Military Strategy and Adaptation in Machiavelli
and Frederick the Great

An Honors Thesis for the Department of Political Science

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Explanation of Abbreviations and Footnotes:

The following abbreviations are used as shorthand for my primary sources in the in-text citations, as listed below:

1. **A-M**: Anti-Machiavel: Or, an Examination of Machiavel’s Prince. With Notes Historical and Political. Published by Mr. de Voltaire. Translated from the French. (London, 1741).


Chapter I: Introduction

Section I: Machiavelli and Frederick the Great

My thesis will analyze the advancement and synthesis of military political theory and strategy by Machiavelli and Frederick the Great. Both were great innovators for their time, and they offer significant developments in the areas of political theory and military strategy. The two authors may seem disconnected from the outset, as Machiavelli lived between 1469 and 1527 and Frederick lived from 1712 to 1786,¹ suggesting that their writings may have reflected different political situations and motifs. Further, Frederick was an important member of the royal family in Prussia, while Machiavelli was a mere applicant for a position under a Medici prince.² The two were thus quite divided by both time period and position in society, making for different beliefs and ideals, yet the similarities in their works and actions suggest otherwise. Frederick wrote Anti-Machiavel as a prince, a work that Nancy Mitford believes to state “that armed aggression is immoral and honesty the best policy for a ruler.”³ As I will suggest in this work, this statement misses Frederick’s deeper meaning; Frederick used Machiavelli’s ideas to establish his own system of military-political theory. The connection with Machiavelli is thus very present in Frederick’s early work, though it seems at first to reflect an anti-Machiavellian attitude, as expressed by several biographies and works on the two characters.⁴ Thus, the

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⁴ See also Christopher Clark, *Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600-1947*. 

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different backgrounds of the two authors suggest that Machiavelli and Frederick developed opposing types of political theory.\(^5\) Almost immediately, one wonders about the actual connections and developments between the three principal characters, particularly the relationship between Machiavelli and Frederick II. It should come by no surprise, then, that the main thrust of my thesis discusses this connection between the two principle characters, and, ultimately, Frederick’s development of Machiavellian ideas.

Machiavelli’s life saw much less time in the spotlight than did that of Frederick II, with the former being born on May 3\(^{rd}\), 1469 into a family of poorer Tuscan nobility.\(^6\) It seems that his political career lasted between 1498 and 1512, where he held a key position on the Florentine Ministry that functioned as the “Home, Military,” and “Foreign Affairs,” writing dispatches and making diplomatic trips.\(^7\) After he was tortured by his own government for supposed conspiracy, Machiavelli went on to write several books; he was commissioned to write his *History of Florence* in 1519 by Cardinal Medici, eventually dying on June 22\(^{nd}\), 1527.\(^8\) His *Discourses on Livy* and *The Prince* were published posthumously, in 1531 and 1532, respectively. This stands in stark contrast to Frederick, as Machiavelli lived his political career before beginning his writing, the opposite of Frederick. In terms of his writings, *The Prince* and *The Art of War*

\(^5\) The connection becomes further frayed, though, as Frederick’s transition from Crown Prince to King of Prussia after his father’s death affected his completion of the work, leading Frederick to utilize Voltaire to assist in the completion of the work (*Letters of Voltaire and Frederick the Great*, 139-140). As will be shown, though, the extent of Voltaire’s role in the completion of *Anti-Machiavel*, though, is unclear.


function as Machiavelli’s central military treatises, analyzing military strategy, tactics, and theory in Machiavelli’s time as well as for other important military traditions.  

Frederick found himself in a position far different from Machiavelli’s trials and tribulations. After becoming crown prince in 1701 with the ascendancy of his father, Frederick I, to the throne of Prussia, Frederick went about building “a cult of friendship and youth” as well as “a context for all the arts to be displayed” “at Rheinsburg;” here, Frederick was exposed to Machiavelli’s work and character for the first time. Frederick was apparently “filled with indignation” upon reading Machiavelli’s works, telling Voltaire that Machiavelli “should never be entitled to a position reserved solely for those who had performed virtuous deeds or possessed praiseworthy abilities.” Thus Frederick wrote Anti-Machiavel, which analyzes different types of “principalities,” military methods, and the roles of princes, whether militarily or politically, specifically focusing on Italy. Importantly, though, Frederick seemed to have only read The Prince, as Schieder, in his biographic account of Frederick II, comments that Frederick “remained ignorant of Machiavelli’s other works.” Thus, Frederick’s Anti-Machiavel was a

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11 Theodor Schieder, Frederick the Great (London ; New York: Longman, 2000), 75-76.

12 It is unclear whether Frederick heard about or read Machiavelli during this period; the results, however, were the same.


14 [Frederick II, King of Prussia and Voltaire], Anti-Machiavel or, an Examination of Machiavel’s Prince with Notes Historical and Political, 24.

15 Theodor Schieder, Frederick the Great (London ; New York: Longman, 2000), 76.
response to *The Prince*,\(^{16}\) and yet the nature of this connection is the subject of much speculation. Schieder explains the range of possibilities, citing Friedrich Meinecke’s belief in a “dualism between Machiavellianism and anti-Machiavellianism” in Frederick’s thought, while he takes a different stand:

Frederick’s anti-Machiavellism held sway only over the intellectual side of his nature; his Machiavellianism, on the other hand, was an instinctive ability, permanently at odds with the contemporary ideological forces which fascinated him but could not always be allowed to influence his actions.\(^{17}\)

Thus, the discussion of Frederick’s *Anti-Machiavel* inherently involves a conflict of interest with Machiavelli. Indeed, the nature of their relationship forms a cornerstone of my thesis, as my ideas diverge from both Meinecke’s and Schieder’s interpretations, suggesting a strong connection between the two authors in both their writings and experiences.

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\(^{16}\) Schieder suggests that the work was a reaction to Voltaire’s work, *Henriade*, which portrayed Frederick’s “ideal monarch,” “Henry IV of France;” as such, *Anti-Machiavel* functioned as the means of destroying Machiavelli while elevating Henry IV (Schieder, 76).

\(^{17}\) Theodor Schieder, *Frederick the Great* (London ; New York: Longman, 2000), 76.
Section II: Research Questions and Thesis

In this thesis, I answer two main questions: how are the theories of Machiavelli and Frederick the Great on military strategy and political theory related, and what is the relevance of a synthesis of these works? In the first hypothesis, I observe the chain of development between the two authors in their works most concerned with military strategy and theory, Machiavelli’s *The Prince* and Frederick the Great’s *Anti-Machiavel*.¹⁸ Frederick’s work is a direct response to Machiavelli’s *Prince*. The first hypothesis is that these connections are ample and strong enough to create a synthesis of the two authors and their military-political theories. To do this, I will compare and contrast the different themes that these two philosophers and leaders develop, emphasizing those ideas that create a unique picture of political theory. Thus my project will involve analyzing the works of both authors comparatively, focusing on Machiavelli’s influence on the works of Frederick the Great.

In this work, I argue that Frederick the Great was in fact agreeing with Machiavelli’s ideas in *The Prince* in Frederick’s *Anti-Machiavel*, specifically in the area of military-political strategy. Although Frederick the Great insists that he is writing a counter-argument to Machiavelli’s political theory, he is in fact adapting many of Machiavelli’s ideas from the 15th century to the state of affairs 18th century Europe. It seems very likely that Frederick wished to upgrade many of Machiavelli’s ideas to follow an enlightened, more modern track, observing the

¹⁸ As has been shown through Schieder’s work, Machiavelli’s *Art of War*, which would seem to better address topics of military political theory, was not analyzed by Frederick II, so a study examining the intellectual connections between the two authors must focus on *The Prince* in combination with *Anti-Machiavel*, rather than *Art of War*.
developing nature of European warfare as it was in the 1700s.\textsuperscript{19} Thus, Frederick’s work is a further development of Machiavelli’s in \textit{The Prince}, with Frederick using \textit{Anti-Machiavel} to project Machiavelli’s idea onto the political and military conditions of 18\textsuperscript{th} century Europe. Frederick makes these strategies and beliefs even more obvious through his military actions, making strategic decisions that very much reflect his Machiavellian thought.

The role of deception in these writings is essential, given the nature of Frederick’s \textit{Anti-Machiavel}; this work is superficially aimed at tearing down Machiavelli’s ideas, despite its core support of Machiavelli. Both Frederick and Machiavelli rely on interpretations of their works that require a certain level of understanding and textual comprehension. Without the proper level of understanding and intuition, though, it is very easy for one to slip into a superficial reading of these texts, thus muddying the subtle, deeper meanings and creating false impressions about the actual military and political ideas and strategies demonstrated by the two authors.\textsuperscript{20}

In order to demonstrate this development in Frederick’s works, I analyze three key examples and elements of the military strategy of both. These are the issues of fortune and deception, the focus on troops in military strategy, and the general benefit of warfare and victory on the battlefield. By examining these three key areas, the connections and important, beneficial relationship between Frederick’s and Machiavelli’s works will become far more obvious, giving the reader an opportunity to understand Machiavelli’s and Frederick’s writings below the deceptive surface.

\textsuperscript{19} As this work explains, European warfare was seeing transitions in the size of military forces and types of engagements during Frederick’s life.

\textsuperscript{20} Herein lies the primary purpose of the following methodology section.
This project is most relevant and useful because it analyzes the connection between two important world actors, one an essential military leader and one a key political theorist, in a way that has not been done before. A comparative study to this end does not yet exist in the scholarship of political theory, nor do any works examine the military aspects of the two author’s political theories in relation to each other. Thus, my research reflects a lack of scholastic depth on this topic. Although many sources refer to the connection between Frederick the Great and Machiavelli, usually the connection only goes as far as a vague statement about the similar ideas of both authors, despite the title of Frederick’s work (Anti-Machiavel).\(^{21}\) In-depth research on this topic has been rarely done, with the exception of Evrigenis and Somos’ work briefly looking at the connections between the two.\(^{22}\) Although Schieder also brings out his theory of anti-Machiavellian Machiavellism combined with anti-Machiavellism,\(^{23}\) I examine Frederick as an individual wholly connected Machiavellism, using anti-Machiavellism as a means of deception. My own ideas seek to go far further through analysis of the texts of the three authors and, I would argue, give a more in-depth and complete explanation for the connections between Frederick and Machiavelli. Beyond this, my thesis demonstrates important contemporary importance in its ability to predict and explain military and foreign relations decisions in the modern and post-modern ages, as the three main subjects that I analyze continue to play an important role in military policy.


In this project, I use primary sources from Frederick II and Machiavelli and relevant secondary sources. Most important, I analyze the two largest contributions by each author to the military-political theory tradition: Machiavelli’s *The Prince* and Frederick the Great’s *Anti-Machiavel*. As has been shown above, the only known connection between Frederick and Machiavelli is *The Prince* and Frederick’s response to *the Prince*, *Anti-Machiavel*. Thus, logically, these two works are most significant in a comparative study of the two authors. I also analyze other works by these authors, such as Machiavelli’s *The Art of War*, and related or comparative works, histories, and biographies.

Thus, my thesis analyzes the related and connected military theories of Machiavelli and Frederick the Great in relation to strategy and tactics as well as political theory more generally, showing the development and adaptation of Machiavelli’s ideas for Frederick’s time. This thesis draws key theoretical connections between the two political and military theorists, including fortune and deception, the focus on troops in military strategy, and the general benefit of warfare, creating a cohesive body of strategy and military theory.

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24 Although one might argue that Machiavelli’s *The Art of War* offers more in the field of military and political theory, there is no record or source that shows that Frederick II read or commented on *Art of War*. Thus, *The Prince* remains as Machiavelli’s most relevant work for this study.
Chapter II: Methodology

Section I: General Methodology

From the outset, an examination of the works of Frederick the Great and Machiavelli would seem rather simple and straightforward, as Frederick II wrote a direct response to Machiavelli’s *Prince*. With further research, however, one will find that such an assumption is erroneous, as this process involves sifting through the heavily-layered works of both authors, understanding the subtle and surface differences in the meaning of the texts, and seeing beyond Frederick’s allegedly anti-Machiavellian title. Beyond this, Machiavelli *The Prince* should be analyzed side-by-side with Frederick’s *Anti-Machiavel*. Further, Frederick’s military actions figure into the equation, as they could either support or dispute his deeper claims in *Anti-Machiavel*. After extensive research, one finds that such action relates in a key fashion to the concept of superficial and deep meaning in these works, as Frederick’s actions demonstrate some of his subtler intentions in his writings.

The first problem that one discovers in understanding these works is the issue of translation. Frederick II wrote in French,\(^{25}\) while Machiavelli wrote in Italian; this creates a fundamental language gap, with English translations further muddying the gap. If this were not enough, a plethora of translations exist for these works. In this study, I have tried to use the most up-to-date versions of these texts, as well as relying on more renowned translations, such as Harvey Mansfield’s translation of *The Prince*. This translation issue is most acute in *Anti-Machiavel*, which combines a translation of *The Prince* by Amelot de La Houssaye, a writer who

\(^{25}\) \(A\cdot M\), ii.
was known to include a Tacitean twist and added Tacitus-based footnotes to his works with a supposed refutation of Machiavelli’s works under the combined authorship of Frederick II and Voltaire. This creates several problems, the first being the use and understanding of La Houssaye’s translation. Since his work used a Tacitean bent, understanding Machiavelli’s The Prince without outside interference is quite difficult. Thus, multiple readings of The Prince were necessary to prevent a Tacitean-skewed understanding from skewing my findings against Machiavelli’s true wording. Further, Frederick makes this issue doubly important, as it would seem that he himself used La Houssaye’s translation to understand Machiavelli’s work; thus, Frederick’s work may be marred by La Houssaye-created misunderstandings of Machiavelli’s text. On top of this, this work has been translated into “from the French” into English

Another problem in methodology arises in one’s understanding of the texts. Both authors write in styles that reflect their eras, both requiring a mode of concealment for their actual thoughts; Machiavelli wrote in a mode to deceive the Papal censors and others, while Frederick certainly needed to conceal his political designs from surrounding rulers. Thus, the strong reader’s job is to go through these ideas with a fine-toothed comb, attempting to find the deeper meaning behind the deceptions and confusing ideas that these authors throw out. For example, Frederick often begins his arguments that support Machiavelli by blatantly attacking a certain idea, yet later Frederick will subtly support a different idea or a subtle variation of The Prince.


27 A-M, ii.

28 This is most obvious in Machiavelli’s description of history and hunting, where Frederick goes on a tirade against hunting, while supporting history. A-M, 156-158.
Schieder brings out this concept in his biography of Frederick the Great, stating that “(b)ehind the sparkling, rhetorical condemnation of Machiavelli’s corrupt and criminal advice lie certain qualifications and reservations which form the basis of a highly realistic and concrete plan of government.” Indeed, this issue plays a key role throughout my work, as deception plays a key role for Machiavelli and Frederick. Machiavelli uses messages that can be utilized at all levels of society, though they seem to focus on the ruler, at least in *The Prince*. At issue, though, is Machiavelli’s maintaining his own position at a time of great upheaval and literary censorship. Thus, he is limited to coding his actual meanings into pandering to rulers and passages meant to confuse all but the most perceptive of readers. Thus, multiple readings of his works and slow analysis is necessary to truly understand Machiavelli’s ideas. Frederick’s works reflect similar issues, as Frederick, an aspiring prince during the writing of the *Anti-Machiavel*, wrote for an audience of rulers and elites sensitive to radical messages. Thus, as I argue in this work (and has been put forward by authors such as Evrigenis and Somos in *Wrestling with Machiavelli*), Frederick hides his own arguments focused on ruler and state interest in the surface language of Anti-Machiavellian idealism. Indeed, such ideas are supported by Frederick’s actual military strategy, which saw a series of surprise offenses that can be only described as pursuing state interest. As a writer, I also must look at the exact wording to understand Frederick’s real, in-depth themes, beyond the mask of humanist innocence that he seems to project to the untrained observer.


