteem rather those who are, and not those who can be generous; and those who would know how to govern states, rather than those who have the right to govern, but lack the knowledge. For this reason have historians praised Hiero of Syracuse, a mere private citizen, more than Perseus of Macedon, monarch though he was; for Hiero only lacked a principality to be a prince, whilst the other had nothing of the king except the diadem. Be it good or bad, however, you wanted this work, and such as it is I send it to you; and should you continue in the belief that my opinions are acceptable to you, I shall not fail to continue to examine this history, as I promised you in the beginning of it. Although the envious nature of men, so prompt to blame and so slow to praise, makes the discovery and introduction of any new principles and systems as dangerous almost as the exploration of unknown seas and continents, yet, animated by that desire which impels me to do what may prove for the common benefit of all, I have resolved to open a new route, which has not yet been followed by any one, and may prove difficult and troublesome, but may also bring me some reward in the approbation of those who will kindly appreciate my efforts. And if my poor talents, my little experience of the present and insufficient study of the past, should make the result of my labors defective and of little utility, I shall at least have shown the way to others, who will carry out my views with greater ability, eloquence, and judgment, so that if I do not merit praise, I ought at least not to incur censure. When we consider the general respect for antiquity, and how often "to say nothing of other examples" a great price is paid for some fragments of an antique statue, which we are anxious to possess to ornament our houses with, or to give to artists who strive to imitate them in their own works; and when we see, on the other hand, the wonderful examples which the history of ancient kingdoms and republics presents to us, the prodigies of virtue and of wisdom displayed by the kings, captains, citizens, and legislators who have sacrificed themselves for their country, "when we see these, I say, more admired than imitated, or so much neglected that not the least trace of this ancient virtue remains, we cannot but be at the same time as much surprised as afflicted. The more so as in the differences which arise between citizens, or in the maladies to which they are subjected, we see these same people have recourse to the judgments and the remedies prescribed by the ancients. The civil laws are in fact nothing but decisions given

by their jurisconsults, and which, reduced to a system, direct our modern jurists in their decisions. And what is the science of medicine, but the experience of ancient physicians, which their successors have taken for their guide? And yet to found a republic, maintain states, to govern a kingdom, organize an army, conduct a war, dispense justice, and extend empires, you will find neither prince, nor republic, nor captain, nor citizen, who has recourse to the examples of antiquity! This neglect, I am persuaded, is due less to the weakness to which the vices of our education have reduced the world, than to the evils caused by the proud indolence which prevails in most of the Christian states, and to the lack of real knowledge of history, the true sense of which is not known, or the spirit of which they do not comprehend. Thus the majority of those who read it take pleasure only in the variety of the events which history relates, without ever thinking of imitating the noble actions, deeming that not only difficult, but impossible; as though heaven, the sun, the elements, and men had changed the order of their motions and power, and were different from what they were in ancient times. Wishing, therefore, so far as in me lies, to draw mankind from this error, I have thought it proper to write upon those books of Titus Livius that have come to us entire despite the malice of time; touching upon all those matters which, after a comparison between the ancient and modern events, may seem to me necessary to facilitate their proper understanding. In this way those who read my remarks may derive those advantages which should be the aim of all study of history; and although the undertaking is difficult, yet, aided by those who have encouraged me in this attempt, I hope to carry it sufficiently far, so that but little may remain for others to carry it to its destined end. Of the beginning of cities in general, and especially that of the city of Rome. Those who read what the beginning of Rome was, and what her lawgivers and her organization, will not be astonished that so much virtue should have maintained itself during so many centuries; and that so great an empire should have sprung from it afterwards. To speak first of her origin, we will premise that all cities are founded either by natives of the country or by strangers. The little security which the natives found in living dispersed; the impossibility for each to resist isolated, either because of the situation or because of their small number, the attacks of any enemy that might present himself; the difficulty of uniting in time for defence at his approach, and the necessity of abandoning the greater number of their retreats, which quickly became a prize to the assailant, "such were the motives that caused the first inhabitants of a country to build cities for the purpose of escaping these dangers. They resolved, of their own accord, or by the advice of some one who had most authority amongst them, to live together in some place of their selection that might offer them greater conveniences and greater facility of defence. Thus, amongst many others were Athens and Venice; the first was built under the authority of Theseus, who had gathered the dispersed inhabitants; and the second owed its origin to the fact that several tribes had taken refuge on the little islands situated at the head of the Adriatic Sea, to escape from war, and from the Barbarians who after the fall of the Roman Empire had overrun Italy. These refugees of themselves, and without any prince to govern them, began to live under such laws as seemed to them best suited to maintain their new state. In this they succeeded, happily favored by the long peace, for which they were indebted to their situation upon a sea without issue, where the people that ravaged Italy could not harass them, being without any ships. Thus from that small beginning they attained that degree of power in which we see them now. The second case is when a city is built by strangers; these may be either freemen, or subjects of a republic or of a prince, who, to relieve their states from an excessive population, or to defend a newly acquired territory which they wish to preserve without expense, send colonies there. The Romans founded many cities in this way within their empire. Sometimes cities are built by a prince, not for the purpose of living there, but merely as monuments to his glory; such was Alexandria, built by Alexander the Great. But as all these cities are at their very origin deprived of liberty, they rarely succeed in making great progress, or in being counted amongst the great powers. Such was the origin of Florence; for it was built either by the soldiers of Sylla, or perhaps by the inhabitants of Mount Fiesole, who, trusting to the long peace that prevailed in the reign of Octavian, were attracted to the plains along the Arno. Florence, thus built under the Roman Empire, could in the beginning have no growth except what depended on the will of its master. The founders of cities are independent when they are people who, under the leadership of some prince, or by

