



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER


A Critical Analysis of Machavelli's View on the Criterion of Moral Action based on the Anthropological Basics of Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi

Zeinab Kabiri^{1*}, Ashraf Hashemi², Kuburat Agbogun²

1. * Assistant Prof. in Department of Islamic Education, Faculty of Hazrat Masoume Qom, Farhangian University, Tehran, Iran, (*Corresponding Author*)

2. PhD Student in Department of Women Studies, Faculty of Woman and Family, Religions and Denominations University, Qom, Iran, andishehashemi@yahoo.com

3. BA in Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Management Studies, Kwara State Polytechnic Institute of Technology, Kwara, Nigeria, and PhD Student in Bintul-Hoda Institute of Higher Education, Al-Mustafa International University, Qom, Iran, kubratagbogun@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO		ABSTRACT
Article History: <i>Received: 24 March 2023</i> <i>Revised: 16 May 2023</i> <i>Accepted: 29 May 2023</i>		SUBJECT AND OBJECTIVES: This article is to explain Machiavelli's view on the criterion of moral action and its evaluation based on the anthropological foundations of Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi. METHOD AND FINDING: The method of this article is descriptive-analytical and the findings of this article are: Machiavelli is a power-oriented philosopher who presented his moral opinions in the form of his political views. He believes that any kind of behavior and action can be used to achieve the goal of human power; But Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi believes, to determine the standard of goodness and ugliness of human actions, one must first gain a correct understanding of man, his existential dimensions, his happiness and misery, his perfection and ultimate goal. CONCLUSION: Machiavelli considers the main goal of life to be human power and considers human actions moral if they enable humans to achieve material power. From his viewpoint, power has inherent value and man can use any means to acquire it. On the other hand, Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi believes in acquiring spiritual and moral life. He believes that the goal does not justifies the means, and to attaining the human power strength, you cannot use any behavior and action to achieve the goals.
Key Words: <i>Anthropology</i> <i>Moral Action</i> <i>Criterion of Moral Action</i> <i>Machiavellianism</i> <i>Misbah Yazdi</i>		
DOI: 10.22034/imjpl.2023.16081.1101		
DOR: 20.1001.1.26767619.2023.10.34.3.5		
		
* Corresponding Author: Email: zekabiri60@cfu.ac.ir ORCID: 0000-0001-5035-8826		Article Address Published on the Journal Site: http://p-l-journals.miu.ac.ir/article_8223.html
NUMBER OF REFERENCES 29	NUMBER OF AUTHORS 3	NATIONALITY OF AUTHOR (Iran, Nigeria)

Introduction

Some moral philosophers hold that, unlike natural actions that are used to manage worldly life and are common between us and animals, moral actions are devoted to human life and are superior to animal life.

So, the criterion of moral actions, means that what characteristics should an action have in order to be considered among moral actions and to be removed from the normal and natural actions?

Other philosophers of ethics have also explained the moral action according to its purpose and goal, and some have defined the morality of actions according to the intention and motivated ultimate goal of human actions in that action.

So, depending on the criteria for considering an act as moral, a philosopher explains and

establishes his own moral school.

Therefore, the main question of this article is: What is the criterion of moral action from Machiavelli's viewpoint and what is Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi's criticism regarding this view based on the foundations of anthropology?

Theoretical Foundations and Research Background

Ethics (Akhlaq), is the plural form of “kholq” and “kholuq” and literally means mood, habit, character, disposition and inner nature, as opposed to “khalq” which means outer appearance. (*Ragheb Esfahani, 1995: 297; Fayoumi, 1984: 180*)

On the other hand, Anthropology is knowledge that examines human beings, aspects or dimensions of their existence or a certain group and stratum of human beings. Scientists have studied anthropology from different

aspects, such as: anthropology in terms of mysticism, philosophy, and experience. (*Rajabi, 2001: 21-23*)

The question raised here is what is the criterion of moral action and when human actions, called moral?