30 Frederick, Prince Royal of Prussia to Voltaire, January 6th, 1740, *Letters of Voltaire and Frederick the Great*, trans. Richard Aldington, The Broadway Library of Eighteenth-Century French Literature (London: Routledge, 1927), 131. Frederick’s position during the writing of *Anti-Machiavel* as a prince or king is debatable, given the argument in Methodology II on the authorship of the work.
This work benefits methodologically from previous studies of commentaries on Machiavelli’s works, though these arguments themselves have their own problems. Evrigenis and Somos, in their article *Wrestling with Machiavelli*, provide a good examination of Machiavellian commentary, emphasizing the hidden messages of commentators. Jacob Soll brings up a different issue in *Publishing the Prince*, where the author shows that Frederick and Voltaire’s political criticism of Machiavelli accidentally supported the author’s ideas. Soll, Evrigenis and Somos’ works, however, lack the detailed textual commentary to completely explain the connections between Machiavelli and Frederick, as I do in this work. In *Wrestling with Machiavelli*, this occurs because the authors employ several political critiques in a relatively short article, while *Publishing the Prince* includes many other important ideas about the history of political critiquing. Last, Schieder explores the entirety of Frederick’s life and exploits in his biography, rather than focusing on Frederick political theory and its relation to Frederick’s actions. This created a difficult issue for me, as my work requires the textual analysis to back up my arguments showing the distortion between different layers (or understandings) of these works and demonstrating the true, in-depth meanings that both Frederick II and Machiavelli create.

Thus, this topic involves many challenges, not the least of which is the essential understanding of the primary texts of Machiavelli and Frederick the Great. As I have shown, both authors use a great deal of deception throughout their works, and understanding their hidden, deeper meanings is the principal challenge facing any scholar on this subject.

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The Layout of Frederick II and Voltaire's
Anti-Machiavel (Commentary Form)

2 EXAMINATION of

has been long in Possession; or new. The
new are either wholly so, as the Dutchy of
Milan was to Francis Sforza; or they are
annexed, as Members, to the hereditary States
of the Prince who acquires them, as the King-
dom of Naples is to the King of Spain. Domi-
nions thus acquired, are accustomed either to
be subject to a Prince, or to be free; and are
acquired either by foreign Arms, or one's
own, either by Fortune or Valour.

OBSERVATIONS.

If a Man would reason well upon any Subject,
he must begin with examining thoroughly the Na-
ture of it; he must go back to the very Source
and Rife of Things, in order to lay down the first
Principles of them, with as much Certainty as pos-
possible; it will then be an easy matter to trace out
their Progress, and all the Consequences that may
follow. Instead of beginning with an Account of
the different Sorts of Dominion, Machiavel ought,
methinks,

Agricola. Rerum a principio Reges labores: Libratura
C. Marius & L. Sulla Liber-
tatem in dominationem verte-
num. Hist. 2. Haec facile
Libertas et Domininfectatur.
Hist. 4. Indeed every Prin-
cipality is not a Republic;
but every Republic is a
Principality: Il serenissimo
Principe fa pater, lays the
Republic of Venice in its
Edicts.
b'Tis in this Sense that
Galba said to Piso, In genti-
bus, qua regitantur, certa do-
1. And Mauritius to Vespas-
ian: Non contra Caii sed
Claudii, vel Neronis, funda-
tam lungo imperio dominum
surgimus. Hist. 2.

Anti-Machiavel: Or, an Examination of Machiavel's Prince. With Notes Historical and Political.
Published by Mr. de Voltaire. Translated from the French. London, 1741.
http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupNa-
me=mлин_juфts&tabID=T001&docId=CW3308171082&type=multipage&contentSet=EC-
COArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE.
Section II: Voltaire’s Influence and the True Nature of Anti-Machiavel

Another important set of issues in analyzing this topic revolves around the role of Voltaire and his influence on the writing of Anti-Machiavel. Voltaire’s influence is unclear, and sources suggest that Voltaire had different effects on Anti-Machiavel, varying from joint authorship to mere editorial status. Digging further into this issue, the underlying stormy relationship between the two authors may prove to be a problem for understanding Anti-Machiavel, as does Machiavelli’s shifting role from prince to king.

In terms of direct textual influence, the connection between Frederick and Voltaire is also problematic, at best. What separates the ideas of the two theorists? Given Frederick’s superior talents in politics and his domination of their political relationship in 1746,\textsuperscript{32} it seems safe to assume that the majority of the work reflects Frederick’s ideas. Yet, Voltaire still has some role to play.\textsuperscript{33} As suggested by the diplomatic correspondences and other sources on the two authors, three clear-cut options can explain their possible authorship of Anti-Machiavel, since no conclusive evidence exists to resolve this confusion. The first option is the most clear cut: Frederick writes Anti-Machiavel, and Voltaire acts simply as his editor. This seems to be true, given a surface reading of the correspondences between the two authors, where Frederick

\textsuperscript{32} Theodor Schieder, Frederick the Great (London ; New York: Longman, 2000), 255-257.

\textsuperscript{33} Schieder suggests Voltaire’s elevated role, as Voltaire allegedly “remov(ed) those sections of the manuscript he found objectionable, and those which contained the last traces of Machiavelli’s ideas, such as the concept of a just war” (Schieder, 252). Since this edition of Frederick’s work contains references to just war, as seen below, Schieder’s conclusion seems debatable, perhaps reflecting an edition of Anti-Machiavel that did not stand the test of time.
describes Voltaire as “my dear editor.””34 Yet Frederick is still vague in his letters, later saying that “I shall be a thousand times obliged to you for the edition of the completed Machiavelli.”35 This leaves Voltaire’s role unclear; is he the editor or a coauthor? This brings up the second possible authorship path, where Frederick writes the first edition of the work and Voltaire makes significant editorial changes. This angle is backed by Voltaire’s biography, which suggests that Voltaire’s edition of Frederick’s work “contained so much material introduced by Voltaire that Frederick claimed not to recognise it.”36 This possibility would have significant consequences for any analysis of Anti-Machiavel, as Voltaire’s influence would be much more pronounced. A third option exists as an uncomfortable medium between the two above; Frederick writes the work, while Voltaire makes limited editorial comments, yet he still has some effect on the content of the work. The exact amount of material that Voltaire added, however, is next to impossible to discover, as Anti-Machavieel is not particularly choppy or alternating, suggesting that any additions by Voltaire were seamlessly added to Frederick’s extant commentary.

All three of these options, however, play into two key issues that the authors discuss, Frederick’s consistency (in his actions and writing) and deception. The first conflict begins when Voltaire insults Frederick, insinuating that Frederick is more interested in the state and military action than on his writing and political theorizing. Voltaire suggest that Frederick prefers rulership, being “happier in all this clamour of glory than…in the pleasant solitude of

34 Frederick II, King of Prussia to Voltaire, August 2nd, 1740, Letters of Voltaire and Frederick the Great, 140.

35 Frederick II, King of Prussia to Voltaire, October 26th, 1740, Letters of Voltaire and Frederick the Great, 143.

Rheinsberg.”37 This may be a hidden attack on Frederick’s abandonment of Anti-Machiaveli to Voltaire, perhaps suggesting that Frederick has passed on the torch of authorship to Voltaire. Indeed, Frederick emphasizes this possibility, since he feels “that since losing my father I owe myself wholly to my country.”38 Indeed later, after specifically addressing the completion of Anti-Machiavel, Frederick demurs that he “cannot work at it at present” because he is “overwhelmed with business.”39 These statements point to the likelihood of the second and third authorship possibilities described above. If Voltaire is criticizing Frederick for his involvement in politics, it is logical to think that Voltaire may have been asked to take on a role in the writing of the work, as Frederick was too busy to complete it.40 Still, Frederick maintains that his views on politics have remained the same, suggesting that he may not have wholly abandoned Anti-Machiavel to run the Prussian state. Frederick states that “(y)ou may be certain that the life I am leading has changed neither my character nor my way of thinking…but we must adapt ourselves to our station in life and make our duties a pleasure.”41 Later he describes himself with

37 Voltaire to Frederick II, King of Prussia, March, 1742, Letters of Voltaire and Frederick the Great, 160.

38 Frederick II, King of Prussia to Voltaire, June 27th, 1740, Letters of Voltaire and Frederick the Great, 139.

39 Frederick II, King of Prussia to Voltaire, October 26th, 1740, Letters of Voltaire and Frederick the Great, 143.

40 On the other hand, Voltaire’s comment may be a general criticism, rather than one aimed directly at his increased role in the work. The two writers do not, however, give us a conclusive answer in either direction.

41 Frederick II, King of Prussia to Voltaire, April 12th, 1742, Letters of Voltaire and Frederick the Great, 161.
melodramatic metaphors as “a galley-slave chained to the vessel of state.” Here, the reader may question Frederick’s integrity, as he may have indeed changed his views on political and military decision-making, yet he is trying to deceive Voltaire into thinking otherwise. Deception pervades the entire production of Anti-Machiavel.

The emphasis that both authors place on deception makes this entire argument even more confusing and multi-layered. When discussing interactions with the masses, Frederick suggests that he and Voltaire should “commit a few follies with the fools to attain that desirable situation,” which he defines as living in peace. This suggests that both authors use deception in their writings, which may be taken in by the public. Frederick further establishes his personal duplicity, suggesting that “(t)rickery, bad faith and duplicity are unfortunately the dominating characteristics of most of the men who are at the head of nations and should be an example to them.” Frederick is obviously being self-referential here, essentially writing an apology for himself and any deceptive behavior that he might commit as a ruler. He further advances this

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42 Frederick II, King of Prussia to Voltaire, March 5th, 1749, *Letters of Voltaire and Frederick the Great*, 193.

43 Frederick II, Prince Royal of Prussia to Voltaire, January 6th, 1740, *Letters of Voltaire and Frederick the Great*, 133.

44 The nature of their audiences is a further problem, as Machiavelli writes nominally for “Lorenzo de/ Medici” (*Prince*, ix) and Frederick’s audience is unclear, though he suggests that *The Prince* “must naturally come into the Hands of Princes, and of those who have a Taste of Politicks” (*A-M*, vi). Thus, Frederick is likely writing for a diverse audience and Machiavelli’s audience is unclear, meaning that the messages of the two authors are meant for different audiences, time periods, and levels understanding. This, in turn, means that the amount of deception that the two authors may vary according to their different audiences. Here, it is clear that deception applies both to the masses and to the elites, though Frederick obviously cannot apply this statement in print to his fellow rulers and other nobles.

45 Frederick II, King of Prussia to Voltaire, February 3rd, 1742, *Letters of Voltaire and Frederick the Great*, 158.
point while describing diplomacy, suggesting that “it is a general ruler that we are only bound to keep our promises so far as our strength permits.” Thus, Frederick suggests that, at the very least, he himself is capable of deception. This seems to support the first line of thought on the authorship of *Anti-Machiavel*, as Frederick’s previous comment on Voltaire’s authorship may simply be Frederick’s attempt at duplicity, turning any and all bad publicity and negative reactions to *Anti-Machiavel* on Voltaire rather than the King of Prussia. Thus, the duplicity that Frederick makes obvious in his letters makes the first option for authorship more plausible, as his deception in statements about Voltaire’s involvement points to Frederick as the sole author of *Anti-Machiavel*.

For our purposes, I take the view that Frederick was the primary author, while Voltaire acted as his editor. This provides the most clear-cut explanation, as it means that the ideas in *Anti-Machiavel* are Frederick’s alone, but it is also fairly convincing given Frederick’s emphasis on deception in his communication with Voltaire and the overall lack of communication on this issue. As shown above, Frederick’s use of deception may have easily applied to public statements on *Anti-Machiavel*, as Frederick may have used Voltaire as a scapegoat for his true authorship. Further, it seems likely that the two characters would discuss *Anti-Machiavel* more extensively in their correspondences if they had actually been co-authoring the work. According to the *Correspondences*, they only discuss the work a handful of times, spending far more time discussing other works. In addition, Frederick’s aforementioned dominance of their relationship

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46 Frederick II, King of Prussia to Voltaire, July 25th, 1742, *Letters of Voltaire and Frederick the Great*, 166.

would suggest that he was the primary author, with Voltaire functioning as an auxiliary assistant, most likely the editor. Without further scholarship and an explanation of their actual relationship, this debate seems impossible to resolve.

**Section III: Analyzing Machiavelli’s Different Works and Audiences**

Machiavelli creates two different accounts of political life in *The Prince* and *The Discourses on Livy*. *The Prince* is described as a “briefer and pithier” account of Machiavelli’s political thought, and “is addressed to Lorenzo de’ Medici, a prince,”

[48]

and Machiavelli’s dedicatory letter at the beginning of this work is clearly aimed at the improvement of a prince’s government.

[49] As has been shown above, Frederick did not read *The Discourses*, meaning that this account cannot play a meaningful role in a comparative study of the two authors. If *The Discourses* and *The Prince* came to different conclusions on military strategy, creating a discrepancy in Machiavelli’s military-political theory, this would be quite problematic for the completion of this study, as Machiavelli’s ideas in the *Prince* would not reflect the former author’s complete beliefs. It does not seem that this is a problem, however, as Machiavelli does not seem to distinguish between military leadership in republics and principalities, even referencing the ruler in his section on fortifications in *The Discourses* (as will be shown in the section on soldiers). Beyond this, Machiavelli’s ideal military is constituent-based, creating a somewhat democratic form of military leadership in *The Prince*. Indeed, it would seem quite logical for a constituent-army to be used in a republic as well, as was seen in classical Athens.

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Thus, Machiavelli does not seem to find any tension between the military systems of either type of government.
Chapter III: Understanding *The Prince*, Chapter XIV

Chapter IV of the Prince immediately sticks out as important to the topic of military-political theory, given its title, *What a Prince Should Do Regarding the Military*. This section provides one of Machiavelli’s strongest arguments for the primacy of military thought in politics and government, meaning that Frederick’s response to this section is essential in understanding the agreement or disagreement between the two on the military and politics. Initially, it seems that the two authors come into conflict on the issue of the primacy of military thought and war-making in the mind and actions of a prince or ruler. Frederick responds quite negatively, at least initially, to Machiavelli’s absolute claim, stating that Machiavelli’s emphasis on the purely military qualities of a prince is laughable. The deeper meaning of this chapter, however, can be found principally in the first and last sections, where Machiavelli subtly points out the utility of the attitude of a commander and military knowledge in all aspects of government and rulership. Although Frederick initially states that Machiavelli’s assumptions on a military understanding of politics are inane, he goes on to agree with Machiavelli on this topic. This discussion ultimately defines the probable cause for my work, suggesting that military affairs and military thinking are essential to both authors and allowing me to focus acutely on these ideas, rather than elsewhere within the political theory of the two authors.

Machiavelli’s statements about warfare in Chapter XIV of *The Prince* are sudden and jarring. After examining soldiers (as will be observed later), Machaivelli opens this new chapter by arguing that “a prince should have no other object, nor any other thought, nor take anything else as his art but that of war and its orders and discipline; for that is the only art which is of
concern to one who commands.”50 This is certainly an absolute statement, suggesting that a ruler should focus both his outer political and inner thoughts and actions on military thought, strategy, and action. Machiavelli goes on to argue that such an ability, if developed, “is of such virtue that not only does it maintain those who have been born princes but many times it enables men of private fortune to rise to that rank; and on the contrary, one sees that when princes have thought more of amenities than of arms, they have lost their states.”51 Thus, princes are required to focus on arms for multiple reasons, needing to protect and maintain their thrones, while preventing other, militarily-skilled private citizens from taking power from within. Machiavelli’s theory points to an early notion of sovereignty, with the ruler maintaining a monopoly of violence within his realm. Machiavelli’s emphasis on the ruler’s military capabilities point to the necessity of the ruler’s role as sole commander of the military, though Machiavelli is making a bolder claim in suggesting that this is indeed the only role of the ruler.