themselves, have been obliged to fly from pestilence, war, or famine, that was desolating their native country, and are seeking a new home. In such case we are able to appreciate the talents of the founder and the success of his work, which is more or less remarkable according as he, in founding the city, displays more or less wisdom and skill. Both the one and the other are recognized by the selection of the place where he has located the city, and by the nature of the laws which he establishes in it. And as men work either from necessity or from choice, and as it has been observed that virtue has more sway where labor is the result of necessity rather than of choice, it is a matter of consideration whether it might not be better to select for the establishment of a city a sterile region, where the people, compelled by necessity to be industrious, and therefore less given to idleness, would be more united, and less exposed by the poverty of the country to occasions for discord; as was the case with Ragusa, and several other cities that were built upon an ungrateful soil. Such a selection of site would doubtless be more useful and wise if men were content with what they possess, and did not desire to exercise command over others. Now, as people cannot make themselves secure except by being powerful, it is necessary in the founding of a city to avoid a sterile country. On the contrary, a city should be placed rather in a region where the fertility of the soil affords the means of becoming great, and of acquiring strength to repel all who might attempt to attack it, or oppose the development of its power. As to the idleness which the fertility of a country tends to encourage, the laws should compel men to labor where the sterility of the soil does not do it; as was done by those skilful and sagacious legislators who have inhabited very agreeable and fertile countries, such as are apt to make men idle and unfit for the exercise of valor. These by way of an offset to the pleasures and softness of the climate, imposed upon their soldiers the rigors of a strict discipline and severe exercises, so that they became better warriors than what nature produces in the harshest climates and most sterile countries. Amongst these legislators we may cite the founders of the kingdom of Egypt: And whoever has examined the government of the Pachas of Egypt and the discipline of their Mameluke militia before it was destroyed by the Sultan Selim of Turkey, will have seen how much they dreaded idleness, and by what variety of exercises and by what severe laws they prevented in their soldiers that effeminacy which is the natural fruit of the softness of their climate. I say, then, that for the establishment of a city it is wisest to select the most fertile spot, especially as the laws can prevent the ill effects that would otherwise result from that very fertility. When Alexander the Great wished to build a city that should serve as a monument to his glory, his architect, Dinocrates, pointed out to him how he could build a city on Mount Athos, which place he said, besides being very strong, could be so arranged as to give the city the appearance of the human form, which would make it a wonder worthy of the greatness of its founder. Either way it will be seen that Rome was from the first free and independent; and we shall also see as we shall show further on to how many privations the laws of Romulus, of Numa, and of others subjected its inhabitants; so that neither the fertility of the soil, nor the proximity of the sea, nor their many victories, nor the greatness of the Empire, could corrupt them during several centuries, and they maintained there more virtues than have ever been seen in any other republic. The great things which Rome achieved, and of which Titus Livius has preserved the memory, have been the work either of the government or of private individuals; and as they relate either to the affairs of the interior or of the exterior, I shall begin to discourse of those internal operations of the government which I believe to be most noteworthy, and shall point out their results. This will be the subject of the discourses that will compose this First Book, or rather First Part. Of the different kinds of republics, and of what kind the Roman republic was. I will leave aside what might be said of cities which from their very birth have been subject to a foreign power, and will speak only of those whose origin has been independent, and which from the first governed themselves by their own laws, whether as republics or as principalities, and whose constitution and laws have differed as their origin. Others have owed theirs to chance and to events, and have received their laws at different times, as Rome did. It is a great good fortune for a republic to have a legislator sufficiently wise to give her laws so regulated that, without the necessity of correcting them, they afford security to those who live under them. Sparta observed her laws for more than eight hundred years without altering them and without experiencing a single dangerous disturbance. Unhappy, on the contrary, is that republic which, not having at