Philosophers have different opinions about this question: The action that is not the end of man himself, the action that is for the purpose of fulfilling duty, and the action that leads man to the goal of morality. (*Misbah Yazdi, 2013: 295*)

On the other hand, Niccolò Machiavelli, is the famous Italian political philosopher and playwright, lived in an era that was greatly influenced by the Renaissance.

Machiavelli is a representative of the school of neo-fundamentalism. He revived the political philosophy and linked power and politics with

ethics for the first time. He considered power as the ultimate goal of man and allowed the use of any method, both good and bad, to obtain and maintain it. (*Motahari, 2005, Vol. 23: 249*)

The present article evaluates and criticizes Machiavelli's view based on the anthropological foundations of Ayatollah Misbah in stages: Anthropological foundations, moral action criteria and school of power.

Based on this, as the examination of the standard of human moral action requires an explanation of the man's position in that school, Machiavelli's view on the nature of man, his changeability or immutability, perfection and the orientation of human abilities, power and its relationship with perfection, and inherent dignity of man is discussed and then this view is evaluated by Ayatollah

Misbah Yazdi view (Philosopher, Quranic exegete and the Former Head of Imam Khomeini Educational and Research Institute in Iran).

Also, in the second step, moral action, the classification of moral actions, the criterion of the value of moral action and the way of determining the criteria of the value of moral action from his view is explained. Then Machiavelli's view is evaluated from the perspective of Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi.

The background of the research is as follows:

- The book “*Discourses*” by Niccolo Machiavelli, is one of the sources that explains Machiavelli's view on the relationship between power, morality, justice and government.
- Another famous book by Machiavelli is titled “*The Prince and the Art of War*”,

which examines the relationship between ethics and politics and the moral qualities that a ruler should have. Actually the famous ten principles of Machiavelli were taken from this book.

- The article titled “*Machiavelli's Political Anthropology*” by Dent Jermaine also discusses human nature, the inconsistency of human nature, the relationship between politics and human nature, and the negative essence of human nature and creativity from Machiavelli's viewpoint.

- Ayatollah Misbah view is also explained in his books such as “*Anthropology in the Quran*”, “*Law and Politics in the Quran*” and “*Critical Study of Moral Schools*”, which examine the nature of man, his happiness, perfection and

the ultimate goal of human actions and finally, the standard of moral actions.

Although the introduced sources have made references to the subject, there is no source that independently expresses Machiavelli's view on the standard of moral action and evaluates his view from the perspective of Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi.

Basics of Machiavelli's Anthropology

1. The Nature of Man and his Real Essence

Fan Fukno, one of the famous interpreters of Machiavelli's views, has reviewed the materiality of human identity based on Nietzsche's and Machiavelli's viewpoint.

He declares the philosophical anthropology of Nietzsche and Machiavelli are based on human physicality. So spiritual dimension of man is not

found in Machiavelli's works. (*Ref: Holler, 2009*)

It can be concluded that if man is considered as a one-dimensional being without a single soul, discussing about values and criteria for achieving them tend to be material and perfectionism remains incomplete, because eternal values are related to the human soul.

Machiavelli has referred to the badness of human nature in different chapters of the book “*Discourses*”. He even begins the introduction of the book like this:

People are born with a jealous nature and tend to be criticized more than to be praised. (Machiavelli, 1984)

According to him, man is humble and ambitious, and because he has such a creation, he gets tired of his work to the point where he even forgets his father's death, but

he never forgets his father's property.

Most of the critics of Machiavelli's books believe that according to him, the social position and the law make a person overcome his selfishness and desire, but the social position cannot suppress the selfishness of a person; So politicians should benefit from this bad human trait (ambition) to increase their power, and they can use any means to get the power. (*Madadpour, 2010, Vol. 1: 45-46*)

He believes that when a person does a good deed, he is necessarily either forced or in need, and if his freedom and need are satisfied, he immediately makes the world chaotic and full of unrest, so there should be a law for him.

