SEMESTER TWO
UNIT FOUR
TOPIC: MACHIAVELLI

Machiavelli was perhaps the most universally reprobated figure in the history of political literature. His precepts are universally disavowed in principle, but regularly followed in practice.

CHILD OF HIS TIMES

- The brilliant Florentine was truly a child of his times. The era was that of the strong man in both secular and ecclesiastical politics.
- He was interested in the unification of the Peninsula and took France and Spain as his example.
- He conceived of Italian society and politics as illustrative of institutional decay and prey to corruption and moral degradation.

METHODOLOGY

- He advocated the empirical or historical method of investigation.
- It was different from the theological and authoritarian method which had characterized the medieval thought.
- His reference was restricted to histories of Greece and Rome.
- However, his method was historical more in appearance than in reality as he did not supplement by comparisons.

HUMAN NATURE

- His views on human nature made him responsible for establishing the relationship between politics and psychology.
- Aristotle's views on social nature of man is his basis but his views are thoroughly Hobbesian.

THE PRINCE

In 'The Prince' he describes man as:

- Ungrateful
- Fickle
- Deceitful
- Cowardly
- Avaricious
- Calculative
- Egoistic
- Aggressive
ADVICE TO PRINCE

- He advised the ruler to construct his policies on the assumption that men are bad so he should aim to be feared rather than loved.
- Property and life are universal desires so governments should aim at security of these two
- As man judges by appearances crafty rulers should take advantage of it.
- The ruler should depend on his own judgment and never trust his counsellors.

RELIGION AND MORALITY

- Initiated the process of completely and deliberately separating politics from ethics and religion.
- This was practically involved in works of Aristotle but was not essential in his system.
- His concern was limited to the attainment and maintenance of power. In this he was a forerunner of Marx.
- He was not immoral but unmoral or amoral.
- In 'Discourses' he held that religion made men feeble and an easy prey to evil minded men.

STATE

- His interest was in the practical state and his pragmatism lead him 'to get back to the actual truth of things'.
- He repudiated the idea that the State is a part of the Divine order and could be understood only in the light of the Divine plan.
- This idea was later taken up by Marx on the basis of economic forces.
- He makes materialistic individualism the explanation of the love of independence and self-government.
- People desire Republican government as it gives a chance of material gain to a majority of the people

SOVEREIGNTY

- His idea of sovereignty and corresponding idea of the territorial national-state is an important contribution of Machiavelli according to Jones.
- His idea of a central authority which is supreme over other institutions was significant in separating ancient from modern theory.

NATIONAL STATE

- He became the forerunner of the theory of national state when he laid down that a state should expand up to the limits of ethnic homogeneity.
• He did not use the term of nationality in the modern sense but indicated that common traditions, language and legal system were forces which made a state united against other states.
• He advocated the expansionist state like the Roman' expansionism and unlike that of Greek city state.

CONCLUSION
• He was an extreme individualist
• He was pragmatic devoted to classical antiquity.
• He believed in hedonistic morality
• He was a sincere patriot.
• He was the 'Father of Modern Political Theory' who introduced new possibilities in political philosophy.
• He was the first exponent of 'power politics'

CRITICS
• Dr. Murray: 'Machiavelli was clear-sighted, not far-sighted.'
• C J Fox: 'What is morally wrong can never be politically right.'
• His greatest weakness was the acceptance