the beginning fallen into the hands of a sagacious and skilful legislator, is herself obliged to reform her laws. More unhappy still is that republic which from the first has diverged from a good constitution. And that republic is furthest from it whose vicious institutions impede her progress, and make her leave the right path that leads to a good end; for those who are in that condition can hardly ever be brought into the right road. Those republics, on the other hand, that started without having even a perfect constitution, but made a fair beginning, and are capable of improvement, "such republics, I say, may perfect themselves by the aid of events. It is very true, however, that such reforms are never effected without danger, for the majority of men never willingly adopt any new law tending to change the constitution of the state, unless the necessity of the change is clearly demonstrated; and as such a necessity cannot make itself felt without being accompanied with danger, the republic may easily be destroyed before having perfected its constitution. That of Florence is a complete proof of this: Having proposed to myself to treat of the kind of government established at Rome, and of the events that led to its perfection, I must at the beginning observe that some of the writers on politics distinguished three kinds of government, viz. Other authors, wiser according to the opinion of many, count six kinds of governments, three of which are very bad, and three good in themselves, but so liable to be corrupted that they become absolutely bad. The three good ones are those which we have just named; the three bad ones result from the degradation of the other three, and each of them resembles its corresponding original, so that the transition from the one to the other is very easy. Thus monarchy becomes tyranny; aristocracy degenerates into oligarchy; and the popular government lapses readily into licentiousness. So that a legislator who gives to a state which he founds, either of these three forms of government, constitutes it but for a brief time; for no precautions can prevent either one of the three that are reputed good, from degenerating into its opposite kind; so great are in these the attractions and resemblances between the good and the evil. Chance has given birth to these different kinds of governments amongst men; for at the beginning of the world the inhabitants were few in number, and lived for a time dispersed, like beasts. As the human race increased, the necessity for uniting themselves for defence made itself felt; the better to attain this object, they chose the strongest and most courageous from amongst themselves and placed him at their head, promising to obey him. Thence they began to know the good and the honest, and to distinguish them from the bad and vicious; for seeing a man injure his benefactor aroused at once two sentiments in every heart, hatred against the ingrate and love for the benefactor. They blamed the first, and on the contrary honored those the more who showed themselves grateful, for each felt that he in turn might be subject to a like wrong; and to prevent similar evils, they set to work to make laws, and to institute punishments for those who contravened them. Such was the origin of justice. This caused them, when they had afterwards to choose a prince, neither to look to the strongest nor bravest, but to the wisest and most just. But when they began to make sovereignty hereditary and non-elective, the children quickly degenerated from their fathers; and, so far from trying to equal their virtues, they considered that a prince had nothing else to do than to excel all the rest in luxury, indulgence, and every other variety of pleasure. The prince consequently soon drew upon himself the general hatred. An object of hatred, he naturally felt fear; fear in turn dictated to him precautions and wrongs, and thus tyranny quickly developed itself. Such were the beginning and causes of disorders, conspiracies, and plots against the sovereigns, set on foot, not by the feeble and timid, but by those citizens who, surpassing the others in grandeur of soul, in wealth, and in courage, could not submit to the outrages and excesses of their princes. Under such powerful leaders the masses armed themselves against the tyrant, and, after having rid themselves of him, submitted to these chiefs as their liberators. These, abhorring the very name of prince, constituted themselves a new government; and at first, bearing in mind the past tyranny, they governed in strict accordance with the laws which they had established themselves; preferring public interests to their own, and to administer and protect with greatest care both public and private affairs. The children succeeded their fathers, and ignorant of the changes of fortune, having never experienced its reverses, and indisposed to remain content with this civil equality, they in turn gave themselves up to cupidity, ambition, libertinage, and violence, and soon caused the aristocratic government to degenerate into an oligarchic tyranny, regardless of all civil rights. They soon,

