

Impact of Machiavellian thought on International Politics

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Abstract

Machiavelli a realist thinker who wrote books like 'The Prince', 'Discourses', 'History of Florence'. He gave many suggestions to the Prince. His main objective was to protect Italy from Internal bickering as well as external onslaught. But his ideas have impact over international politics. In the present article I have tried to analyse his thoughts and its impact over world politics.

Machiavelli a medieval thinker who took politics in its real form. In other words he was a realist. In his book 'The Prince' he clearly talked about realism. Realism is a practical frame work of thinking. Machiavelli introduced this thought to protect the Italy from the external enemies as well as internal enemies. His thoughts came in the form of advice to king of that time. Though his thoughts were aimed to protect Italy from onslaught but these thoughts were not limited to Italy only. These thoughts have wider implication for nation, nationality and International politics. Here we limit ourselves about Machiavelli's thought impact on International politics.

Machiavelli's thought that human being is selfish:-

Its impact on International politics is huge. When we analyse world history we find the echo of Machiavellian thought. If we go through the history of colonial powers like Britain, Spain, Portugal, France we reach to the conclusion that human being is nasty. What Britishers did to Indians was an unending saga of grief, sorrow and exploitation. First impact was political Britishers annexed the power from Indian rulers. They employed the doctrine of lapse. This doctrine of lapse led to the annexation of many riyasat. Jhansi was one of them. In their bid to annex Indian territory Britishers exploited Indian masses.

On economic side when Britisher snatched India from Mughals the total contribution of India to the world GDP was 24% to 26% When Britishers left India the Indian contribution reduced to 3%. Britishers also employed their divisive tools to divide society. They divided society on the basis of religion. They created narrative to divide the society on the basis of caste. Herbert Rissley the census commissioner was the first who made the caste permanent in India. Britishers also tried to break the economic and educational framework of Indian society.

Macaulay broke the gurukuls who were 90000 in number and introduced new education policy. The only objective of the education policy was to discourage Indian enterprunural skills and encourage more and more people for government jobs. These all manouvering was to make Britain powerful and have their say in World politics. It also confirms the thought of Machiavilli that human being is nasty and easily forgets the loss of his father then the loss of money.

Machiavellian thought that king primary duty is to safeguard the interests of its citizens and moral principles are not important. We analyze world politics we found the echo of Machiavellian principle. Take up the history of First World War, we find six main reasons:-

European expansionism -

European countries effort to expand its empire known as imperialism was the first main reason of first world war. Britishers expanded their boundries. French followed them, result of all this was increased tension among the countries of the world. Countries who made their colonies took recourse to coercion. They also exploited resources of their colonies for the benefit of their country population. As Britain and France were amassing wealth tension rose between other countries like Germany, Austria and Hungry. It led to the formation of allied power and axis power.

Rise of Serbian nationalism:-

Serbian people realized that their country was exploited by the Austria and Hungry. They had their grievances against Ottoman empire. These two examples in the past underlined the above thought of Machiavelli.

Now look at the reasons of the second world war.

Second World War resulted because of Treaty of Versailles, economic crisis, role of Hitler and Nazi party and Germany's Rearmament. Treaty of Versailles was the major reason behind the world war IInd. It also depicted the selfish behavior of human being as concluded by Machiavelli. Victors in order to extract maximum benefits from Germany and paralyse Germany for future imposed harsh terms over Germany. Greed and aim to benefit maximum from the treaty victors removed saar an area rich in coal from German authority, Industrial area of Germany was given to Poland. Germany was forced to pay France and Belgium. Even German army was refrained from building tanks, aircrafts & submarines. Germans took the settlement as dishonour to them. Here Machiavelli's thought again gained ground that human

being cannot forget the economic loss. Flaring up the emotions of dishonor Hitler ignited Germans for revenge. Hitler also promised to make Germany great again. Coupled with dishonor Hitler attempted to fulfill the economic needs of Germans. Nazi party in the leadership of Hitler offered a dream to the people of Germany for a new living space (Lebensraum), dynamic economy and strong army. In the above discourse we identify Machiavellian thought that to upgrade the situation of the common men kings can undertake any route ignoring the moral principles.

Now look at the present situation of the world politics:-

Look at middle east, Israel bombed Gaza killing thousands of innocent people. Even it killed number of prominent terrorist in other countries. World raised questions over the killing but Israel reflected all the questions and said as per Machiavellian thought that it is free to safeguard the interests of citizens.

In present scenario after Trump assumed the Presidency he is talking about America first. For the purpose Trump is ensuing policy like sending illegal immigrants back to their countries. Talking about peace in middle east and Ukraine. His plea is that in this war billions of dollar were wasted at the cost of American citizens. He is threatening to impose tariffs in the name of protecting American people and business.

In the context of India present dispensation is doing all the actions for preserving the interests of India. Example is profound. India refused to bow before American pressure where India did not refuse to buy oil from Russia. Reason being that it is in the interest of Indian people and the duty of king is to protect the interests of its citizens rather than protecting moral principles.

Machiavellian thought that when other tools fail religion works

Also have its impact over International politics. Religion influences International politics in three ways. Firstly religious views shape the decisions of policy makers. Secondly policies of any government is praised or criticized on the basis of religion internally or Internationally. Thirdly small issues of religious nature turns into International issue which ultimately leads to war. Religious world view of different countries shapes their policy in Arab-Israel War in the past as well as present. Scholars like Anthony Smith trace the origin of ideologies like nationalism to religion. Leaders of Arab and Israel have to shape their policies based on religion. Pakistan and Bangladesh in Asia frame their policies based on religion. When Gulf war took place Egypt and Saudi Arab due to realist concern sided with United States of

America. This led to heavy criticism among the Islamic world. Point of criticism was that how Islamic Countries can side with non Islamic power secondly how army of non Islamic countries can walk on the holy land of believers. Samuel Huntington when talked about clash of civilization in his celebrated book *Clash of civilizations* his arguments were woven around the religion. He talked about three major civilizations, like civilization based on Hinduism, based on Islam, and thirdly based on Christianity. He said that religion is linked to identity and ultimately it influences International politics.

Another example of how religion impacts International politics is indicated by the recognition and respect Pope gets when he visits any country. China's reaction on Dalailama visit to various countries reflects the importance of religion impacting International politics.

Religion is not limited to boundaries. It transcends boundaries. Religious issues are fanning fundamentalist movements. Fundamentalist movements are turning into terrorism. World tower attack carried out by Islamic fundamentalists in year 2001 underlined the influence of religion in shaping International politics. Terror attacks carried out in India, France, Germany, Nigeria forced the World leaders to reshape their policies. Now any International conference is not taking place which is not discussing Islamic terrorism. Even countries like Iran and Afghanistan are supporting terrorists in Lebanon and sheltered Osama bin laden. USA & Western countries shape their policies keeping these points into consideration.

Conclusion-

After analyzing Machiavelli's thoughts and International issues it is evident that Philosopher thoughts in 'The Prince' and Discourses are not limited to the suggestions to king but his thoughts have greater impact over International politics. Hans. J. Morgenthau realist principles about International Politics is clearly the expansion of Machiavelli's thought.

References:

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