Machiavelli provides historical examples for this military emphasis, putting forth the primary example of Francesco Sforza to support his argument here. Machiavelli suggests that Sforza, due to his military capabilities, “became the duke of Milan from a private individual; and his sons, because they shunned the hardships of arms, became private individuals from dukes.”52 Thus, Machiavelli juxtaposes the use of arms in creating a new rule to a lack of arms, which in turn lead to a loss of power for Sforza’s sons. Machiavelli uses this historical example to highlight the necessity for a leader to have military forces to hold on to power. Next, Machiavelli

50 Prince, 58.

51 Prince, 58.

52 Prince, 58.
explains the human emotions and attitudes that shape this emphasis on military power and capabilities. He states that a ruler lacking arms makes himself “contemptible,” since “a prince who does not understand the military…cannot, as was said, be esteemed by soldiers or trust them,” since the armed have no reason to “obey willingly whoever is armed.” Thus, a leader who does not possess military capabilities, understanding, or leadership skills lacks the ability to maintain a monopoly of violence within his state because he lacks the adequate means and communication skills to dominate and lead his military forces. This army is, instead, susceptible to the whims of whoever would choose to lead them through strong military background and strategic understanding.

Machiavelli pushes this idea further, in suggesting, as he has done in the first section of this chapter, that a prince should “never lift his thoughts from the exercise of war.” This can occur, Machiavelli suggests, “in two modes, one with deeds, the other with the mind;” these entail “keeping his armies well ordered and exercised,” “hunting,” allowing the ruler to “accustom (his) body to hardships” and to train his mind to understand the geographic and strategic makeup of his own country, which can in turn be applied to similar geographical structures in foreign lands. Thus, the author gives clear examples of proper techniques for

\[53 \textit{Prince}, 58.\]
\[54 \textit{Prince}, 58.\]
\[55 \textit{Prince}, 59.\]
\[56 \textit{Prince}, 59.\]
\[57 \textit{Interestingly, Machiavelli does not include this section when he examines training the mind, only including the historical section of this chapter. This is strange, given the mental necessities required for such a surveillance of geographic structures.} \]
\[58 \textit{Prince}, 59.\]
creating and maintaining military knowledge and leadership, as is necessary for a successful commander.

Further, Machiavelli addresses the importance of military support and advice for the armed prince. He suggests that “Philopoemen, prince of the Achaeans,” “when he was on campaign with friends,” would stop to discuss military tactics with these “friends.” Having listened to the responses to his tactical questions, Philopoemen could “put before them, as he went along, all the chances that can occur to an army; he listened to their opinions, gave his own, supported it with reasons, so that because of these continued cogitations there could never arise” any crisis that he could not resolve. Thus, Machiavelli brings up the importance of advisors, suggesting that these individuals play an essential role in the development of military policy for the ruler. Machiavelli makes sure to leave ultimate decision-making power firmly in the hands of the ruler; the advisors are in place to fulfill their job descriptions, not to rule. Thus, the ruler maintains a stranglehold on decision-making power for his military forces, maintaining a basic concept of sovereignty within his territory.

Finally, Machiavelli attends to the ruler’s military “exercise of the mind,” which entails a historical understanding of military strategy and tactics. He suggests that such a ruler

59 Prince, 59. It is interesting that Machiavelli uses the word ‘friends,’ rather than ‘allies,’ ‘generals,’ or ‘advisers’ here, as Machiavelli seems to be referring to advisers. This may simply reflect Philopoemen’s age, as ancient Greek military hierarchies did not reflect such a strict hierarchy of military subordination and leadership.

60 Prince, 60.

61 Prince, 60.
should read histories and consider in them the actions of excellent men, should see how they conducted themselves in war, should examine the causes of their victories and losses, so as to be able to avoid the latter and imitate the former. Above all he should do as some excellent man has done in the past who found someone to imitate who had been praised and glorified before him, using Alexander the Great, Cyrus, and Achilles as examples of great rulers to imitate. Thus Machiavelli notes the cyclical nature of history, suggesting that military leaders should follow the examples of their predecessors to achieve success on the battlefield, as their predecessors had done. Machiavelli is not suggesting that rulers should not simply copy their predecessor’s actions, though, instead using the teachings of the past to make successful military decisions in the present, as I will discuss in the conclusion.

_The Prince_ suggests the formative nature of military ideals for the prince and his kingdom, more generally. As has been shown earlier, the first few sentences of this chapter go a long way in explaining this, yet the concluding sections shed more light on this critical argument. Machiavelli makes this idea clearer in the concluding ideas of this chapter, where Machiavelli makes the following argument:

A wise prince should observe such modes, and never remain idle in peaceful time, but with his industry make capital of them in order to be able to profit from them in adversities, so that when fortune changes, it will find him ready to resist him.

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62 _Prince_, 60

63 It is interesting that Machiavelli references Xenophon here, possibly suggesting that Machiavelli himself has used Xenophon as an example for his own works.

64 _Prince_, 60.
He suggests that the ruler of any state should use his military power and understanding as a consistent theme throughout his executive decisions. This allows the ruler to be ever-watchful and busy, always on alert to the needs and developments of and within his state. Thus, Machiavelli suggests that the nature of the ruler should remain the same in peace as in warfare, using his militarily-built sense of productivity to prepare the country, if and when difficulties arise in the future. This demonstrates the long-term application of a military character and attitudes for a ruler, as the ruler, as has been shown above, uses the battlefield and preparations for war as an exercise for both his body and mind, allowing him to realize his full leadership potential in civilian life. This is made even more obvious in Machiavelli’s brief reference to fortune, suggesting that fortune can be averted by the warlike capabilities and mindset of the leader. This will suffice for explanation of this section, as I will address this section, especially the role of fate and fortune in significantly more depth in later sections of this work.

Frederick’s responses to Machiavelli’s ideas provide a rationale for my thesis concept, specifically my emphasis on military affairs and strategy. Frederick maintains that Machiavelli only reveals half of the role of the ruler through this emphasis on military matters, emphasizing a further position of rulers, though Frederick interestingly skirts the exact nature of this issue. Frederick’s response begins harshly, stating that “Machiavel’s Enthusiasm (for military matters) makes his Prince ridiculous” and that Machiavelli “carries things to such a strange Extravagance, that he would have him be nothing but a mere Soldier; he makes him a complete Don Quixote, who has his Imagination filled with nothing but Engagements, Retrenchments, Sieges, Fortifications, and Attacks.”65 Thus, Machiavelli is accused of militarism and minimizing the

65 *A-M*, 152.
role of a prince to a militant, almost tragic figure. Frederick, as will be shown below, does not expand as completely on his image of a complete ruler as one would think. Further, Frederick accuses Machiavelli of short-changing the ruler through an emphasis on military duty; “(a) Prince who applies only to Arms, discharges but one Half of his Duty.”\textsuperscript{66} Thus, it would seem, Machiavelli suggests that military affairs are only half of the ruler’s duties, as well as the duties to his subjects and internal rule in general. According to Frederick II, the second half of the ruler’s duties is much less obvious.

Frederick’s definition of a ruler’s duty beyond military matters is problematic at the very least. He seldom gives any explanation for this concept in this section; only a few clues exist, such as Frederick’s statement that “Princes are but Judges by their Institution.”\textsuperscript{67} The closest evidence that Frederick offers for the second half of a prince’s duties is a notion of “Justice,” whereas Machiavelli’s emphasis on military matters is based only on the principals of “Interest and Violence.”\textsuperscript{68} Thus, Frederick concludes, Machiavelli’s military rule is limited “to the Politicks of petty Princes.”\textsuperscript{69} This insult seems hollow, however, as Frederick pointedly refuses to explain the further duties of a ruler in this section, implying that he may in fact be agreeing with Machiavelli’s conclusions on the nature of the ruler’s duties. At the end of his commentary on this chapter, Frederick provides a single alternative for the non-military duties of the ruler, suggesting that the ruler’s “fitter Employment” should be “the Care of rendering a State

\textsuperscript{66} A\textsuperscript{-}M, 152.
\textsuperscript{67} A\textsuperscript{-}M, 153.
\textsuperscript{68} A\textsuperscript{-}M, 153.
\textsuperscript{69} A\textsuperscript{-}M, 153.
flourishing and happy, and of protecting and encouraging Arts and Sciences.”

Thus, according to Frederick II, the ruler’s job is to bring prosperity and security to his state, in order to allow the state to succeed. This amorphous definition of the ruler’s job, however, allows for both military and non-military definitions of rulership. Frederick essentially gives the ruler carte blanche in protecting the state and allowing it to succeed, whether economically, politically, or militarily.

Beyond internal protection, Frederick’s emphasis on “rendering the state flourishing and happy,” allows for a broader, offensively-oriented definition of rulership, perhaps explaining his later military policies. The ruler can also use this amorphous definition of state-advancement to build up his army and invade other nations. This policy doubtless would, with a victory, increase the economic and political capital of the ruler, allowing the ruler to provide the spoils to his population and ultimately increasing constituent material happiness through political and economic gains. Further, one could even apply this idea to economic policy, as Frederick’s explanation of the ruler’s duty suggests that he may pursue any economic policy that furthers the success of the state, whether it be mercantilism, capitalism, or some other system. The only real consideration that Frederick seems to suggest here, though, is not an ethical dilemma but a cost-benefit analysis for the ruler and the subsequent good of the nation. Any ruler is put in the position of political expansion through war, yet this ruler must analyze the possible costs and benefits of expansion in relation to the relative happiness and success of his constituents. Thus, the only sense of ethics here relates directly to the happiness and success of a ruler’s constituents. Frederick’s argument here agrees with Machiavelli, despite all of his criticisms on...

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70 A-M, 164.

71 A-M, 164.
the earlier parts of Chapter XIV; despite seemingly throwing out Machiavelli’s militant ruler as merely half-complete, Frederick uses a deeper logic and emphatic word choice and description to explain his true agreement with Machiavelli on military matters and the role of the sovereign. This subtle switch in Frederick’s thinking may explain his military decision-making and strategy; a supporter of “the permissibility of the pre-emptive strike and the ‘war of interest,’”72 Frederick was not shy to put his political theory and dearth of ethical dilemmas into political use. Indeed, the latter term is couched in the terms seen above, as a conflict where a ruler is “obliged to resort to force in order to prosecute the interests of his people.”73 These ideas, which will be explored in far greater depth later in this work, all descend from this idea of the sanctity of the constituents’ needs and desires and the resultant militarily-defined rulership.

Frederick demonstrates his ability to cover up his tacit support for Machiavelli’s military policy by his extensive berating of Machiavelli’s emphasis the ruler as a good hunter. His conclusion, however, leaves room for the primacy of the military within the ruler, as has been shown above. Frederick goes on an extensive diatribe against hunting, providing one of the most stinging and longest sections of criticism within all of the Anti-Machiavel. Despite spending pages 155 to 163 of his criticism describing the issues and dilemmas involving hunting,74 Frederick’s opening statement on this issue is the most important. Frederick asks the reader’s

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74 Frederick comments that hunting is “an Amusement which renders the Body robust and active, and leaves the Mind fallow and uncultivated” (A-M, 156), further, he states that hunting may be “carried to Extravagance” and is one of the “little and idle Occupations” unworthy of being imitated (A-M, 158).
pardon, asking that he or she “will allow (him) to make a small Digression upon this Subject.”

Thus, right before us, Frederick states that he is attempting to lure the reader away from his main point, as stated above; by writing the rest of this section (besides the short conclusion), Frederick is seducing the reader into a false sense of security by battering down Machiavelli here. This demonstrates what Evrigenis and Somos describe as “Anti-Machiavellian Machiavellism” in their paper, Wrestling with Machiavelli: namely,

writers concerned with reason of state found in Machiavelli the opportunity to legitimize morally questionable policy recommendations by discrediting the author rather than his counsels.

Following Rousseau, one might thus describe the rhetorical strategy of the most compelling thinkers who sought to legitimize reason of state as Anti-Machiavellian Machiavellism.

This type of deception occurs in Chapter XIV, with Frederick using the cover of insulting Machiavelli’s ideas, both initially and specifically addressing hunting. In reality, Frederick is actually agreeing with Machiavelli on the centrality of military policy, understanding, and capabilities for the ruler. This type of interaction is a theme that will dominate the rest of this work, coming up in each other the three subsequent chapters.

It is interesting, and somewhat telling, that Frederick does not specifically address the end of Machiavelli’s argument in this section, specifically in the section discussing history. Frederick, however, as he is wont to do in agreeing with Machiavelli, discusses military history while continuing to attack Machiavelli’s hunting ruler. Thus, Frederick begins this commentary

75 A-M, 155.

by suggesting “that to be a great General, there is no need of being a Hunter.” He backs up this idea, as does Machiavelli when describing the utility of military history, by giving historical examples of non-hunting, successful commanders, such as “Gustavus Adolphus” and “The Duke of Marlborough,” suggesting that these men possessed “Characters, as able Generals and illustrious Men, will not be questioned.” Thus, Frederick is implicitly supporting the idea of following and imitating the actions of important historical military leaders; he does this, not by directly agreeing with Machiavelli, but by building on his earlier argument against the use of hunting to show that prudent rulers will follow the examples of past rulers by not engaging in hunting. Frederick is essentially agreeing with Machiavelli’s ideas about the imitation of past successful military commanders, and one can assume that Frederick would want a smart audience to read between the lines and follow the paths of past strong military commanders.

Thus, Frederick’s analysis of Chapter XIV of The Prince suggests a military theory that maintains a close relationship with Machiavelli’s theories on the subject. Frederick delves deeply into an argument that can falls under Evrigenis and Somos’ term of “Anti-Machiavellian Machiavellism;” Frederick initially accuses Machiavelli of short-changing the true leader, yet he does not provide an adequate extension of the ruler’s power that does not encompass the substantial role of military thought and leadership. Later, after attacking Machiavelli’s support of hunting for improving the character of the military ruler, Frederick uses this assault as a vehicle to support Machiavelli’s reliance on past rulers and history for current military tactics and

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77 A-M, 163.

78 A-M, 163.

advantages. In both cases, Frederick uses an assault on Machiavelli’s arguments to tactfully camouflage his support of his predecessor’s ideas. Indeed, this agreement provides a key shaping factor for this work as a whole; by emphasizing the military role and characteristics necessary for a ruler, Frederick and Machiavelli both demonstrate the essential role of the military and military in political theory. This also shows the essential role of foreign affairs for the two, as Machiavelli and Frederick seem to suggest that, along with a military attitude toward peacetime politics, such affairs should take center stage for the ruler. As such, Chapter XIV provides a key framing device for my thesis, allowing me to focus on military affairs, as well as the relationships and effects of such military affairs, tactics, and results. Frederick, after some initial surface disagreement, tacitly agrees with Machiavelli on the importance of military affairs as an essential method for reaching the end-goal of the state, the satiation and happiness of the people. As such, both Machiavelli and Frederick II see the essential role of the ruler in military affairs; an understanding of the resultant discussion and its outcomes for military strategy requires an in-depth analysis, which this work will attempt to do.
Chapter IV: Soldiers and the Problematic Nature of Extra-National Forces

The manpower of the military is an essential topic throughout Machiavelli’s works as well as in Frederick the Great’s Anti-Machiavel. Machiavelli makes the argument that, in sum, good troops trump any and all other essential aspects of military tactics and preparation. This argument manifests itself throughout his discussions on auxiliaries, mercenaries, fortifications, and general military strategy, forming a key theme in the reader’s understanding of Machiavellian military strategy. Thus, Frederick’s response to these ideas is all the more important. Frederick, as he will do throughout Anti-Machiavel, seeks to moderate Machiavelli’s ideas for a modern audience and for his political contemporaries. Thus, the soon-to-be Prussian monarch responds that home-grown troops, while being the best option, often are an unfeasible or unreasonable suggestion, given the nature of Europe during his lifetime. Frederick takes exception to Machiavelli’s strict system, modifying it for a modern Europe defined by a large number of mercenary and constituent forces, a multitude of small states, and larger powers. This augmentation of the military talent pool, however, brings into question whether Machiavelli’s core ideas are being challenged or whether they are simply being modified for a new age.

Machiavelli’s first argument on the subject of soldiers examines mercenaries, an issue he brings up relatively early in The Prince, suggesting its primary importance for foreign relations and the state as a whole. Mercenary arms are, according to Machiavelli, “useless and dangerous,” further, a “state founded on mercenary arms…will never be firm and secure,” as mercenaries are “disunited, ambitious, without discipline, unfaithful.” Indeed, Machiavelli even


81 Prince, 48.
proposes their total ineptitude in either peace or war, saying that “ruin is postponed only as long as attack is postponed; and in peace you are despoiled by them, in war by the enemy.”