however, experienced the same fate as the first tyrant; the people, disgusted with their government, placed themselves at the command of whoever was willing to attack them, and this disposition soon produced an avenger, who was sufficiently well seconded to destroy them. The memory of the prince and the wrongs committed by him being still fresh in their minds, and having overthrown the oligarchy, the people were not willing to return to the government of a prince. A popular government was therefore resolved upon, and it was so organized that the authority should not again fall into the hands of a prince or a small number of nobles. And as all governments are at first looked up to with some degree of reverence, the popular state also maintained itself for a time, but which was never of long duration, and lasted generally only about as long as the generation that had established it; for it soon ran into that kind of license which inflicts injury upon public as well as private interests. Each individual only consulted his own passions, and a thousand acts of injustice were daily committed, so that, constrained by necessity, or directed by the counsels of some good man, or for the purpose of escaping from this anarchy, they returned anew to the government of a prince, and from this they generally lapsed again into anarchy, step by step, in the same manner and from the same causes as we have indicated. Such is the circle which all republics are destined to run through. Seldom, however, do they come back to the original form of government, which results from the fact that their duration is not sufficiently long to be able to undergo these repeated changes and preserve their existence. But it may well happen that a republic lacking strength and good counsel in its difficulties becomes subject after a while to some neighboring state, that is better organized than itself; and if such is not the case, then they will be apt to revolve indefinitely in the circle of revolutions. I say, then, that all kinds of government are defective; those three which we have qualified as good because they are too short-lived, and the three bad ones because of their inherent viciousness. Thus sagacious legislators, knowing the vices of each of these systems of government by themselves, have chosen one that should partake of all of them, judging that to be the most stable and solid. In fact, when there is combined under the same constitution a prince, a nobility, and the power of the people, then these three powers will watch and keep each other reciprocally in check. Amongst those justly celebrated for having established such a constitution, Lycurgus beyond doubt merits the highest praise. He organized the government of Sparta in such manner that, in giving to the king, the nobles, and the people each their portion of authority and duties, he created a government which maintained itself for over eight hundred years in the most perfect tranquillity, and reflected infinite glory upon this legislator. On the other hand, the constitution given by Solon to the Athenians, by which he established only a popular government, was of such short duration that before his death he saw the tyranny of Pisistratus arise. And although forty years afterwards the heirs of the tyrant were expelled, so that Athens recovered her liberties and restored the popular government according to the laws of Solon, yet it did not last over a hundred years; although a number of laws that had been overlooked by Solon were adopted, to maintain the government against the insolence of the nobles and the license of the populace. The fault he had committed in not tempering the power of the people and that of the prince and his nobles, made the duration of the government of Athens very short, as compared with that of Sparta. But let us come to Rome. Although she had no legislator like Lycurgus, who constituted her government, at her very origin, in a manner to secure her liberty for a length of time, yet the disunion which existed between the Senate and the people produced such extraordinary events, that chance did for her what the laws had failed to do. Thus, if Rome did not attain the first degree of happiness, she at least had the second.

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Chapter 3 : The Discourses Summary & Study Guide

Machiavel's Discourses upon the First Decade of T. Livius, Translated out of the Italian. To which is Added his Prince: with some Marginal Animadversions Noting and Taxing His Errors. Machiavelli, Niccolo.

