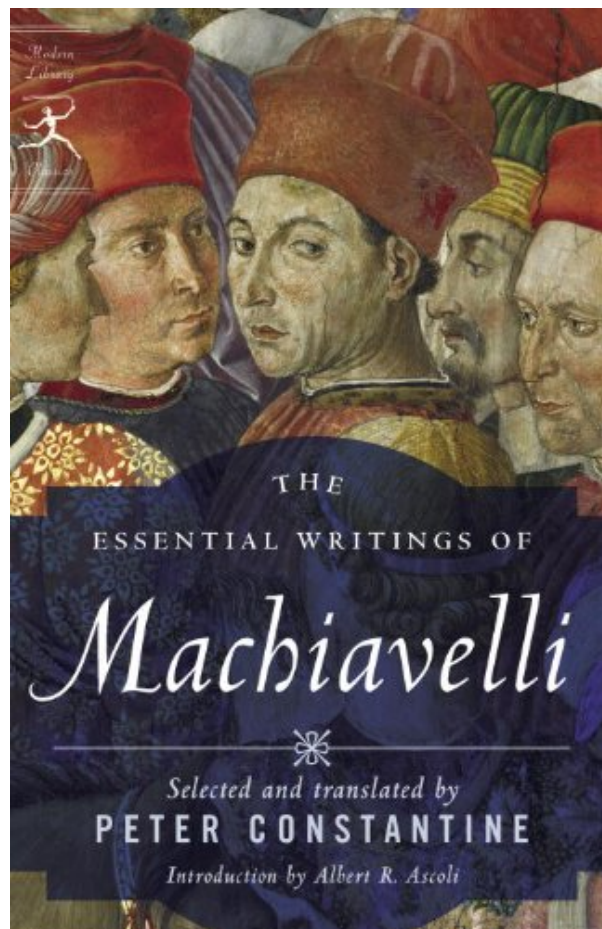
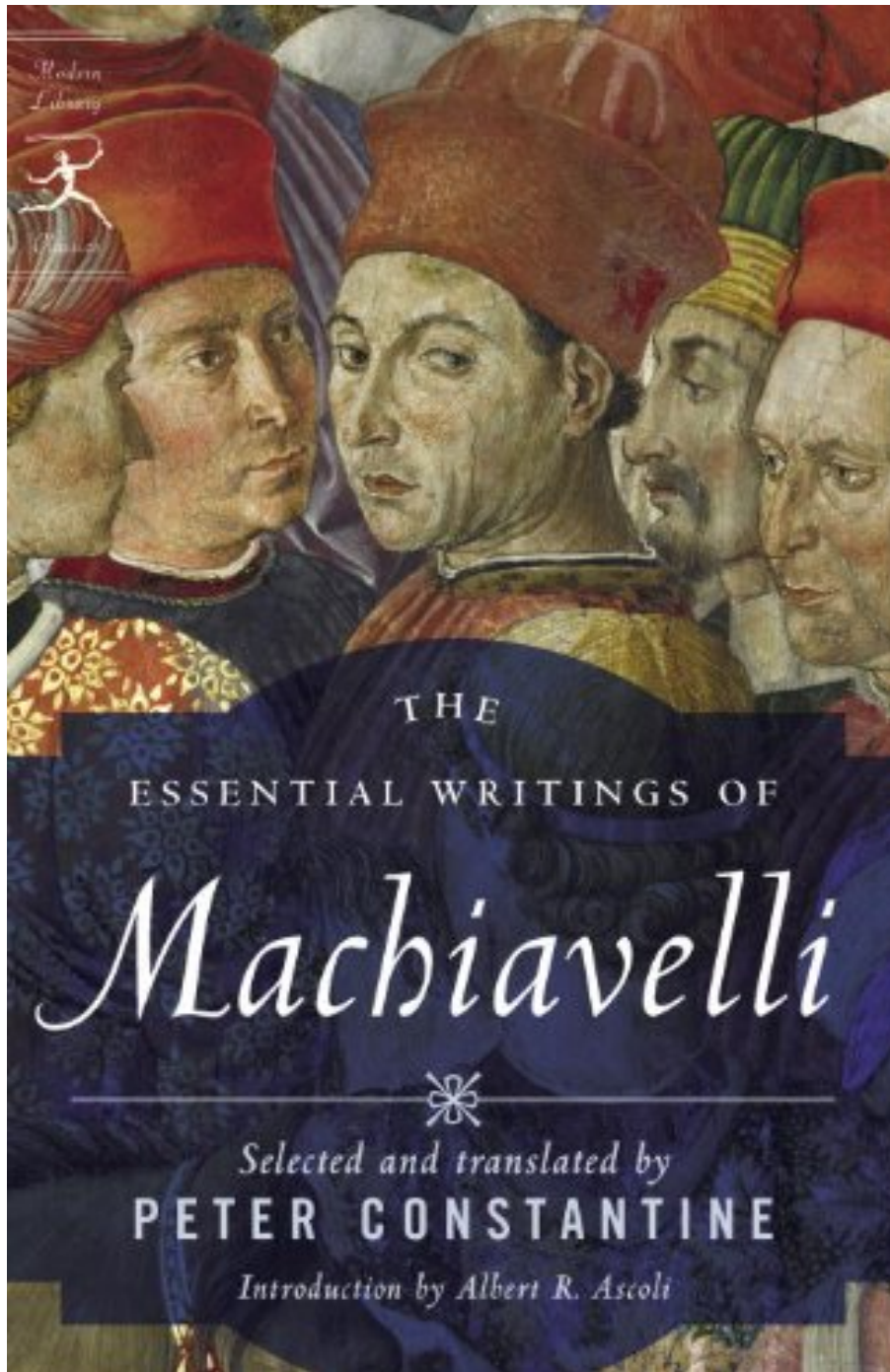