These are all bold, strongly-worded claims, requiring Machiavelli to back up such bold summations with detailed proof. Machiavelli suggests that mercenaries have “no love nor cause to keep them in the field other than a small stipend, which is not sufficient to make them want to die for you.”

This description gives the first inkling of Machiavelli’s requirements for good military forces: a certain type of love is necessary in good soldiers that goes beyond mere pay. This is a logical conclusion, given Machiavelli’s comments in Chapter XV of The Prince; man must have a higher gain in mind than money if he is to possibly sacrifice his life, rather than simply a moral responsibility to a mercenary contract. Since Machiavelli suggests that vice is sometimes necessary for a man’s success, it is quite likely and logically that a mercenary would forsake his contract and his obligations to save his life. Indeed, Machiavelli suggests that the mercenaries “want to be your soldiers while you are not making war, but when war comes, they either flee or leave.”

Thus, he demonstrates that the actions of the mercenaries directly reflect their ambitions and drives; financial gain, rather than a higher sacrifice, is indeed all they are useful for. Indeed, Machiavelli points to a broad historical example to demonstrate this point, suggesting that “the present ruin of Italy is caused by nothing other than its having relied for a

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82 Prince, 48.

83 Prince, 48-49.

84 These conclusions reflect, at least in part, Machiavelli’s claim that “it is so far from how one lives to how one should live that he who lets go of what is done for what should be done learns his ruin rather than his preservation;” later, he suggests that an action “appears to be vice, which if pursued results in one’s security and well-being,” while “one will find something appears to be virtue, which if pursued would be one’s ruin.” (Prince, 61-62).

85 Prince, 49.
Thus, although Italian history has favored the use of mercenaries, Machiavelli suggests that a change is necessary, as these forces have mortally damaged Italy, due to their motives.

Machiavelli goes further, suggesting that mercenary problems can be further divided based on the abilities and actions of their leadership. He states that such captains are “either excellent men of arms or not;” the former results in the leader attempting to gain his “own greatness, either by oppressing you…or by oppressing others contrary to your intention.” If the latter is true, the mercenaries, as described above, will seek profit, in this case in the wrong place. As such, “nothing but harm ever comes from mercenary arms.” Machiavelli’s negative views on mercenaries, as such, seem quite harsh, yet not inaccurate given the state of Italy during his lifetime. Indeed, Machiavelli views on mercenaries are quite rational and easily understood, suggesting that human interest would dictate that no sacrifice of livelihood could receive adequate monetary compensation. Mercenaries, those paid to wage war, are thus only successful in such situations that require no possibility of bodily harm. This is an obvious impossibility in warfare, and Machiavelli’s only exception, the possibility of good mercenary leadership, does not provide any support for the cause of mercenaries. A good mercenary leader, Machiavelli suggests, is profoundly self-interested, and will not have the interests of his employer in mind. Rather, such an individual will support his own cause, denying the state any success. Thus, Machiavelli argues that self-interest defines mercenary service, and monetary gains can never

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86 Prince, 49.
87 Prince, 49.
88 Prince, 49.
89 Prince, 50.
result in an individual sacrificing his life.\textsuperscript{90} Machiavelli is searching for a higher meaning or reason for possible bodily harm or death as a necessary part of the good soldier.

Machiavelli offers the alternative of home-grown troops instead of mercenaries, or any other form of troops. He intimates this in \textit{The Discourses on Livy}, Book II, where Machiavelli establishes the three necessities in war: “very many and good soldiers, prudent captains, and good fortune.”\textsuperscript{91} The first of the three, good troops is not immediately clear, yet Machiavelli expands on this idea in \textit{The Prince}. He first looks at the historical background of subjects in arms, saying that “there has never been, then, a new prince who has disarmed his subjects; on the contrary, whenever he has found them unarmed, he has always armed them.”\textsuperscript{92} This seems to be a rather generalized conclusion, yet Machiavelli expands on this idea to explain it; he suggests that “when (one’s constituents) are armed, those arms become yours; those whom you suspected become faithful, and those who were faithful remain so; and from subjects they are made into your partisans.”\textsuperscript{93} This suggests a truly revolutionary form of military organization, suggesting that the ruled can be mobilized as an army, as opposed to the more common highly-professionalized, small armies of the day. This goes hand-in-hand with Machiavelli’s ideas on mercenaries, as such small armies were made up primarily of these troops. As such, Machiavelli

\textsuperscript{90} Machiavelli leaves open the possibility that a mercenary force, when under the command of a good leader of the state, may be more successful. This idea would discount the idea of bad commanders, yet motivating the entire mercenary force with monetary gains in exchange for the possibility of death is still a problem. Further, historical examples are lacking for mercenary forces directly commanded by a leader by their employer-state, as Machiavelli seems to suggest.

\textsuperscript{91} Niccolò Machiavelli, \textit{Discourses on Livy} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 149. Good fortune will be addressed in the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{92} \textit{Prince}, 83.

\textsuperscript{93} \textit{Prince}, 83.
seems to be far ahead of his time in terms of military structure and makeup; indeed, large, mass-mobilized armies were not even seen in Frederick’s day, with the Wars of French Liberation and the Napoleonic wars representing this transition from small, professional armies to mass, peasant-based armies.

Machiavelli makes further distinctions in his rules about these new constituent-based armies, suggesting that, “because all subjects cannot be armed, if those whom you arm are benefited, one can act with more security toward the others. The difference of treatment that they recognize regarding themselves makes them obligated to you; the others excuse you, judging it necessary that those who have more danger and more obligation deserve more.”\textsuperscript{94} Thus Machiavelli lays out an ingenious method of mobilizing a ruler’s population for correctly-waged warfare; he is suggesting that human psyche dictates that both those armed and unarmed will understand their places and will recognize the validity of their positions. This establishes a system of agreement and social legitimacy, as neither those armed nor the unarmed must be feared by the ruler.\textsuperscript{95}

\textsuperscript{94} \textit{Prince}, 83.

\textsuperscript{95} This conclusion of military personnel problems, however, seems too simple for the modern eye. Machiavelli seems to suggest that no possible conflict could develop between the armed and unarmed citizens, as the latter recognize the former’s legitimacy as an essentially higher class, both in terms of responsibility and ability. This seems contradictory to Machiavellian themes, giving mankind a far more generous and pious quality than Machiavelli usually would. Machiavelli is in effect suggesting that these citizens will value the interest of the state over their individual interests; this idea seems flawed. For an author who suggests that the ruler must sometimes be unfaithful in certain situations toward his people “because they are wicked and do not observe faith with (the ruler),” (\textit{Prince}, 69) this reversion to completely trusting the citizens is quite problematic. Beyond this, the possibility of social tension between the armed and unarmed certainly seems likely, especially if these two groups happen to fracture into separate classes, as would seem to occur in Machiavelli’s militarized society. Yet, Machiavelli’s overall idea seems to ring true, as mercenaries and auxiliaries would certainly be a far worse alternative to home-grown elites, creating a completely separated ethnic and social group that would certainly prove
Machiavelli provides a negative counterexample to this ideal, suggesting the dangerous implications of the alternative situation. He states that disarming one’s people “offend(s) them” because “you show that you distrust them either for cowardice or for lack of faith, both of which opinions generate hatred against you. And because you cannot remain unarmed, you must turn to a mercenary military, which is of the quality described above; and even if it were good, it cannot be so good as to defend you against powerful enemies and suspect subjects.”\textsuperscript{96} Thus, Machiavelli suggests that well-armed citizens are the best defense, and that removing their arms may indeed incite them to rebel, if not at least leave a ruler and state susceptible to the issues of mercenaries and the resultant likelihood of foreign invasions.

Machiavelli’s decision-making in his own lifetime reflected this position on both mercenaries and constituent forces. After having been “appointed Chancellor and Secretary to the Lieci di Libertà” in 1498 Florence, Machiavelli attempted to put his ideas into practice, “pushing forward and carrying through with unceasing and unspeakable vigour the great military dream of his life, the foundation of a National Militia and the extinction of Mercenary Companies;” unfortunately the nature of his constituent troops, described as “spoilt half-mutinous levies,” may have led to his downfall, as he was eventually arrested and tortured.\textsuperscript{97} Despite his ignominious failure in forming a constituent military force,\textsuperscript{98} Machiavelli’s actions problematic for those in power. Still, the concept of an entire society under conscription seems more palpable, if impossible in Machiavelli’s time, than Machiavelli’s alternative of a stratified society.

\textsuperscript{96} \textit{Prince}, 83-84.


\textsuperscript{98} Perhaps this speaks to the problem of weak-natured constituent forces, an unexpected issue for Machiavelli’s theory of strong, home-grown troops. On the other hand, this issue may reflect
demonstrate that he fully believed in and followed through on his theory of soldiers. As will be seen, Frederick’s beliefs and actions in using troops are not nearly as clean cut.

For Machiavelli, another alternative is often far worse than even the use of mercenary troops, rather than constituent troops, for one’s army. He suggests that the ruler “who wants to be unable to win make use of these arms, since they are much more dangerous than mercenary arms.”

This is a radical comment, given Machiavelli’s stated issues with mercenaries; Machiavelli seems to suggest that auxiliaries can do worse than the deadly mercenary cocktail of inaction and problematic (or even negatively domineering) leadership. This occurs because, with auxiliaries “ruin is accomplished; they are all united, all resolved to obey someone else.”

Auxiliaries are chiefly problematic because of their leadership, much like the more virulent strand of mercenaries. They obey a foreign power and are therefore partial to the commands of a different interest, rather than their current employer; thus these forces, who are essentially “on loan” in the European football sense, can cause significant damage within their host country.

With a victory, they may take the spoils of war for their home state, and in defeat, they may attack and destroy their host state, taking advantage of its relative weakness during defeat. Even Machiavelli’s lack of military experience beyond mere theory, as he may have been ill-equipped to properly train and command military forces.

99 *Prince*, 55.

100 *Prince*, 55.

101 This brings up a problematic issue, as Machiavelli does not differentiate nor rank the differences between mercenaries with strong leadership vs. auxiliaries. Both seem problematic, as they have leadership that directly disagree with and can attack the state. It seems, however, that auxiliaries may be a more negative force, as they maintain a connection to an outside power and can therefore bring stronger forces to bear against the ruler, whereas mercenaries are cut off from any real form of outside connections.
in stasis, auxiliary troops constantly leave the possibility of a foreign assault on the ruler’s domain, enhanced by a pre-existing knowledge of the territory and an extant bypass of any border defenses. Auxiliaries are more problematic than mercenaries because of the former’s connections to a foreign state. Given Machiavelli’s views on human nature, it is only natural that a foreign state harbors the possibility of malignant action toward a state hosting its auxiliaries.

Last in Machiavelli’s description of troops is his description of fortifications and defensive strategy. Machiavelli initially suggests the utility of fortifications, though later he seems to renege on the importance of such defensive measures. He suggests that

whoever has fortified his town well, and has managed the other governing of his subjects as was said above and will be said below, will be attacked always with great hesitation; for men are always hostile to undertakings where difficulties may be seen, and one can see it is not easy to attack one who has a strong town and is not hated by the people. 102

This sentence demonstrates the many intricacies of defensive policies and fortifications, as Machiavelli addresses them. Most importantly, Machiavelli sees the proper governing of subjects as necessary for proper defense. Only with strong fortifications and a government that is not susceptible to upheavals from within will an invading power be dissuaded from using its military power to the detriment of the ruler. Later, after addressing constituent-armies, Machiavelli makes the argument that “the best fortress there is, is not to be hated by the people, because although you may have fortresses, if the people hold you in hatred fortresses do not save you; for to peoples who have taken up arms foreigners will never be lacking to come to their aid.” 103 After

102 Prince, 43.
103 Prince, 87
giving historical examples, such as the Countess of Forlì, Machiavelli suggests that “it would have been more secure for her not to be hated by the people than to have had fortresses.” Thus, fortresses are far less useful than a non-inimical home-population; indeed, Machiavelli does not even suggest that this population needs to be loving of the ruler, he merely implies the passive, almost neutral, support of the population.

When addressing republics in Discourses on Livy, Machiavelli goes even further in his elevation of popular acceptance over the use of fortifications. He says that “a wise and good prince, so as to keep himself good and not to give cause to or dare his sons to become bad, will never make a fortress, so that they may found themselves not upon fortresses but upon the benevolence of men.” Machiavelli suggests that fortifications may even be detrimental, as they give the ruler the possibility of becoming a criminal or, at the very least, a bad ruler, from within the protection of his fortress. Here, too, Machiavelli expands the role of the population, suggesting that he prefers a positive popular image of the ruler rather than a simple non-inimical sentiment (seen on the previous page). Further, he addresses the role of lineage as a possibly problematic area; sons growing up in the protection of their fortresses, away from any interactions with the population, may be willing to commit to bad rule and lose the support of the public. Thus, Machiavelli logically suggests that rulers, especially those in father positions, should not use fortresses for their defense, but should instead rely on the support of their constituents for defensive success.

104 Prince, 87

105 Prince, 186. It is interesting that Machiavelli speaks to a ruler here, despite The Discourses’ focus on republics.
Frederick II, as he does throughout *Anti-Machiavel*, responds in a positive manner to Machiavelli’s ideas, initially denouncing their applicability while actually expanding the practice to a modern audience. Here he suggests that mercenaries, while somewhat debilitating, are nevertheless necessary in the militaries of his time, despite the superiority of a ruler’s home-grown troops:

It must be owned, Experience has shewn that the national Troops of a State are always the most serviceable…Our Author’s Maxim therefore may justly be applied to all Countries, that are enriched with such a Number of Inhabitants as to be able to send out a complete Army for their Defence. I agree with *Machiavel*, that a State is generally but ill served by mercenary Troops, because they can never act with so much Fidelity and Courage as Men who fight for their Possessions and Families…

By the phrase “most-serviceable,” Frederick II is agreeing with Machiavelli, stating that citizen-armies are better than professional armies of mercenaries. As has been shown by Machiavelli, this is a logical conclusion, and Frederick does not contest the rationality of this logic. He does, however, demonstrate that this ideal cannot be applied to all countries. Some countries do not have enough inhabitants to build a “complete Army for their Defence” through civilians alone, counteracting Machiavelli’s argument that countries cannot arm all of its civilians, suggesting a primary difference in their claims. Machiavelli is operating with a far different state size than is Frederick, yet the latter, the soon-to-be-ruler of Prussia, seems to suggest that his state does not have the civilian population to adequately build a military through

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106 *A·M*, 124-6

107 *A·M*, 124.

108 *A·M*, 125.
conscription alone. This seems to be reflected in the makeup of Frederick’s military, which requires a deeper analysis.

A historical analysis of Frederick’s military forces seems to suggest that he took Machiavelli’s ideas on troops to heart, though a lack of total rigidity and adaptation to various foreign policy issues may have had a detrimental effect on the Prussian military in the future. Gordon Craig suggests that earlier Prussian rulers had enacted “the canton system,” which constituted “an important change in the very character of the military establishment, for, despite the large number of foreign mercenaries in the service, the army would now, at least in time of war, be predominantly national in composition.”\textsuperscript{109} The makeup of such a system saw the regularization of military recruitment, as “the crown asserted its right to conscript ordinary Prussians over their lords’ claims to their labor.”\textsuperscript{110} Thus, the Prussian military became a state-centered military, rather than relying on the nobility for recruitment, and yet “(a)grarian interests were mollified by releasing conscripts to work in the fields for up to ten months a year after their initial training.”\textsuperscript{111} Further benefits included the end of “arbitrary impressment” and increasing the predictability of recruitment.\textsuperscript{112} Thus, Frederick inherited a useful military system, on which Frederick would leave his indelible stamp.

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\textsuperscript{110} Peter H. Wilson, \textit{From Reich to Revolution: German History, 1558-1806}, European History in Perspective (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 233.
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\textsuperscript{111} Peter H. Wilson, \textit{From Reich to Revolution}, 233.
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\textsuperscript{112} Peter H. Wilson, \textit{From Reich to Revolution}, 233.
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The general transition away from mercenaries was reversed by Frederick, whom Craig blames as responsible for the fall of the Prussian army because “he watered down the canton system to a dangerous degree.” Given Frederick’s support for mercenary troops in *Anti-Machiavel*, it seems doubtful that he would wholly support the elimination of constituent armies. Craig disagrees with this, suggesting that, “although he was willing to admit on occasion that native soldiers fought Prussia’s battles better than foreign mercenaries, Frederick always felt that his subjects served the state better as taxpayers and producers of goods than as soldiers.”