Further Readings about the Author Personal Information: Also Nicolo, Niccholo, and Nicolas; also Machiavegli, Machiavello, and Machiavel Italian essayist, dramatist, historian, sketch writer, biographer, dialogist, writer of novellas, and poet. Born May 3, , in Florence, Italy; died of illness; June 21, , in Florence, Italy; son of a doctor of laws; married Marietta Corsini, ; children: Studied Latin under various tutors. Essayist, dramatist, historian, sketch writer, biographer, dialogist, writer of novellas, and poet. Statesman and political theorist. Assisted in deposition of Girolamo Savonarola, ; appointed to the second chancery of the republic, beginning in ; Ten of Liberty and Peace government agency , chancellor and secretary; removed from office, jailed, and tortured by the Medici family when Spanish forces invaded Italy in ; appointed official historian of Florence, E di Lucretia comedy , c. Discorsi di Nicolo Machiavelli La vita di Castruccio Castracani da Lucca Also, the Life of Castruccio Castracani of Lucca. Tutte le opere storiche e litterarie di Niccolo Machiavelli treatises, history, dramas, biography, prose, and poetry , The Chief Works and Others treatises, history, dramas, biography, and prose , three volumes, While addressing a wide range of political and historical topics, as well as embracing strictly literary forms, he has come to be identified almost exclusively with his highly controversial manual of state Il principe The Prince. This straightforward, pragmatic treatise on political conduct and the application of power has, over the centuries, been variously hailed, denounced, and distorted. Seldom has a single work generated such divergent and fierce commentary from such a wide assortment of writers. Eliot has remarked that no great man has been so completely misunderstood. BIOGRAPHY Machiavelli was born in Florence to an established though not particularly affluent middle-class family whose members had traditionally filled responsible positions in local government. In the same year Machiavelli was appointed to the second chancery of the republic. As chancellor and secretary to the Ten of Liberty and Peace, a sensitive government agency dealing chiefly with warfare and foreign affairs, Machiavelli participated both in domestic politics and in diplomatic missions to foreign governments. These posts afforded him innumerable opportunities over the next fourteen years to closely examine the inner workings of government and to meet prominent individuals, among them Cesare Borgia, who furnished the young diplomat with the major profile in leadership for The Prince. Machiavelli quickly gained political prominence and influence; by he was a well-respected assistant to the republican gonfalonier, or head of state, Piero Soderini. In , Spanish forces invaded Italy and the Florentine political climate changed abruptly. The Medici for centuries the rulers of Florence, but exiled since seized the opportunity to depose Soderini and replace the republican government with their own autocratic regime. Machiavelli was purged from office, jailed and tortured for his well-known republican sentiments, and finally banished to his country residence in Percussina. Machiavelli spent the enforced retirement writing the small body of political writings that insured his literary immortality. Completed between and , Discorsi The play was popular with audiences throughout much of Italy for several years. Meanwhile, Machiavelli had made several attempts to gain favor with the Medici including dedicating The Prince to Lorenzo. In he was appointed official historian of Florence and was subsequently entrusted with minor governmental duties. His prodigious Istorie fiorentine History of Florence carefully dilutes his republican platform with the Medicean bias expected of him. Critics have found it ironic that the fiercely republican Machiavelli should have written a handbook advising an autocratic leader how best to acquire and maintain power and security. Machiavelli was acutely aware, however, of foreign threats to Italian autonomy and thus deemed it necessary for a strong prince to thwart French and Spanish hegemony. Hence The Prince, addressed to the ruling Medici. He believed that a shrewd head of state, exemplified by Borgia, was essential to sublimating self-interest to common welfare. Yet, from its initial appearance, The Prince proved no mere manual of protocol nor, for that matter, of even conventional strategy.