2. Human Changeability or Immutability

Machiavelli does not accept that ethics may change the destiny, though some of his critics assert that he did so indirectly. (*Machiavelli, 2011: 16*)

Machiavelli discusses the immutability of human morals in his “*The Prince*” book; he narrates the story of two commanders, one of whom was bad and the other good, but both of them reached the same degree of success. The story concludes that the success of commanders goes back to their internal states, which are always constant, and that changes are the external states of humans. (*Machiavelli, 2019a*)

He believes that every human being has an unchangeable nature and the moral traits derived from his nature are unchangeable because deviation from nature is not possible (natural determinism).

He also assumes that only human traits and external states can be changed. Machiavelli writes in a chapter of the book “*The Prince*”:

The fact that man cannot change voluntarily is due to two reasons: One is the impossibility of deviating from human nature, and the second is the difficulty of convincing himself to do so (changing his personality). (Machiavelli, Chapter. 9: 116-117)

3. Humanism or Human Orientation

Humanism, a prevalent school in the West, means that man is the centre of the world, and philosophical, moral, political, social and economic systems should be governed according to his will, because human happiness is the criterion of all values. All scientific and practical activities should revolve

around human well-being and happiness.

From Machiavelli's viewpoint, man is the centre of values; Therefore, human power and dignity must be preserved, keeping human dignity means preserving maximum freedom and satiating the power-seeking instinct. (Jurdjevic, 2014: 102-83)

The dignity that Machiavelli holds for the nobles, and the dignity that he holds for the weak are completely different.

He attributed the degree of dignity and worth of a person to the degree of his strength. One of the critics of his works has said:

The morality and commitment that Machiavelli believes in is based on his hatred of aristocratic corruption and self-dealing, rather than on the basis of human dignity and equality. (Duwell, 2014)

The Standard of Moral Action from Machiavelli's Viewpoint

Machiavelli describes ethics from two aspects: Individual ethics, which a person must adhere to ethics as much as he can, and social ethics, which is the same ethics in the field of politics and society. Then he has distinguished between the ethics of a healthy society from the ethics of an unhealthy society.

He maintains that in an unhealthy society, morality is subordinate to necessity and political expediency.

Machiavelli stresses on the dialectical relationship between morality and law and says: Just as good law is necessary to maintain good morality, good morality is also necessary to obey laws.

He believes that the concepts of virtue and art are associated with merit, effort,

diligence and chivalry. (*Machiavelli, 2011, Vol. 5: 50*)

According to Machiavelli, the concept of virtue should be studied in the light of the concept of power and utilitarian ethics. Machiavelli stated in the book “*Prince and Speeches*” that power is an end in itself and virtue should be at the service of power. (*Ibid: 102*)

Based on Machiavelli views, it is not necessary to observe ethics in the political sphere; and keeping power and supporting it is more important.

In “*The Prince*” book, he emphasizes that in order to have a healthy society, the ruler must adhere to ethics, but this adherence of the ruler to ethics is not permanent, and whenever the ruler feels that the observance of ethics is in conflict with the interests of the government or his person,

he can disobey the ethical principles.

It seems that Machiavelli somehow believed in the ethics of positivists, because he does not consider moral rules to be fixed. (*Machiavelli, 2011, Vol. 5: 102*)

In determining the criterion of moral action and distinguishing it from other human actions, philosophers were divided into two groups: Result-oriented (consequentialism) and Duty-oriented.

Result-oriented refer to those moral theories that assume the results of actions are the basis of any valid moral verdict about them.

Based on consequentialism, good and right action is the action that leads to the best results. The criterion of ethical action is getting the desired results or goals from doing the action.

Some schools that seek to achieve perfection are: Utilitarianism, Hedonism, Powerism, etc.

In contrast to result-orientation, there is the school of duty orientation which emphasizes on the performance of duties and tasks and considers it more important than the goal of the action.