Further, according to Holborn, Frederick enacted special privileges on the burghers, “the class that by its industry contributed most to the maintenance of the government;” one of these privileges was the “exemption from military service.” Instead of disagreeing completely with Frederick’s ideas, though, this commentary suggests a nuanced view of constituent forces. It seems to suggest that economic power was more important than military might to Frederick, perhaps providing another reason for using mercenary troops; constituent troops were thus still favored, according to Frederick in both his writings and actions, yet mercenaries could be used to allow the constituent population to back up the war effort with a robust war economy.

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116 This is brought out in Holborn’s description of the peasant class, who were both important for “their military services” but also for “(t)he livelihood and a substantial part of the income of the state” (Holborn, 265); further, Craig states that the recruitment of foreigners “was preferable to jeopardizing the economic strength of the country” (Craig, 22).

117 This proves to coincide with Frederick’s comment about Sweden, as seen below, suggesting that, even with adequate military power, a strong wartime economy is an essential factor in continued warfare.
with these similarities in policy and practice, it seems that Frederick’s actions may have indeed still been detrimental in the long run for Prussia. Craig suggests that, in newly conquered territories, Frederick did not extend military service laws to prevent emigration; thus, “in a period in which Prussian population and territory was growing, the canton system was not adjusted to the changed conditions; and the government sought to make up the inevitable deficiencies in recruitment by filling the quotas with foreign mercenaries.” Crai  

Craig suggests that this trend continued through Frederick’s successors, implying that Frederick’s initial changes in recruitment policies eventually caused troop numbers to even out between constituent troops and mercenaries, a dangerous situation according to Frederick’s earlier writings. Although Frederick’s intended purpose of mercenaries was to make up for population gaps in comparison to the rest of Europe and to encourage home economies, it seems that he unwittingly encouraged a pattern of military recruitment that would eventually have damaging consequences for the Prussian army, as will be explored later.

Frederick goes on to explain the citizens’ rationale and motivation for strong military action: they are acting out of self-interest, protecting their “Possessions and Families.” Thus, according to Frederick, the self-interest of the individuals plays directly into the hands of the state, as individual interest leads to cooperative military action and success for the state. Whereas Machiavelli does not go into any depth to explain the basis for the loyalty of constituent arms, Frederick II creates a palpable and logical connection between constituent self-interest and


120 *A-M*, 126.
military service for the good of the state, again building on Machiavelli’s own ideas and modifying them for his own time.

Frederick does, however, show the limits of constituent-soldiers, suggesting that, when on campaign abroad, a ruler cannot immediately trust those whom he has conquered. Frederick bases this idea on ‘Prudence,’ asking to “see what Prudence will advise in comparing the past with the future, and in forming such Conclusions as are always consonant to Reason and Justice.” Frederick claims that, “in general, Prudence seems to require, that the Inhabitants of a conquered Town should be disarmed at first, especially if there is any cause to fear a Revolt.”

This idea of disarming subjects would seem to disagree with Machiavelli’s and Frederick’s earlier claims, yet it makes logical sense, given these individuals being former enemies, possible revolutionaries, and not yet true constituents. Frederick intimates that, if these individuals eventually become civil enough and a revolt is no longer feared, they may yet again be armed as constituent-soldiers. Even this exception, however, requires a further caveat; Machiavelli suggests that, “(w)hen a Town is taken by Intelligence, and by the Treachery of some of the Inhabitants, it would be highly imprudent to trust the Traitors,” “and it is to be presumed that those who were loyal to their old Masters, will likewise prove so to their new Sovereigns.”

Frederick provides a further reason to disarm and not trust those who have recently been conquered; treacherous individuals can pose an acute threat to any new government or occupying force. Thus, for a variety of reasons, Frederick explains that the favorable use of constituent-

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121 A-M, 239.
123 A-M, 243.
armies does not immediately apply to the conquered, at least until they prove that they will not revolt.

Beyond augmenting the utility of an army of constituent soldiers, Frederick states certain exceptions to Machiavelli’s ironclad rule on mercenaries. He cites certain cases “that must be excepted from our Author’s general rule. If a Country does not produce a sufficient Number of Men for raising a complete Army, and recruiting it from time to time, according to the Consumption of the War, mercenary Troops are absolutely necessary for supplying the Wants of the State.”¹²⁴ Frederick’s exception, however minimal, suggests that there are definite times when mercenaries are needed by certain countries. This, it seems, would apply to Frederick’s own country, as seen above. Frederick ruled over a Prussia significantly smaller than today’s Germany; indeed, some of its territories were not even contiguous, being surrounded by various small German states, as well as the twin specters of Russia in the East and France in the West. As such, Prussia seemed to require a force beyond its constituent population, as the Prussian ruler’s ability to conscript could not possibly compete with that of France or Russia.¹²⁵ Machiavelli, on the other hand, is faced with many small Italian city-states, for which mass-mobilization would naturally overpower the smaller mercenary forces that any one state could

¹²⁴ A-M, 127.

¹²⁵ Frederick’s argument here reflects the developing nature of European warfare in the 1700s. In 1757, Frederick faced 105,000 French troops, 177,000 Austrian troops, as well as 80,000 and 20,000 troops promised by Russia and Sweden, respectively (Schieder, 124). Perhaps, then seeing the trends toward mass mobilization, Frederick is also writing for future generations. This builds into the thematic purpose of Frederick’s argument: is he directing his work towards contemporary rulers and future-rulers, or is he looking toward generations in the future, suggesting developments that have not yet occurred? As history has shown, Frederick’s ideas truly reflect military-political developments in history, as mass mobilization would grow to a huge scale following the French Revolution. One could argue that he is writing for his current generation, while simultaneously preparing for the future of augmented massed armies.
possibly afford. Thus, Frederick is again modifying Machiavelli’s ideas for his own times. He makes sure to minimize the use of mercenaries, however, suggesting that, to prevent damage from these troops, they should be “mixt with the national Troops.”\textsuperscript{126} This strategic decision prevents the problematic situations that develop for Machiavelli, as their cowardice in battle may be corrected by the examples of those around them.

\textsuperscript{126} A-M, 127.
At the very least, they cannot pursue a coup against a state’s leadership, as may happen, according to Machiavelli, with strong mercenary leadership. Indeed, Frederick II goes further, saying that, throughout Europe, a tax prevents the landed and/or rich elites from being conscripted, so current European armies are made up of the rabble, the lower classes, “who have as little Attachment to their Masters, or Concern about them, as Foreigners.” Thus, Frederick suggests a new problem: European conscription as characterized by only the poorest classes. In a way, Frederick II expands the mercenary problem, generalizing this issue to include the current plight of European militaries. Indeed, Frederick cites past events, asking: “How different are

127 Prince, 49.

these Armies from those of the Romans, who conquered the world?¹²⁹ He goes on to describe the desertion problems for all European armies, which “were unknown among the Romans, those who fought for their Families, their Household Gods, their Fellow-citizens, and every thing that was dear to them, never betrayed so many Interests by their Cowardice and Desertion.”¹³⁰ By bringing up the Roman army, Frederick again describes the reasons for participation in a constituent-army: self-interest, religion, and state-interest. Indeed, the three seem to intermingle for the Romans; yet, in the Europe of Frederick’s time, no religion united each country, as the Reformation, religious wars, and had shattered religious connections within and between countries. Self-interest still seems key in Europe, but any connection to the rulers and the state seems to be gone;¹³¹ it seems that, by recruiting from the mean groups of the population, rulers in Frederick’s time could not adequately gauge their troops’ self-interest (as connected implicitly and strongly to the self-defense and interest of the state). Thus, Frederick argues that it is critical to “the Security of the Sovereign Princes of Europe at present, that their troops are much alike, so that in (desertion) they have no Advantage over one another.”¹³² Frederick notes the identity problem for the current populations of Europe, and suggests the homogenization of European troops to level the playing field. Frederick continues the theme of updating Machiavelli’s ideas for his own time, suggesting that the factors that emphasized constituent troops in the Roman army and for Machiavelli differ from factors in 18th century Europe.

¹²⁹ A-M, 130.

¹³⁰ A-M, 131.

¹³¹ Nationalism would not become an essential force in Europe until Napoleon and the 19th Century, thus Frederick’s lifetime is an awkward transition between different eras of virulent state support by the constituent population.

¹³² A-M, 131.
He goes on to describe Sweden as an exception to this universal desertion rate yet their advantage proves to be unimportant, as their lack of wartime agriculture prevents them from accomplishing any wartime goals “without ruining themselves at length, as well as their enemies.” In effect, Frederick II is suggesting that, if he can establish a home-grown military, composed of both elites and the masses while maintaining a wartime economy, he can significantly destabilize Europe. Again, we must turn to the statistics of Frederick’s army to confirm or deny the linkage between Frederick’s theory and his policy. Craig suggests that, despite Frederick’s inclinations against the use of constituents for military, rather than economic, purposes, the mercenary element of the military only reached approximately half of the military in 1804, thus, during Frederick’s life, it can be surmised that his army consisted of a plurality of constituent soldiers. Craig, however, suggests that the later Prussian defeat in 1806 was due to “defects of organization, training, and leadership which had been apparent since 1763.” Thus, although Frederick himself continued the constituent forces tradition, he set up the future Prussian state for failure.

Frederick’s argument about auxiliaries bears many similarities to his previous argument about mercenaries. He suggests “that a King ought not to make war solely with foreign Troops,

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133 A-M, 131.


135 Gordon Alexander Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, 22.

136 Schieder disagrees, suggesting that “(t)he Prussian army under Frederick the Great was thus rarely, or more precisely only in the years of grave national crisis, composed of a majority of native Prussians” (Schieder, 52). I would be more inclined to agree with Craig, both because his description supports a stronger linkage between Frederick and his writings, but also because his work analyzes the Prussian army and thus may contribute more weight.
and to depend, if possible, upon none but his own.” This seems to be a rejection of all foreign troops, both mercenary and auxiliary (according to Machiavelli’s definitions of the two), yet Frederick’s use of the subjunctive “ought” suggests that the use of constituent-troops, as seen above, is ideal, but cannot always occur. This is related, as I have shown above, to Frederick’s personal military situation, as Prussia lacked the manpower to match such powers as Russia and France, and as such had to rely on foreign support. Indeed, he intimates this by saying that a “few Princes of Europe are in such a Situation” where they have a need for “mixt or auxiliary Troops;” it is amply clear that Frederick is being self-referential here, describing his rapidly approaching role as commander-in-chief of the Prussian military with his accession to the throne. This reliance is emphasized in terms of life and death, as Frederick suggests that the audiences knows “by Experience, that the first Care of Man is his own Preservation, and the next his Happiness: And this entirely destroys our Author’s sophistical Hyperbole” about preferring death to using foreign troops. Thus, Frederick turns Machiavelli’s argument for self-preservation on its head, suggesting that, in certain situations, mercenaries are essential for the ruler’s very survival. This being said, Frederick suggests that a ruler should “send (rather) than receive Auxiliaries.” Frederick’s statement hearkens back to Machiavelli’s own ideas in The Discourses on Livy; here, Machiavelli suggests that “(a) prince or an ambitious republic cannot

137 A-M, 143.

138 A-M, 143.

139 “In contemporary eyes, its size…and population of 1.65 million qualified it, at most, as a second-rate power” (Schieder, 5).

140 A-M, 144.

141 A-M, 141-142.

142 A-M, 143.
have a greater opportunity for seizing a city or a province than to be asked to send his armies to its defense.”¹⁴³ Thus, both theorists agree that auxiliaries can be used for offensive purposes, possibly even being able to seize a foreign power. At the very least, sending auxiliaries has some positive benefit, though Frederick II does not specify this exact benefit.¹⁴⁴ Indeed, Frederick goes further, suggesting that there is an exact cutoff for those needing and accepting foreign troops; these princes “are in no Danger from their Auxiliaries, as long as the Number of these is not superior to that of their own Troops.”¹⁴⁵ This ratio is an issue to the reader, and, from Machiavelli’s point of view, would seem to be taking an inordinate risk. If, for example, an auxiliary force made up approximately 40% of Frederick’s army were to turn against him, Frederick would be victorious, albeit at a massive cost to his forces (both from those lost in combat and by losing his auxiliary forces as well). As such, Machiavelli’s stricter rules about auxiliaries seem more logical and prudent, as they prevent the obvious possible political tensions and internal assault from auxiliaries. It seems, however, that Frederick II was far more willing than was Machiavelli to deviate from strict personnel policies and was willing to make larger risks for a greater victory, made possible with a larger army. Perhaps this reflects Frederick’s eventual role as a commander of large military forces, suggesting that large-scale military operations require some amount of leeway in terms of constituent makeup in order to accomplish

¹⁴³ Livy, 176.

¹⁴⁴ Though implicit agreement with Machiavelli’s ideas may be assumed here.

¹⁴⁵ A-M, 144. This statement is slightly problematic in its ambiguity. Frederick does not address both auxiliaries and mercenaries, simply comparing the numbers of auxiliaries and constituent-troops. He may be expanding this idea to include mercenaries, suggesting that auxiliaries and mercenaries, when taken as a group, must not outnumber constituent troops. It may, however, be that Frederick is suggesting constituent-troops must maintain a numerical plurality over mercenary and auxiliary groups separately. Although the latter seems more likely, Frederick II does not clear up this confusion with any conclusiveness.
victory. Thus, as an overall statement, one can see a transition of Machiavelli’s more conservative military policy on auxiliaries toward Frederick’s riskier, more modern strategies that reflect his position in 18th century Europe.

Last Frederick examines fortresses and there use in comparison with ideal soldiers. Speaking to the use of fortifications against one’s own population, Frederick suggests that the Prince is no longer in a position of needing fortifications to protect himself; indeed, “whether it be that Men are grown weary of destroying one another, or rather that Sovereigns have a more absolute Power over their subjects, we do not here so much of Revolts and Seditions.” This lack of interest in intrastate conflict has meant that “that turbulent Spirit, after having sufficiently fatigued itself, may be said to be reduced at present to a State of Tranquility; so that there is no further Occasion for Citadels to secure the Fidelity of Towns and Provinces.” Thus, Frederick argues, Machiavelli’s point about fortresses as being detrimental to the ruler and his relations with his people is, in many ways, invalidated by the changing of the times. As such, Frederick argues, fortifications can be used as a favorable military technology; he suggests that “such Fortifications” are “a further Security to the State.” Thus, Frederick seems to suggest that fortifications are a secondary force able to support the constituent-army and their cohorts. Although Frederick states that “Armies and Fortresses are of equal Service to Princes,” this seems to be a slightly misleading idea, for immediately after Frederick explains the supplementary role of fortifications; “for their Armies, in case they are worsted, may retire under

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146 A-M, 253

147 A-M, 253.

the Cannon of their Fortresses; and if the Enemy attempts the Siege of them, the Prince has Time
to recover himself, and to levy new Troops, with which and the rest, he may raise the Siege. 149
Thus, constituent-armies provide the primary line of defense, while fortifications provide these
forces with a possible respite; he does not, however, suggest that fortifications can function as
the primary defensive mechanism. As he does with mercenaries and auxiliaries, Frederick
suggests that fortifications can be used to support constituent-armies, yet these armies must be
the primary weapon in a ruler’s military arsenal, his primary method of achieving military
success.

As has been shown in this section, Frederick’s analysis of troops, though seemingly
differing from Machiavelli’s analysis, is in fact very similar, simply acting as an updated version
of Machiavelli’s ideas for Frederick’s time and the political and military realities of the day. This
applies, first and foremost, to constituent-troops. Machiavelli and Frederick both make it very
clear that constituent-troops are an essential part of military forces; Frederick, however, is
willing to make an exception for both auxiliaries and mercenaries, suggesting that these forces
are useful and common throughout Europe during this time period. Frederick is thus willing to
make sacrifices to the constituent purity of his military to account for the demographic and
military realities of Europe during his lifetime. Beyond this, Frederick suggests that constituent
and other military forces should be supported by a robust wartime economy, a subject
Machiavelli does not analyze in his work, probably owing to the small size and economic
capabilities of the Italian city-states of his day. Last, addressing fortifications, Frederick suggests
that Machiavelli’s worries about civil unrest and its relation to the existence of fortifications no

longer exists, and thus fortifications are a legitimate force to be used in war, though admittedly being a supporting military component to constituent-soldiers.