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In its chapters, Machiavelli delineated a typology of sovereignties and the deployment of available forces military, political, or psychological to acquire and retain them. The Prince is the first political treatise to divorce statecraft from ethics; as Machiavelli wrote: How one lives is so far removed from how one ought to live that he who abandons what one does for what one ought to do, learns rather his own ruin than his preservation. On issues of leadership hitherto masked by other political theorists in vague diplomatic terms, Machiavelli presented his theses in direct, candid, and often passionate speech, employing easily grasped metaphors and structuring the whole in an aphoristic vein which lends it a compelling authority. But, within a short time the book fell into widespread disfavor, becoming viewed as a handbook for atheistic tyranny. Further denigrated toward the close of the sixteenth century in *Discours sur les moyens de bien gouverner et maintenir en paix un royaume, ou autre principaute. Contre Nicolas Machiavel, florentin* by Innocenzo Gentillet in France, The Prince was held responsible for French political corruption and for widespread contribution to any number of political and moral vices. Hostile English interpreters so effectively typified Machiavelli as an amalgam of various evils, which they described with the still-used term "Machiavellian," that fact and fabrication still coexist today. Rarely, until the nineteenth century, did mention of The Prince elicit other than unfounded and largely unexamined repugnance, much less encourage objective scrutiny of its actual issues. As Fredi Chiappelli has aptly summarized: An anomalous seventeenth-century commentator, philosopher Pierre Bayle, found it "strange" that "there are so many people, who believe, that Machiavel teaches princes dangerous politics; for on the contrary princes have taught Machiavel what he has written. Was the treatise, as Bayle suggested, a faithful representation of princely conduct which might justifiably incriminate its subjects but not its chronicler? Or had Machiavelli, in his manner of presentation, devised the volume as a vehicle for his own commentary? Still more calculatedly, had the author superseded description in ably providing a legacy for despots? John Addington Symonds has deemed it "simply a handbook of princecraft, as that art was commonly received in Italy, where the principles of public morality had been translated into terms of material aggrandisement, glory, gain, and greatness. According to Harold J. Laski, The Prince "is a text-book for the house of Medici set out in the terms their own history would make them appreciate and, so set out, that its author might hope for their realization of his insight into the business of government. Macaulay has affirmed that the "judicious and candid mind of Machiavelli shows itself in his luminous, manly, and polished language. Without looking for Italian prose he found it. The Discourses also presents that methodical extrapolation of political theory from historical documentation which is intermittent in The Prince. Max Lerner has observed that "if The Prince is great because it gives us the grammar of power for a government, The Discourses are great because they give us the philosophy of organic unity not in a government but in a state, and the conditions under which alone a culture can survive. For Machiavelli regarded comedy exactly as he conceived history: De Sanctis has remarked that "under the frivolous surface [of Mandragola] are hidden the profoundest complexities of the inner life, and the action is propelled by spiritual forces as inevitable as fate. It is enough to know the characters to guess the end. Masquerading as a doctor, Callimaco advises Nicia to administer a potion of mandrake to Lucrezia to render her fertile, but also warns that the drug will have fatal implications for the first man to have intercourse with her. He slyly suggests to Nicio that a dupe be found for this purpose. Tales of this sort" replete with transparent devices, mistaken identities, and cynical, often anticlerical overtones" were already commonplace throughout Europe by the Middle Ages, though critics have remarked that Machiavelli lent freshness to even this hackneyed material. Sydney Anglo has commended his "clear, crisp repartee" and ability "to nudge our ribs at improprieties and double-meanings," despite characterization that is "rudimentary, haphazard, and inconsistent, with even protagonists going through their motions like automata. For with this slim treatise the author confronted the ramifications of power when its procurement and exercise were notably preemptory" not only in his own country but throughout Europe as well. Some, like Roberto Ridolfi, have endeavored through their studies to dislodge the long-standing perception of Machiavelli as a ruthless character: A Dissection, Gollancz,

Chapter 4 : Machiavelli Discourses Review

The Discourses on Livy (Italian: Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio, literally "Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livy") is a work of political history and philosophy written in the early 16th century (c.) by the Italian writer and political theorist Niccolò Machiavelli, best known as the author of The Prince.