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## FINALIST--2008 PEN TRANSLATION PRIZE

In *The Essential Writings of Machiavelli*, Peter Constantine has assembled a comprehensive collection that shows the true depth and breadth of a great Renaissance thinker. Refreshingly accessible, these superb new translations are faithful to Machiavelli's original, beautifully crafted writings.

The volume features essays that appear in English for the first time, such as "A Caution to the Medici" and "The Persecution of Africa." Also included are complete versions of the political treatise, *The Prince*, the comic satire *The Mandrake*, *The Life of Castruccio Castracani*, and the classic story "Belfagor", along with selections from *The Discourses*, *The Art of War*, and *Florentine Histories*. Augmented with useful features--vital and concise annotations and cross-references--this unique compendium is certain to become the standard one-volume reference to this influential, versatile, and ever timely writer.

"Machiavelli's stress on political necessity rather than moral perfection helped inspire the Renaissance by renewing links with Thucydides and other classical thinkers. This new collection provides deeper insight into Machiavelli's personality as a writer, thus broadening our understanding of him."

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A Worthy Political Scientist

By Retired Reader

This is an excellent edition of the works of Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527 CE) published by Modern Library in 2007. It includes not only a complete translation of his most famous work, "The Prince", but large sections of his less famous "Discourses" and "Florentine Histories." It also provides a good selection of his essays and papers. The quality of the translation work appears quite good and done with a good deal of care. The notes provided are quite helpful as well.

Machiavelli is a name that some consider synonymous with guile, cynicism, and tyranny. In point of fact he was a romantic who was an admirer of the early Roman Republic. He was a supporter of republican principles and a Florentine patriot his entire life. After Lorenzo de Medici overthrew the Florentine Republic in 1513 (CE), he exiled Machiavelli to his estates outside of Florence. Such was Machiavelli's love for his city that he was willing to ignore his republican principals (at least temporarily) and join the Medici administration of the city. "The Prince" his most famous work and the principal source of his reputation as a cynic and ruthless politician was written to ingratiate him with Lorenzo.