Machiavelli creates a fairly detailed image of his ideal military force while discussing soldiers, especially in *The Prince*. Machiavelli highlights the essential nature of the constituent-army and maintains that this force is superior, nay dominant, over other forces, such as mercenaries, forces from other nations (auxiliaries), or any type of defensive fortifications. Frederick, on the other hand, seems to disagree with Machiavelli, suggesting that there is a place for such forces as mercenaries. In reality, Frederick uses careful wording to agree with Machiavelli, in essence adapting Machiavelli’s ideas for a modern time. He makes the case that constituent troops, while being the best option, are often impossible to achieve completely; thus, Frederick is upgrading Machiavelli’s ideas for his own time, showing that the current European state affairs demands that certain states employ mercenaries and auxiliaries. In many ways, these ideas are self-referential, acting as Frederick’s method of rationalizing his own actions within the framework of Machiavellian ideas. Like the first two alternatives for soldiers, Frederick last suggests that fortifications can provide a secondary support for constituent troops, as do mercenaries and auxiliaries in certain key situations. Thus, Frederick recognizes the state of Europe, the balance of power, and his own tenuous position, and makes the wise decision to expand Machiavelli’s strict guidelines to the current European status quo, specifically his own situation. As such, Frederick provides an advanced template for troop use in modern times; as armies moved toward mass-mobilization and the growth of constituent forces, Frederick was somewhat prophetic in his support for Machiavelli’s constituent armies, applying small city-state policies to large European 18th Century states, while still maintaining important controls, such as mercenaries, to create large enough militaries to adequately combat foreign armies. As such,
Frederick managed to skillfully toe the line between older ideas from smaller states and the coming reality of mass-mobilization and warfare on a larger scale, providing an impressive addition to Machiavelli’s military strategy.
Chapter V: Fortune and Deception in Military Strategy

A second, equally important discussion revolves around the twin subjects of fortune and deception in Machiavelli’s writing and Frederick’s supposed counter-argument. These discussions are essential because Machiavelli suggests that fortune determines roughly 50% of our actions, thus its influence on military affairs is critical for this study. Machiavelli suggests that, though chance plays a key role in political and military action, mankind can still bring about their political and military goals, given the correct steps. Machiavelli uses deception as a tool to this end, making such actions a response to the fickle nature of fortune. Thus, as is seen throughout his works, Machiavelli is willing to use any and all tools and methods to reach his own ends, as well as combat the possibly detrimental effect of fortune; in a way, Machiavelli creates his own “luck” through deceptive political action. Frederick responds that chance can indeed be completely understood, though with the inevitable cautionary note that most people lack the abilities or resources to do this, preventing many from maintaining a solid dominance over their decision-making. In essence, though, both Machiavelli and Frederick suggest that certain individuals can sometimes have the ability to affect fortune, while others may not be able to accomplish this, yet both rulers suggest viable alternatives to combat such issues, giving individuals the ability to create their own “good fortune.” Indeed, with regard to deception, Frederick seems to agree with Machiavelli, seen in his military theory as well as his actual military actions. Indeed, the creation of “fortune” can occur in other forms, including Machiavelli’s suggested use of history and Frederick’s subtle agreement, as seen in Chapter 3.

Machiavelli begins his assault on chance and fortune in Chapter XXV of The Prince by attacking what he sees as the view “that many have held and hold,” a fatalist view on
mankind.\(^{150}\) By intimating that this view reflects that of a large group of people, Machiavelli is necessarily referring to those who are willing to bear the negative consequences of fortune, often lower class individuals at the mercy of the church; at the same time, though, Machiavelli is himself writing to a ruler and as such is addressing the fortunes of princes and kings, suggesting that all individuals can profit from controlling their fortunes. Machiavelli characterizes this fatalistic argument by stating “that worldly things are so governed by fortune and by God, men cannot correct them with their prudence, indeed that they have no remedy at all;”\(^{151}\) as such, these individuals infer that “that they might judge that one need not sweat much over things but let oneself be governed by chance.”\(^{152}\) Machiavelli disagrees with this view on the agency of mankind, suggesting, “so that our free will not be eliminated, I judge that it might be true that fortune is arbiter of half of our actions, but also that she leaves the other half, or close to it, for us to govern.”\(^{153}\) Thus, Machiavelli argues that fortune controls a good deal of our actions, but approximately half of our actions are self-made. He then uses a natural metaphor, comparing Fortune “to one of these violent rivers which, when they become enraged, flood the plains, ruin the trees and the buildings, lift earth from this part, drop in another; each person flees before

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\(^{150}\) *Prince*, 98. This also comes across as an attack on the Church and organized religion in general, stating that the idea of fatalism and living with one’s allotment in life is, in fact, a falsity. By suggesting that the individual can affect change for himself and better his situation in relation to his own fortune, Machiavelli essentially makes the possibility of socio-political mobility quite realistic. If an individual can change his fate and one’s position is not set from birth, the church must indeed lose much of its staying power, as the possibility of a better afterlife to entice individuals to cope with their current situations is inferior to better possibilities in this life.

\(^{151}\) *Prince*, 98.

\(^{152}\) *Prince*, 98.

\(^{153}\) *Prince*, 98.
them, everyone yields to their impetus without being able to hinder them in any regard."\textsuperscript{154} As he often does, though, Machiavelli continues suggesting that “dikes and dams” can be built, “so that when they rise later, either they go by a canal or their impetus is neither so wanton nor so damaging.”\textsuperscript{155} Machiavelli’s description is clear in suggesting that both religion and fate can be restrained by human means, making this connection even more obvious as he continues, saying that “(i)t happens similarly with fortune, which demonstrates her power where virtue has not been put in order\textsuperscript{*} to resist her and therefore turns her impetus where she knows that dams and dikes have not been made to contain her.”\textsuperscript{156} Machiavelli thus compares dikes and dams to virtue, which can be used as an adequate tool to fight the fickle forces of God\textsuperscript{157} and Fortune; the exact definition of virtue, however, remains unexplained here, yet the remainder of this chapter will attempt to expand on this concept by looking at the use of deception. Following this stirring attack on fatalism, Machiavelli uses the strong example of his Italy, suggesting that Italy lacks “any dike” to withstand the flood of fortune and god, while “Germany, Spain, and France” “had been diked by suitable virtue.”\textsuperscript{158} Thus, Machiavelli gives a current example that is strongly relevant to his current situation, since his work is nominally aimed at an Italian leader. It is also particularly pointed because this juxtaposition of virtue on one side and God and Fortune on the

\textsuperscript{154} Prince, 98.

\textsuperscript{155} Prince, 98.

\textsuperscript{156} Prince, 98-99.

\textsuperscript{157} This is an incredibly harsh reaction to religious principles, suggesting that fatalism and following the path that God has set out for an individual can be counteracted by virtue. This, in effect, implies that the way of God does not include virtue in its makeup; indeed, the paths of following God and the winds of fortune may both lead to the destruction of the individual.

\textsuperscript{158} Prince, 99.
other suggests a direct attack on the Roman Catholic Church in Italy, a bold move from an
individual of Machiavelli’s stature and position. Machiavelli begins his assault on religion and,
more relevant for my argument, fortune by putting forth an individual controlled both by fate and
human agency, with the possibility of total human agency through the use of virtue.

Machiavelli continues his description of and response to fortune, stating “that he is happy
who adapts his mode of proceeding to the qualities of the times; and similarly, he is unhappy
whose procedure is in disaccord with the times.”¹⁵⁹ This suggests that a ruler should be willing to
affect his behavior for different possible situations, both positive and negative. As such, the use
of straightforward or deceptive military and political tactics, as seen below, would seem quite
logical given different circumstances; yet, both have their particular uses for the prudent ruler.
Machiavelli goes on to discuss the natures of men in the remainder of Chapter XXV, concluding
that “it is better to be impetuous than cautious, because fortune is a woman,” who is more likely
to “be won more by the impetuous than by those who proceed coldly.”¹⁶⁰ This preference for
impetuousness seems to lead toward the use of deception and military trickery to accomplish the
ruler’s objectives and defy fortune, rather than the comparatively slow use of straightforward
diplomacy or frontal assaults for victory in the face of fortune.

With ironic flair, Machiavelli attempts to deceive the reader on the subject of deception
itself. In Chapter VIII of Prince, Machiavelli discusses the case of Agathocles, who became king
of Syracuse through deceptive means; having gathered “the people and Senate of Syracuse as
if…to decide things pertinent to the republic,” “(a)t a signal he had ordered, he had all the

¹⁵⁹ Prince, 99.
¹⁶⁰ Prince, 101.
senators and the richest of the people killed by his soldiers. Once they were dead, he seized and held the principe of that city without any civil controversy.\textsuperscript{161} Machiavelli evaluates Agathocles as a man whose “actions and virtue” “can be (little) attributed to fortune.”\textsuperscript{162} Thus, Machiavelli suggests one possible path to avoid the winds of fortune, the use of deception to promote one’s aims. Machiavelli does, however, address the morally questionable nature of Agathocles’ actions, emphasizing that “one cannot call it virtue to kill one’s citizens, betray one’s friends, to be without faith, without mercy, without religion; these modes can enable one to acquire empire, but not glory.”\textsuperscript{163} It seems, thus, that Machiavelli may indeed have an ethical problem with Agathocles’ deception:

> For if one considers the virtue of Agathocles in entering into and escaping from dangers, and the greatness of his spirit in enduring and overcoming adversities, one does not see why he has to be judged inferior to any most excellent captain. Nonetheless, his savage cruelty and inhumanity, together with his crimes, do not permit him to be celebrated among the most excellent men. Thus one cannot attribute to fortune or to virtue what he achieved without either.\textsuperscript{164}

Although it seems that Machiavelli initially disagrees with Agathocles’ use of deception, it seems, after further reading, that he implicitly allows for the use of deception as an adequate alternative to virtue, when attempting to counteract one’s fortune. In this way, Machiavelli shows that Agathocles was able to rise “from a mean and abject” fortune to become the tyrant of

\textsuperscript{161} \textit{Prince}, 34-35.
\textsuperscript{162} \textit{Prince}, 35.
\textsuperscript{163} \textit{Prince}, 35.
\textsuperscript{164} \textit{Prince}, 35.
Athens, despite his conspicuous lack of virtue.\textsuperscript{165} Thus, Machiavelli is leaving open a third possible method of political, as well as military, success, beyond fortune and virtue: the use of deception to accomplish one’s ends.

Machiavelli continues on the subject of Agathocles, asking how this character “could live for a long time secure in his fatherland, defend himself against external enemies, and never be conspired against by his citizens,” despite his “infinite betrayals and cruelties.”\textsuperscript{166} Machiavelli thus continues beyond ethics to ask about retribution against Agathocles after his acts of deception; indeed, Machiavelli seems to be asking a question of whether “cruelties (are) badly used or well used.”\textsuperscript{167} Machiavelli sees the latter as cruelties “done at a stroke, out of the necessity to secure oneself, and then are not persisted in but are turned to as much utility for the subjects as one can.”\textsuperscript{168} In opposition, “cruelties badly used” are those “which, though few in the beginning, rather grow with time than are eliminated.”\textsuperscript{169} Thus, in some ways, Machiavelli modifies the proper use of deception, suggesting that such deception must be used quickly, with a factor of shock and awe that allows the ruler to establish himself. This can be applied, in many ways, to Machiavelli’s ideas about the character of the ruler, beyond the example of Agathocles.

Machiavelli examines the necessary dual qualities of the prince in Chapter XVIII of \textit{The Prince}. He describes the “two kinds of combat” that a ruler may encounter, “one with laws, the

\textsuperscript{165} \textit{Prince}, 34-35.

\textsuperscript{166} \textit{Prince}, 37.

\textsuperscript{167} \textit{Prince}, 37.

\textsuperscript{168} \textit{Prince}, 37-38

\textsuperscript{169} \textit{Prince}, 38.
other with force." Machiavelli goes further to divide the character of such force, saying that the ruler should make use of “the fox and the lion, because the lion does not defend itself from snares and the fox does not defend itself from wolves. So one needs to be a fox to recognize snares and a lion to frighten the wolves.” Thus, Machiavelli gives another glimpse at the character of state deception, as the fox, the deceptive side of the ruler, must be used to notice and react to the deceptive actions of other actors, while the lion represents the ruler’s ability to strong-arm weaker opponents. Indeed, Machiavelli gives this explanation as the reasoning for unfaithful behavior by the ruler, for the observance of faith may be falsified by another party’s deceptive activities; Machiavelli uses the amoral state of the world to explain the likelihood unfaithful action, for, “if all men were good, this teaching would not be good.” He responds to any potential debate on this point by discussing the “many peace treaties and promises (that) have been rendered invalid and vain through the infidelity of princes.” This historical argument seems quite legitimate given a brief look at world affairs and military actions, as powerful actors including the United States have reneged on their previous agreements, to the

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170 *Prince*, 69.

171 *Prince*, 69. Machiavelli’s argument for the lion-like nature of the commander emphasizes the continued role of military strategy and decision-making for the ruler.

172 *Prince*, 69.

173 *Prince*, 69.

174 *Prince*, 69-70.
detriment of others.\textsuperscript{175} Last, Machiavelli gives an acute description of this user of “the fox,” “a great pretender and dissembler,” who succeeded because “men are so simple and so obedient to present necessities that he who deceives will always find someone who will let himself be deceived.”\textsuperscript{176} The great political theorist plays on twin key themes when analyzing the utility and necessity of deception and detecting such deception for the ruler: the unethical, amoral nature of humanity and the necessarily weak nature of certain individuals. Given a particularly strong ruler, Machiavelli seems to suggest that deception could be a strong force for such a ruler to succeed in the world political arena. As usual, though, Machiavelli must couch the possibility of such a strong ruler in relatively weaker language, merely suggesting the comparative nature of disadvantages in mankind. With a ruler like Frederick the Great, though, Machiavelli would suggest that he could take advantage of both the amoral nature of humanity and his high intelligence to defeat many weaker rulers through the intelligent use of deception.\textsuperscript{177}

Machiavelli continues on this theme of deception in Book Four of \textit{The Art of War}, providing a concrete example of valid deceptive tactics when he analyzes the use of “disturbance” in actual battle situations.\textsuperscript{178} Machiavelli defines such a method of “disturb(ing) the enemy army in a fight” as creating “something that frightens him.”\textsuperscript{179} He gives several

\textsuperscript{175} An immediate example that comes to mind would be the poor treatment of Native Americans by the US government after the latter reneged on past treaties.

\textsuperscript{176} \textit{Prince}, 69.

\textsuperscript{177} On the other hand, the ruler must also win battles through his military skill and ability to use force to defeat weaker enemies.

\textsuperscript{178} Niccolò Machiavelli, \textit{Art of War}, trans. Christopher Lynch (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 90.

\textsuperscript{179} \textit{AoW}, 90.
examples of such subversive tactics; a ruler may announce that “new supports are coming,” or “by showing things that represent” such supporting forces. \(^{180}\) Machiavelli then suggests that the above tactics can be supplemented by the use of ambushes, given a favorable geographic position, including such natural camouflage as “wooded and mountainous” areas. \(^{181}\) Thus, in many ways, Machiavelli combines the two military faces of the commander, the lion and the fox, as the ruler must be deceptive to accomplish the above actions, but he must also use his military acumen to set up a proper ambush and to successfully rout enemy forces after this ambush has been sprung. Immediately following this description, Machiavelli defines other methods of deception, such as the creation of false rumors within the enemy army of the death or capture of enemy leaders, \(^{182}\) crushing the moral of the enemy soldiers, who now feel leaderless. Specifically for the cavalry, Machiavelli describes the use of “unusual forms or noises” that can be used to disturb them, such as the use of elephants by Pyrrhus against the Roman army’s cavalry, “whose aspect disturbed it and disordered it.” \(^{183}\) Indeed, as Machiavelli suggests the fox must be used to figure out the enemy’s deceptive strategies, Machiavelli furthers the idea that a ruler in combat should know “how to dissimulate” “and pervert (some accident that frightens your soldiers),” which he describes as “a very prudent thing.” \(^{184}\) Machiavelli uses Sulla as his primary example of such action; this commander sent certain soldiers “to do some business,” wherein they were killed, yet he told his troops that he had “sent them into the hands of their enemies by art because

\(^{180}\) AoW, 90. Here he highlights the actions of Rufus, Glabrio, and Sulpitius, who were known to use these tactics.