But if here again Machiavelli attempt to remain ever neutral, to cater as much to the the ruler as to the insurgent, maybe more than in The Prince one can now outline first the peculiar ideological order that sustain his worldview Virtus, Necessitas, Prudentia and Fortuna and maybe more importantly, the hushed moral preferences that connect back his writings to his life-long dedication to the republican ideals. Whereas as we said earlier, not all of his ideas appear as daring and original as they did in The Prince, many of the examples make up for this lack by providing the eager reader with as many epic tales of daring and heroic or vicious and manipulative deeds that shaped ancient history: All in all if you have an interest in either early modern mindset, in political theory or in Machiavelli in particular, this is a necessary read. It does genuinely provide a necessary counterpart to his magnum opus and give this peculiar character the moral depth popular memory robbed him from. The recommendations from The Prince are a necessary evil that must be tolerated for a short time. The Discourses are a more substantial analysis of the preferred type of government for the long term. Thank your professor that she gave you more free time that semester for whatever it is you do with your free time, but curse her that she distorted your view of Machiavelli by recommending an extreme abbreviation of a much fuller concept. This is the same crap as when you just read the Grand Inquisitor and thought that you got everything of value out of the Brothers Karamavoz. But Machiavelli wrote more than one book, and his second-most-famous book is this one, "Discourses on Livy. All this he extracts primarily from the extant writings of the historian Livy 64 B. Thus, this book is part history, part mirror of princes, and part advice to those holding power in a republic on how not to get killed. Of course, using Rome as a frame for political thoughts is pretty much the oldest continuous line of political thought going, and "Discourses" is one of many Renaissance and modern books revolving around that theme. Each such writing reflects not only Rome, but its own times. Moreover, "Discourses" is a much longer book that makes much broader claims to offer a complete approach to the good governance of a republic. At at the same time, "Discourses" is also narrower than "Considerations"â€”it is arranged into different chapters, each with a precise focus, usually drawing on a few very specific events from Roman history, often buttressed by more recent examples. History is used both mechanically in the form of examples of happenings, and for its illumination of human nature in the service of understanding how humans act. The cumulative effect, like a wall made up of many bricks, is very impressive, but each building piece is small in scope. It is therefore hard to summarize this book. Much of the book is devoted to carefully categorizing different historical events that have, or can be shown to have, political implications, and then making distinctions among them. What is more, scholars have spent their lives trying to reconcile apparent contradictions between "Discourses and "The Prince," given that the former appears to strongly endorse republics and rejects terror, while the latter exalts one-man rule and implicitly endorses, if not terror, a harsh regime. The translators and interpreters of this edition, the husband and wife team of Julia Conaway Bondanella and Peter Bondanella, take the position that there is little contradiction between the books, claiming that in "The Prince" Machiavelli focuses on the individual who founds a state and "Discourses" focuses on the larger set of people necessary to maintain a state. However that may be, the book is still hard to boil down although the Bondanellas add a lot with their notes and Introduction.

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Chapter 5 : Niccolo Machiavelli Biography

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The famous fifteenth and sixteenth century Italian political philosopher Niccolo Machiavelli is widely regarded to have founded the field of political science. His best known work is *The Prince*, wherein Machiavelli advises princes of principalities how to rule. However, in the *Discourses*, Machiavelli is focused on the structure, nature and evolution of republics. It is much longer than *The Prince* and covers nearly all the major subjects of political science. The book purports to be a commentary on works of Roman historian Titus Livius known as *Livy*, specifically those books which cover the history of the Roman Empire between the eighth and third centuries B. The *Discourses* is an extensive work and is divided into three volumes with different, though related, subject matters. The first book concerns the structure of a republic, discusses warfare with respect to republics and analyzes the nature of individual leadership in the republic. In the first book, Machiavelli affirms the ancient Greek view that all political societies decay systematically into their vicious counterparts, monarchies into tyrannies, democracies into anarchy, and so on. Aristotle argued that the problem could be counteracted by mixing the different forms of government. Machiavelli agrees with Aristotle only in principle, though not with his arguments. Machiavelli conceives of the task of a political order to deal with the natural flux of the social order. Republics are intended to be lively cultures that preserve liberty and use liberty or promote the general welfare. But flux naturally gives rise to situations that threaten the integrity of republics, such as dissension, conspiracy, war, religious change, cultural change, natural disasters and the like, which inevitably lead to degeneration. The second book concerns the growth of the Roman Empire, which Machiavelli believes was essential to the flourishing of Roman political order. Strong armies must always be preserved. Oddly, Machiavelli not only appeals to Roman practice but also to Roman military tactics and technology despite advances, for example, defending the use of infantry over artillery. Book three draws eternal truths from the example of the great men of the Roman Empire. Virtuous and great leaders have a crucial function in maintaining a flourishing society. They govern the people but also have the ability to incite them to virtue and great works, not only as citizens, but as warriors. Both forms of virtue are necessary to prevent republics from being destroyed from without and decaying from within. Machiavelli expresses moderate trust in the people, often arguing that the people are wiser than princes, though leadership is required in cases of danger. This section contains words approx.

Chapter 6 : Discourses on Livy: Contents

Machivael's [sic] discourses upon the first decade of T. Livius, translated out of the Italian. To which is added his Prince. With some marginal animadversions noting and taxing his errors.

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Machiavelli, Niccolo. & Dacres, Edward. , Machivel's discourses upon the first decade of T. Livius [microform] / translated out of the Italian ; to which is added his Prince ; with some marginal animadversions noting and taxing his errors, by E.D Printed by Tho.

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