



The Prince

Niccolo Machiavelli (1469 - 1527)

Read by:	Paul Adams	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
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Niccolo Machiavelli broke the mold when he wrote *The Prince*, an ostensibly traditional work in the style of books written for princes. Written in the Italian vernacular for all to read, it speaks truth to power about power: the truth about how “things really work” in the sphere of power, politics, leadership and governance. Most advances in man’s progress occur when the thinkers of their time look at the world as it is and not as they might want it to be. It’s the difference between the declarative and the subjunctive modes – the difference between “this is this” and “the would, could, shoulds” of a fantasy land. Princes obtain and retain power over their subjects using tactics with little or no consideration for ethics or the strictures of the then

dominant faith. And those who argue to the contrary will be the ones without power. In saying so *The Prince* was and remains groundbreaking and subversive. And required reading for anyone active or interested in public life.

Niccolò di Bernardo dei Machiavelli (May 3, 1469 – June 21, 1527) was an Italian writer, politician, diplomat, and philosopher based in Florence during the Renaissance. Little is known of his family origins, yet he seems to have received an excellent education. He was prominent in public affairs, serving as Secretary to the Second Chancellor of the Republic of Florence for fourteen years during the years the Medici were out of power. He traveled extensively as a diplomat on behalf of Florence and built a reputation as an astute judge of people and institutions. The Medici returned to power in 1512 and Machiavelli was wrongly accused of conspiracy, imprisoned and tortured for several weeks. Upon his release he retired from public life to a farm outside Florence to undertake literary pursuits. He wrote *The Prince* in late 1513, dedicating the work to Giuliano de Medici in hopes of regaining his status in the Florentine government. He produced plays, poetry, and other works, most notably the *Discourses on the Ten Books of Titus Livy*, his other major contribution to political thought. He gradually returned to the favor of the Medici and was commissioned by Cardinal Giulio de Medeci to write a *History of Florence*, which he completed in 1525 and presented to the Cardinal, now Pope Clement VII.