\(^{181}\) AoW, 90.

\(^{182}\) AoW, 90-91.

\(^{183}\) AoW, 91.

\(^{184}\) AoW, 91.
he found out that they lacked faith.”\textsuperscript{185} Further, he describes the example of Sertorius, who killed the bearer of news of the death of an officer, “for fear that he would frighten them if he said the same to others.”\textsuperscript{186} Machiavelli rationalizes this cold-blooded murder as necessary because it prevents panic from setting in; “(i)t is a very difficult thing to stop an army and return it to battle once it has already moved to flee.”\textsuperscript{187} Thus, Machiavelli seems to give a three-part example of the necessity of deception for the ruler in military situations; military deception can be used to defeat enemies, to deter an enemy’s deceptive attempts at victory through methods of counter-deception, and to prevent panic routing one’s own army or visibly shaking the moral of one’s troops.

In many ways, Machiavelli’s description of deception in military settings reflects upon the idea of strong troops. The commanders of a prince’s forces, as well as the prince himself, must be mentally sharp and willing to use deception to their benefit and to achieve victory, just as the army should be composed of the strongest types of troops, constituent forces. Given these two strong elements, Machiavelli would seem to suggest that a ruler would be nearly indefatigable in combat. The challenge for this study thus remains to determine whether Frederick II himself made use of these ideals, and, specifically for this section, was willing to make use of strong executive action and the tools of deception to accomplish his military ends. Having seen that Frederick adapts Machiavelli’s personnel policy to his situation in 18\textsuperscript{th} century

\textsuperscript{185} AoW, 91-92.

\textsuperscript{186} AoW, 92.

\textsuperscript{187} AoW, 92.
Europe, one could expect that Frederick would make certain modifications to Machiavelli’s military strategies of deception to fulfill his own different military needs.

Frederick speaks to the concept of chance in his response to Chapter XXV of *The Prince* in his *Anti-Machiavel*, suggesting that chance can indeed be completely understood, though humans often lack the faculties or resources to ensure that chance does not play an integral role in their actions. Frederick argues that a ruler can use multiple faces to overcome the negative aspects of fortune and to create his own destiny. This view of destiny seems very humanist, perhaps reflecting the rationalist or Enlightenment thoughts of the time, suggesting that man has complete agency and control over his life and the determination of his future. When addressing deception, as explained in Chapter XXV of *The Prince*, Frederick uses his common approach to Machiavellian arguments, suggesting that, given certain qualifications, Machiavelli’s ideas may be used by a ruler of his time. Indeed, Frederick seems to back up this wavering support by his military decision-making, especially in his use of deception as Machiavelli suggests through the use of preemptive warfare and surprise attacks in Silesia and Saxony during his military campaigns. Thus, Machiavelli and Frederick both agree on the essential nature of fortune, suggesting that humans can adopt methods of overcoming such fortune and determining their own futures. Both also see the value of using deception in warfare, suggesting the essentiality of a cunning and skilled commander for any competent military force.

Frederick responds to Machiavelli’s assault on fortune with similar ideas, at least on the nature of fortune in relation to the ruler. First, he tellingly admits that, “(w)hilst we are but Men, that is, Beings very much circumscribed, we shall never be superior to what we call the Blows of Fortune. We ought to make all Advantages of Hazard, as soon as it happens. But our Life is too
short, and our Understanding too limited, to perceive all its Combinations.” Although Frederick seems to be suggesting that mankind may, at this point be unable to completely overcome fortune, he may be suggesting that, in the future, a ruler who uses his methods of overcoming fortune may be successful. If not, Frederick seems to suggest, it is the ruler’s job to do all he can to accomplish this. He describes the ruler, one who is “appointed to govern others,” as needing to take certain steps “in order to captivate Fortune.” This agrees with Machiavelli’s belief that one can modify the course of the river Fortune. Frederick’s description of such requirements is initially quite vague, stating that rulers should “perfect their Penetration and Prudence,” though he explains this idea by highlighting the necessity of making “their tempers pliable to the different Conjunctures of Affairs; which indeed is no easy Task.” Frederick suggests that rulers must alternate between these “two Sorts of Tempers,” making use of one or the other in whatever situation requires them; “(a) Prince, who would make Advantage of both these different Conjunctures, must learn to accommodate himself to each of them, and always to steer, like a skilful Pilot, according to the Times.” The author goes on to describe the first type as “bold and enterprising,” which he connects to those “Ages which favor the Glory of

188 A-M, 303.
189 A-M, 308.
190 A-M, 308.
191 A-M, 308-309.
192 Despite this comment, Frederick also seems to think that this concept may be a bit too idealistic, as “it is almost impossible a Prince should be so much Master of himself as to assume all Colours like the Chameleon” (A-M, 309), suggesting the limited nature of mankind, even for the ruler. Thus, Frederick would suggest that the ruler should attempt as much as possible to embody both characteristics in order to deny fate and to gain total agency over one’s life.
193 A-M, 310.
Conquerors, and of those bold and enterprising Men who seem to be born for mighty Wars, and mighty Revolutions. But they are especially favourable to those giddy, daring and fiery Spirits, who embroil Sovereigns, and furnish the common Enemy with an Opportunity of profiting by their Quarrels: And to such men almost all Conquerors owe their Success.”

Thus, Frederick seems to be pointing toward the more military and ambitious characteristics of the ruler, an individual who is a risk-taking strategist. The second type, though, is, by contrast, “wary and slow,” being historically-adapted for “other Times when it would seem that the World, being less ruffled and disturbed, requires to be governed only by Gentleness and Moderation; and when nothing is necessary but Circumspection and Prudence.” Further, Frederick connects this mentality to the ruler’s actual foreign policy duties; this ruler resides over a “happy Calm in Politicks, which commonly follows a Storm; then it is that Negotiations are more effectual than Battles, and that you may gain by the Pen what could not be acquired by the Sword.”

Thus Frederick addresses the challenge of fortune by bringing in dual necessary characteristics for the ruler. These two characters give the reader the full range of necessary actions, as he can be calculating and cunning in certain circumstances while bold and daring in others. Indeed, Frederick addresses the importance of such qualities through historical examples, stating that, the Elector of Bavaria did not make use “of Circumspection…at a Time when Circumspection was seasonable, that the Elector put to the Hazard of a Battle, for ever memorable and glorious for

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194 A-M, 309. Frederick’s tangential comment seems odd, but here the fiery individuals simply act as a vehicle for the ruler’s success and his overcoming of fortune. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand comes to mind here, as the European rulers, especially Kaiser Wilhelm, took advantage of a moment of fiery tension to invade other states and eventually embroil Europe in World War I.

195 A-M, 309.

196 A-M, 309.
the Germans,¹⁹⁷ what was in his own Power to preserve.”¹⁹⁸ Thus, this ruler only made use of the rash, conquering attribute, while, in this case, Frederick suggests that the more prudential element would have been of better use in forestalling defeat. Frederick thus decides the fundamental results of both of these attributes; for the first “a People venture much when their Prince is bold and enterprising, and are threatened with continual; whereas as a wary Sovereign, if he is not fit for atchieving great Exploits, seems to be more fit to govern that the other; one ventures, but the other preserves.”¹⁹⁹ Indeed, Frederick’s two qualities of the leader seem to agree in many ways with Machiavelli’s description of the man and the beast, as the ruler must be able to be both a governmental leader and military commander simultaneously, having the rule of law and rule of the military at his disposal. Indeed, Frederick’s characterizations of the bold nature of the ruler leave open the possibility of deceptive action, as he will explain in more detail below.

Despite Frederick’s earlier, Machiavellian theory that man can control his fate and decide his destiny, he seems to contradict himself later in this section. Continuing his analysis of the prince and his fate, Frederick suggests that, “(i)f either of (the two types of leaders) would be great Men, they must come into the World at a seasonable Time; otherwise their Talents will be more pernicious than profitable;” indeed, he suggests that these men create a “Plan of their Conduct” and “adhering to such a system,” so that “they will be sure to act consistently, without ever departing from their main Design,” yet Frederick still concludes “that human Nature is not

¹⁹⁷ His enemies, in this case.

¹⁹⁸ A-M, 311.

¹⁹⁹ A-M, 312.
sufficient for so many Duties." Thus, it seems, Frederick has contradicted himself, retracting his former comment on the ruler’s ability to overcome fate using his two modes of rule. Thankfully, Frederick does not leave us in such a contradiction, for “Justice requires that the People should be content with those Efforts which Sovereigns make to arrive at Perfection.”

Rulers may only be so successful in their efforts, and the populace must accept the successes as well as the failures because rulers are only human. “It is but an Act of Justice to bear with their Failings, while these are counterpoised by the Qualities of the Heart, and by good Intentions; we must never forget, that Error and Weakness are the Lot of every Man, and that there is nothing perfect in this World.” Frederick concludes that fate and destiny continue to play a role in the ruler’s decision-making, yet a ruler will succeed if he is a stronger governmental and military ruler and if his people give him the benefit of the doubt for his losses. Thus, it seems, Frederick adapts Machiavelli’s ideas in a rational way, accounting for the human element of a ruler’s character and his ability to sway his own destiny. Both theorists recognize the problematic role of fate and actions with unexpected, perhaps even “unfair,” consequences in the life of the ruler, yet both realize that the ruler must do the utmost to correct for this issue. While Machiavelli looks at deception to reverse fortune, Frederick suggests that the ruler must have the support of the population, who should be able to understand the ruler’s struggle with fate. He does not, however, rule out the use of fortune to reverse one’s fate, as was shown by his military campaigns and certain diplomatic actions.

200 A-M, 312.

201 “among whom the best accomplished will always be those whose Characters are most remote from that of Machiavel’s Prince.” (A-M, 313); Frederick takes another shot at Machiavelli hear, despite his tacit agreement with Machiavelli in this section.

202 A-M, 313.
Frederick’s comments on the dual characteristics of the leaders can be analyzed further, as he sees the necessity of deception in diplomatic affairs as well. What Frederick describes as a “little Digression,” may speak volumes to describe his closer-than-expected relationship with Machiavelli’s ideas of deception. Frederick comments, in direct response to Machiavelli, that “there are some unhappy Cases, when a Prince cannot help breaking his Treaties and Alliances.” Frederick seems to be wading into Machiavelli’s deception argument, yet he backs this statement up by adding that the ruler “ought to do (this) with as much Honour as he can, by giving timely Notice of it to his Allies, and shewing that he is forced to it by the greatest Necessity and for the Preservation of his People, which are the only Cases wherein it is allowable.” This language, at first look, seems morally puritan, suggesting that the ruler act with all fairness toward his allies or former allies; yet, if one takes a closer look, Frederick’s use of certain modifiers allows the ruler to justify his actions in any situation that entails “the greatest necessity” or “for the Preservation of his People.” These amorphous areas of foreign policy can be misconstrued or abused in many ways, as rulers are want to find excuses for switching sides or allying themselves with more successful states when the need exists, and all a ruler must do is to find a way to fit such traitorous activity into one of these categories. Indeed, if one examines the passage that Frederick seems to be addressing specifically in this diplomacy section, from early of in Chapter XVIII, one finds Frederick’s wording to agree with Machiavelli in many ways, applying Machiavelli’s ideas about faith in general to the science of diplomacy;

203 A-M, 203.
204 A-M, 203
205 A-M, 203.
206 A-M, 203.
Frederick allows the ruler to “to get around men’s brains with (his) astuteness; and in the end they have overcome those who have founded themselves on loyalty.”\textsuperscript{207} In the case of diplomacy, Frederick allows the smart, successful ruler to circumvent other rulers and nations for the sake of his country, despite the loyalty of these other countries to former treaty agreements.

Militarily, Frederick seemed ever-more capable of using deception to change his fate and improve the position of Prussia. This is best illustrated by Frederick’s invasions of Silesia and Saxony, which demonstrated the use of preemptive warfare and surprise attacks to accomplish Frederick’s military and economic goals. Frederick recognized the problematic position that existed for Prussia in terms of foreign policy; Prussia had the option of pursuing two very different paths:

(t)he first was to live in harmony with all its neighbors, which would be equivalent to a permanent state of fearful impotence and mean a hopeless defensive position in case of conflict.

The second alternative was to acquire, without too much regard for existing dynasties, such territories as would consolidate and round off the territory of the kingdom.\textsuperscript{208}

As such, Frederick decided that “the primary focus of his attention (would be) Prussia’s position as a power and his ambition to turn it into a great power.”\textsuperscript{209} The ruler quickly put this decision into effect, invading Silesia in “the one clearly unprovoked act of aggression in Prussian

\textsuperscript{207} \textit{Prince}, 69.


Despite Feuchtwanger’s implied condemnation of the invasion of Silesia as contradicting Frederick’s proclamation in Anti-Machiavel that it was “the duty of the ruler to adhere to the same ethical code in his public as in his private action,” Frederick’s invasion easily fits into Frederick’s theoretical explanation of fortune and deception. Prussia’s situation certainly qualified as one of Frederick’s “unhappy Cases,” as he was driven by the force of necessity to provide for a stronger Prussian future. Rather than putting Prussia in a position of weakness, “a hopeless defensive position,” Frederick determined that creating defensible borders was essential for Prussian existence and continuation, attempting to change Prussia’s fate against an inevitable downward spiral. Although Frederick’s arguments for the use of deceptive political and military action are rather amorphous, this situation provides a solitary example of necessary political deception. Prussia was in a weak political and geographic position at the time of Frederick’s rule, being divided into two territories in the middle of Europe. Political survival for the state can easily be justified by either of Frederick’s reasons for political deception, “the greatest necessity” or “for the Preservation of his People.”

Thus, in a very telling example, Frederick initially dismisses Machiavelli’s views on deception, yet he eventually determines that deception can be used to avert fortune through the

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212 *A-M*, 203.


214 As seen in the map above.

vehicle of political policy. Frederick demonstrates this by his invasion of Silesia in a desperate attempt to sustain the state of Prussia.²¹⁶

Yet again, Frederick demonstrates through the precise wording of Anti-Machiavel and through subsequent political actions that he agrees very thoroughly with Machiavelli’s view on fortune and deception. In the case of chance and hazard, Frederick suggests the strong characteristics of a leader and the support of the population will, given somewhat satisfactory conditions, allow the ruler to achieve his goals, perhaps even changing his fate. Here, perhaps, Frederick provides an accurate description of his personal goals, molding himself in the image of Machiavelli’s thought. In utilizing deception, Frederick seems to limit its use to state necessity, yet Frederick’s wording makes it obvious that the ruler can use such an exception wherever he deems it necessary. As such, Frederick is again modifying Machiavelli’s ideas for a modern time period, making his thoughts more digestible for the 18th century reader, while still allowing the ruler a significant amount of leeway in his actions. Indeed, Frederick even seems to carry the torch of strong executive action provided to him by Machiavelli through his political and military actions, stemming the dikes against overflowing negative fortune with Prussian military aggression and deceptive military action.