Now before adding 'hypocrite' to the other characterizations of Machiavelli, one should understand that the book contained the only gift that he could afford to offer Lorenzo, his knowledge based on his analysis of history. Machiavelli was a student of the history of Roman Republic and Empire. He was also a close observer of human behavior both in the past and in his contemporary Renaissance Italy. If his analysis of history and motivation appears cynical, it was also in tune with his times and reflected contemporary attitudes. His interpretation of events and analysis of behavior represent a serious and honest effort to understand a world that was changing even as he wrote this unique book.

In the "Discourses" and his "Art of War" Machiavelli reveals his true republican feelings and distress at the use of Italy as a battle ground by the Holy Roman Empire, France, the Pope, and various home grown Italian tyrants. The other works presented in this edition show him to be a thoughtful and patriotic man.

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The first "Realpolitik" synthesist/expositor

By Daniel Nelson

I firmly believe that most of Machiavelli's works were written with the goal of bettering the position of his beloved Florence in the horribly complex political and cultural milieu in which he was forced to operate, and knew extremely well from his diplomacy on behalf of Florence. Europe was changing more than it ever had. The new world was opening up. The Renaissance was in its infancy, but starting to gather momentum.

What he did was combine the works of Livy with his own observations, which resulted in The Prince. I believe The Prince was written in hopes of obtaining some sort of position with the Medici, and thereby have some sort of influence, even if only minimal, on the diplomatic and political conduct of Florence, in hopes of influencing things to her benefit.

He was the first to dispassionately list the real, sometimes loathsome things even a good ruler was at times forced to resort to in order to secure long term benefit to his political entity. He also said it was better to have a government that was not always forced to resort to these things by dint of its citizens being satisfied with their ruler. A republic was the most stable in his mind.

Machiavelli was the first real political theorist, and if a wise ruler had practiced some of what Machiavelli had concluded, maybe Italy and Florence might not have had the subsequent three hundred years or so of political turmoil and domination by others.

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**Introduction to Machiavelli**

By Amazon Customer

This is not a perfect coverage for all his writings. However, his essential writings were carefully selected by the editors. If you have interests in renaissance politics, this book would be a good introduction. The formatting and footnotes are excellent.

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cannot take strong measures against them, as you are indebted to them. Even with the most powerful army, if you want to invade a state, you need the support of the people. It was for these reasons that King Louis XII of France was quick to occupy Milan, and just as quick to lose it. Duke Ludovico's own forces were enough to win Milan back the first time, because the same masses that had opened the gates for Louis, finding themselves misled in their hopes for a better future, could not endure the new prince's offenses.<sup>5</sup>

It is a fact that once a prince acquires a rebellious state for the second time, it also proves harder to lose that state a second time.<sup>6</sup> This is because the prince who seizes the opportunity of the rebellion has fewer scruples about securing his position by punishing offenders, flushing out suspects, and strengthening all the places where he is weakest. In this sense, it was enough for a Duke Ludovico to make a little noise along the borders for Louis XII to lose Milan the first time. But for him to lose Milan a second time the whole world had to unite against him, defeat his army, and chase it out of Italy.<sup>7</sup> This followed from the causes I have already laid out. Nonetheless, both the first and second time, Milan was taken from him.

The general reasons for the first loss have been discussed. It now remains to discuss the second, and to see what recourse someone in Louis's position could have taken to maintain himself more securely in his new acquisition. I must stress that the states a prince acquires and adds to his own are either of the same country and language, or are not. If they are it is much easier to retain them, particularly if they are not used to freedom. To hold them securely, it is enough to extinguish the line of the previous prince who ruled them. As for the rest, if the new acquisition's former state of affairs is kept and there is no difference in customs, men will live quite peacefully, as we have seen in Burgundy, Brittany, Gascony, and Normandy, which for a long time now have all belonged to France. Although there is some difference in language, their customs are similar, and their people get along with one another quite easily. He who acquires such states and wishes to retain them has to make sure of two things: that the bloodline of their former princes is extinguished, and that their laws and taxes remain the same. This way, the prince's new state merges with the old, quickly becoming a single body.

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