²¹⁶ The question arises, inevitably, of Frederick’s truthfulness in his implied explanation for invading Silesia. The critique would ask whether Prussia did indeed require territorial gains to survive as a political entity. It suffices to say that Frederick’s political ambition would have allowed his amorphous definition of political necessity to encompass any number of expansionist tactics. Here, however, Prussia did seem to be territorially vulnerable (as seen above) and Frederick’s argument holds water.
Chapter VI: Populace, Ruler, and the General Benefit of Warfare

After analyzing the nature of troops and the qualities of military leadership, a discussion of military theory and strategy would be pointless without a discussion of the end-goals involved. Specifically, one must analyze who makes the most gains from warfare, whether the constituency of a state or the ruler himself. Machiavelli and Frederick II seem to agree in general, intimating that both ruler and constituency benefit significantly from successful military campaigns. Frederick once again expands on Machiavelli’s ideas, making Machiavelli’s claims of popular gains from warfare more understandable and obvious for a more modern audience. The same theme occurs in both authors’ discussions of just war, which demonstrates an important connection with the theme of the general benefit of warfare.

Machiavelli’s support for a joint gains theory logically develops from his treatment of the population in warfare. As seen above, Machiavelli asserts that a ruler may best succeed in warfare by arming his constituents, rather than using mercenaries or other forces. In addition, Machiavelli points to the necessity of a ruler joining in an alliance with his people and being able to trust them, rather than protecting himself inside of his fortifications. These two ideas seem to suggest that the ruler and people can best succeed in warfare when they work together to defeat the enemy. As such, it seems obvious that warfare should benefit both the ruler and the populace, as both groups are ensured of their own defense and a strong military through this alliance. Thus, if the end-goals of warfare are total victory or the successful defense of one’s country, both populations seem to succeed equally to Machiavelli. If, however, the goals of warfare are different, e.g. financial gains, Machiavelli may suggest that the population and the ruler benefit
in different manners from warfare. In addition, these ideas are integrally connected with the theme of just war.

Machiavelli’s position on the benefit of warfare seems rather simple and conflict-free based on the above description. In reality, his argument is more complex. Chiefly, Machiavelli’s position above seems to disagree with his statements on the civil relationship between ruler and ruled. First, he points out the need “for all princes except the Turk and the Sultan to satisfy the people rather than the soldiers, because the people can do more than the soldiers.” This comment seems confusing due to Machiavelli’s emphasis on a constituent army; in this situation, the citizens would indeed be the soldiers, so this description would be quite useless. Machiavelli seems to be discussing the current state of affairs in Renaissance Italy, where mercenary military power was the norm and the citizens and soldiers were separated. Machiavelli further supports this idea in Chapter XVIII, saying that a prince should “win and maintain his state: the means will always be judged honorable…For the vulgar are taken in by the appearance and the outcome of a thing, and in the world there is no one but the vulgar.”

Thus, though speaking in a negative tone towards the masses, Machiavelli is suggesting that both parties will benefit from warfare if the state is maintained. Indeed, Machiavelli states that, in the actions of princes, “where there is no court to appeal to, one looks to the end.” This brings in the important discussion of the just war and its implications for Machiavellian thought.

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217 Prince, 81.
218 Prince, 71.
219 Prince, 71.
Machiavelli’s definition of a just war is noticeably elastic, seemingly separating him from Frederick. In *The Prince*, Machiavelli suggests that “‘war is just to whom it is necessary, and arms are pious when there is no hope but arms.’”\(^{220}\) This statement is strangely contradictory, though Machiavelli’s real meaning is understandable. The first clause suggests that just war may fulfill any designs of the ruler and constituents, as bound by the vague definition of necessity. The second clause is far more restrictive, suggesting that war may only occur in a situation where arms are the only possible situation. Interestingly, though, Machiavelli does not explaining the meaning of the phrase “‘no hope but arms.’”\(^{221}\) This is telling, as Machiavelli leaves open the possibility of military use in any situation where the ruler perceives, or even pretends to perceive, that conflict is the only possible solution. The ruler’s perceptions on the necessity of warfare may indeed be false or imagined, yet, as seen in the last paragraph, the ruler’s excuses for warfare will always be accepted by his people. This means that, according to Machiavelli, all warfare is justified that satisfies the demands of the people, chiefly success and the continuation of the state. Thus Machiavelli’s definition of the just war ties together the constituents and ruler, as the ruler acts in a just manner if his actions satisfy the needs and demands of the constituents. Machiavelli would suggest that the two parties both benefit in a roughly equal manner from just war, as the gains made from warfare satisfy both the ruler and the constituency.

Machiavelli ties together the concept of ruler-constituent agreement on warfare with the idea of the just war to suggest that any conflict benefiting both the populace and the ruler is just

\(^{220}\) *Prince*, 103. Machiavelli is quoting Livy here (*Prince*, 103), but he agrees with this sentiment.

\(^{221}\) *Prince*, 103.
and allowable. Frederick, as he is wont to do, expands on Machiavelli’s ideas of the dual benefit of warfare (both for the ruler and the masses), repeatedly suggesting that the ruler should benefit the masses with all of his decisions. Frederick cloaks Machiavelli’s strong rhetoric on just warfare into three categories, yet in combination all of these categories essentially add up to Machiavelli’s definition of just warfare. These categories, interest, defense, and precaution, are so amorphous as to allow almost any type of military action, though Frederick agrees with Machiavelli on the necessity of constituent agreement. Indeed, Frederick’s military actions very much agree with his cryptic theory on just warfare, much to the chagrin of his biographers.

Initially, Frederick’s response to Machiavelli’s definition of the just war seems quite contradictory. He first highlights the importance of cause, in opposition to Machiavelli; “(w)hat makes a War just or unjust is the Cause of it.” He does agree with Machiavelli when describing “War (as) a Resource in Extremity, so it ought only to be employ’d with Precaution” and induced by “solid and indispensable Reasons.” These reasons are threefold and represent Frederick’s subtle agreement with Machiavelli’s definition of just war and constituent-ruler agreement.

Frederick’s three categories of just war are “defense,” “interest,” and “(p)recaution.” The first, defensive wars, “are the most just.” This idea is very simple; if one is attacked, one has the right to self-defense. Next, Frederick describes “Wars…made for Interest, when Kings

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222 A-M, 324.
223 A-M, 324.
224 A-M, 325.
225 A-M, 325.
are obliged to undertake them in order to maintain their contested Rights.”

Frederick maintains that such rulers “plead their Cause with Sword in Hand, and Battles decide the Validity of their Reasons.” Thus, Frederick begins turning on his own earlier statements on the means defining the justice of warfare, seeming to state that the winners are just in warfare over “contested Rights.”

Frederick is suggesting that the ends, in this case victory, create just warfare, going completely against his earlier sentiments and agreeing with Machiavelli. Third are “Wars made for the Sake of Precaution, and which Princes do well to undertake,” which Frederick describes as “offensive indeed, but just.” Frederick defends these conflicts as allowable because they prevent “the excessive Grandeur of a Prince (from) overwhelm(ing) and swallow(ing) up the Universe.” Indeed, Frederick describes such anticipatory action through a weather metaphor, calling an impending invasion as the “Storm that is approaching” and an anticipatory attack as the proper response to the “Lightening that fortels it.” Thus, Frederick seems to define this latter type of conflicts as reminiscent of a defensive war; in this case, the defense of the state revolves around “escap(ing) the Tempest” through offensive action, rather than allowing another state to gain the upper hand through an offensive.

226 A-M, 325.
227 A-M, 325.
228 A-M, 325.
229 A-M, 325.
230 A-M, 325.
231 A-M, 325.
232 A-M, 325.
Frederick’s three categories seem to promote his theme of cautious, last-option warfare, yet, with further investigation, the three options combine to allow for any type of warfare that the ruler might deem necessary. This is most obvious in the latter two types of just warfare. First, Frederick’s insistence on the just cause of rights allows the ruler a near free hand in action. Any ruler may convince himself or his people that their rights have been infringed upon, whether this idea happens to be true or false. The concept of right is abstract enough to create outlandish claims for conquering, as was demonstrated by Hitler during World War II, when the dictator argued that Germany had a right to expand to gain the right to German liebensraum, or living space. Clearly, Frederick has no qualms with invoking the concept of the just war for selfish or morally tainted reasons. Second, his definition of preemptive warfare asserts the ruler’s right to engage in any conflict where he sees “Clouds that gather” and “a Storm that is approaching.”

Again, it is the ruler’s choice to define an offensive as preemptive, giving the ruler the ability to respond to any foreign threat, whether it may be military or economic, social, or otherwise. Frederick demonstrates here that the ruler as a nearly unlimited scope in allowable action, allowing all warfare to be termed just.

Frederick further agrees with Machiavelli on the nature of gains from warfare, as described after his explanation of the three just types of war. He expands on the above three types of warfare as being just, describing such just wars as those “whose sole Design is to guard against Usurpations, to maintain unquestionable Rights, to guarantee the publick Liberty, and to ward off the Oppression and Violence of the Ambitious.” The potential gains for the people

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\(^{233}\) *A-M*, 325.

\(^{234}\) *A-M*, 325.
are seen throughout this explanation. First, the people gain from stable government, which may only occur through a government that is strong enough to prevent foreign incursions. Second, the masses are indubitably benefited by a system that protects both their rights and liberties against foreign intervention, dominance, and repression. Third, the ruler uses defensive and preventive war to prevent the same type of repression listed above. Thus, Frederick paints the ruler as a beneficial protector, employing warfare as a method of protection for the constituents, allowing the people to keep their vital rights against an oppressor.

Indeed, Frederick’s description here establishes the idea of an intelligent ruler who respects his own people. Frederick writes disparagingly of the princes of Machiavelli’s time, suggesting that “(t)he best Advice that can be given them, would be, methinks, to lessen a little the Opinion they entertain of their own Grandeur, the extreme Veneration they have for their ancient and illustrious Pedigree.” This suggests that Frederick’s definition of the intelligent prince goes beyond military matters, intimating qualities of rulership that satisfy the needs and wants of the people. In this case, though, the intelligent prince is one who defends his citizens and goes to war in situations that benefit both parties, suggesting an equality that certainly did not exist in his time. It is unlikely that, in a time of near-universal absolute monarchies in Europe, Frederick’s political colleagues went to war with their constituents in mind, yet Frederick suggests that rulers should use such a military strategy. Indeed, Frederick’s restrictions on warfare seem more aimed at preventing unpopular warfare rather than unjust warfare on the world scale; for Frederick, protecting one’s own people seems more important than respecting

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235 A-M, 111.

236 By unpopular here, I mean wars that do not benefit the populace.
the rights of other states. This may suggest a new definition of just warfare, one based on national and domestic interests rather than concepts of international justice.

Frederick’s military actions agree in many ways with this domestic-centered definition of just warfare and support for the constituency. Frederick’s first campaign against Silesia reflects these beliefs, as Frederick “says he went to war in order to acquire reputation and to increase the power of his country. He chose Silesia because the French, the English and the Dutch would have no reason to stop him and because it would be a great addition to his domains with its agricultural and industrial riches and largely Protestant population.” Frederick’s actions obviously were aimed to benefit his constituents through all of these reasons for attack; Prussians in general gained from Frederick’s military and personal leadership gaining acclaim, preventing attacks from other powers out of fear. Further, Frederick’s attempt at augmenting his country’s power certainly benefited his constituents, as the gains in raw materials certainly would benefit the Prussian economy, as would the addition of a larger Protestant population, one that would agree with Prussia’s majority-Protestant populace. Frederick did not, on the other hand, go to war because of a personal insult or injury, instead attempting to benefit his state by engaging in this example of Frederick’s offensively-just warfare.

Frederick II and Machiavelli seem to agree on all aspects of the ruler-subject relationship in warfare. Both use deceptive language to suggest that the ruler should be uninhibited by any


238 Nancy Mitford, Frederick the Great, 67.

239 One could argue that Catholic constituents would have been marginalized by the Silesian takeover, given the increase in Protestant population, but this issue does not relate to the majority and thus seems rather minor.
outside forces in his determination to go to war; the only corollary is that such ruler should
benefit the populace, as the populace plays an essential part in the kingdom and in warfare. Here,
the connection with the chapter on soldiers is obvious, as the populace makes up a majority of
the military forces of the kingdom. It is only logical that those risking death for the kingdom and
the ruler should benefit from such warfare, demanding intelligent military decisions and
declarations of war from the ruler. This idea is somewhat revolutionary, as neither author lived in
a time that saw a particular emphasis on constituent benefit from warfare; rather, unimportant
and trifling matters often caused wars, such as intrigue or religious reasons. Thus, Machiavelli
and Frederick the Great are arguing for a new system of military decision-making that benefits
the constituents, creating, in essence, a new definition of just warfare.
Chapter VII: Conclusion

This work strives to demonstrate and explain the difficult relationship between Machiavelli and Frederick the Great. The two authors were divided by centuries, socio-political position, language, and political landscapes. This difference is essential in understanding their works, as Frederick’s work serves as an adaptation of Machiavelli’s thoughts and ideas on military-political theory, developing Machiavelli’s ideas for a later time and a different socio-political system in Europe. Frederick’s work is a masterful piece of deception, as he uses the title of his work and several introductory arguments to create the false idea that he disagrees with Machiavelli. Instead, Frederick actually agrees with Machiavelli’s ideas, assenting to these designs by converting Machiavellian ideas into ideas that make sense in modern times.

Frederick seems to write in such a deceptive way for a variety of reasons; perhaps he is attempting to deceive other monarchs, leaving them adrift amidst a sea of lies. At the same time, Frederick may also be attempting to lay out his true military and political intentions to future generations or potential allies. This work has analyzed the developments of these authors in three key areas: fortune and deception, the makeup of military forces, and just warfare and the general benefit of warfare. In the section on soldiers, Frederick agrees with Machiavelli that constituent soldiers are ideal, yet he maintains that the geo-political state of Europe may require the use of mercenaries and other forces. Further, he brings up the role of the war economy, another factor that Machiavelli does not examine, which plays into Frederick’s policies. In the fortune and deception section, both authors highlight the importance of deception as a method of overcoming fortune, and Frederick brings out the theme of strong ruler action for the benefit of the state, which both authors support. Last, both writers suggest that the ruler should be uninhibited in his military decisions and declarations of war, independent of any notions or ideals of justice. The
ruler should only be responsive to his people, going to war in situations that assist the people, whether economically, politically, or in another manner.

Indeed, Frederick seems to make use of one of Machiavelli’s most important teachings, understanding how to use history correctly. Frederick makes good use of Machiavelli’s teaching, stating that “a prince should read histories and consider in them the actions of excellent men, should see how they conducted themselves in wars, should examine the causes of their victories and losses, so as to be able to avoid the latter and imitate the former.”

Frederick makes use of Machiavelli’s “victories,” his core ideas surrounding the nature of good soldiers and armies, successful forms of deception, and the laws of war and their relationship to the state and the masses, incorporating these ideas into his thoughts. In addition, Frederick notes that some of Machiavelli’s ideas need to be adapted for the 1700s, being careful to make judicious use of Machiavellian concepts and his own military genius to adapt these core ideas to his own government and military. Frederick essentially adapts Machiavelli’s own idea of historical prudence and intelligence to Machiavelli’s own work, making use of the sections that apply to his time, while developing and adapting those ideas that are obsolete. Frederick develops these ideas because he sees Machiavelli’s core concepts as a useful framework for his own designs of military-political theory and strategy.

Thus, the two authors are quite similar in their conclusions, with Frederick often expanding on Machiavelli’s conclusions and adapting Machiavellian concepts for contemporary use. In the three main cases, Frederick and Machiavelli grapple with the issue of the prudent nature of the commander, striving to put forward an example of a prudent ruler armed with

\[\text{Prince, 60.}\]
strong troops, an effective military strategy, and a policy that can be easily supported by the populace.

Lastly, one can see the important role for these topics in modern military strategy and decision-making. The role of the commander and his ability to use deception to accomplish ends continues to play an essential role in warfare, as surprise attacks are often necessary to accomplish military goals, as seen in Operation Desert Storm. The importance of soldiers continues as well, as the United States Army and almost all other strong and successful countries rely on their own troops for defense. Last, the role of the population and the notion of just warfare are incredibly important in modern wars, as expressed by norms of the Geneva Convention and the United Nations. In the United States specifically, the population plays an essential role in determining the commander-in-chief of the military, the president. Further, due to the nature of modern warfare, national populations have the most to gain and lose from warfare. Thus, beyond a historical study of military ideas and experience in the ages of Machiavelli and Frederick the Great, this work is quite useful in its ability to explain and connect with modern US foreign relations and worldwide military policies.
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