Based on the duty- oriented theories, we have a duty to do some actions and refrain from doing some other actions; this duty arises from the nature of the action itself and not from the results obtained by doing the action. (*Misbah Yazdi, 2013: 295*)

Powerism is a result-oriented school, so Machiavelli, like his other companions, defines the criterion of moral action as a tool for obtaining the ultimate goal and perfection, that is, the power of man.

1. Classification of Moral Actions

Value means the merit of something and valuation means estimating the value of that thing. Value involves some kind of truth, correctness, or even goodness. The expansion of the meaning and application of this term has gradually caused the meanings of these concepts to become different in each of the fields. (*Edwards, 1967: 229*)

In a popular classification, values are divided into intrinsic and non-intrinsic. Intrinsic value means that an object is valuable “On its own”. A non-value is a value that is good not for its own sake, but for the sake of something else that is somehow related to it. (*The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2017*)

As stated before, Machiavelli regarded power to be as an end in itself and an intrinsic

value. As he writes in one of his famous book, “*The Prince*”, the princes must be ready to sacrifice their virtues and desirable traits in order to gain and maintain power. Therefore, from his viewpoint, morality should serve power. (*Machiavelli, 2011, Chapter. 16:129-130*)

2. The Role of Intention and Motivation in the Evaluation of Moral Actions

Since Machiavelli is a political philosopher, not a moral philosopher, it is very difficult to find his specific theory on ethics, the criterion of moral action and intention. For he just values material power and apparent government, he appreciates the intention of performing moral actions only if it leads to human strength.

Therefore, from his viewpoint, telling the truth or telling a lie is not important, whatever makes a person

more powerful is desirable and has more value. (*Machiavelli, 2019a: 27*)

3. Way of Determining the Criteria of the Value of Moral Action

Machiavelli argues that if the criteria of values are not found in nature as their primary source, they should be sought in the empirical study of history as their secondary source. (*Benner, 2009: 131-132*)

Therefore, he believes that by referring to nature and history, we can comprehend what actions strengthen our sense of power and what actions weaken this sense, the first type is considered virtues and the second type are vices. (*Ibid: 343-346*)

Machiavelli has turned to oppressing in order to escape from being oppressed. He overlooks inherent goodness and badness, justice and

injustice; even the just actions that cause weakness are considered bad and cruel actions that bring power are good. He wrote in the book of “*Discourse*”:

When the security of our country is in danger, justly or unjustly, consideration of what is just or unjust, merciful or cruel, is not worthy; it is shameful, just there should be concern for power. (Machiavelli, 1883, Part. 3, Chapter. 41: 293)

In other words, he supports the immoral behaviour of the ruler if it leads to the strength of the country and does not propose his advice.

According to Machiavelli's moral system, it is impossible to defend these two moral principles accepted by all moral systems and all wise people, that “Justice is Good” and “Cruelty is Bad”. Anything that serves to increase power

is good and anything that causes a decrease in human power and ability is bad.

Therefore, if an oppressive act increases the power and dignity of the country, that act is good according to Machiavelli, or if a just act causes a decrease and weakness of power, that act will be bad. (*Machiavelli, 2019a: 96-97*)

Machiavelli and The School of Power

This school presumes that for recognizing moral virtues and vices, one should decide which actions strengthen a person's power and which ones weaken it; the first type are virtues and the second are considered vices.

In this school, perfection is equal to ability and imperfection is equal to weakness and incapacity, and goodness and badness are measured by this criterion.

Therefore, in the school of powerism, a human being who is known as a perfect human, has power. In other words, the perfection of man is in his strength and ability. (*Capleston, 1996: 391-393*)

Nietzsche is one of the influential theorists of the school of power. It seems that Nietzsche adopted many of the opinions of his moral school from the opinions of Machiavelli.

He assumed that Christianity suppresses the true character of man and by encouraging people to keep qualities such as altruism, compassion, benevolence, submission and submissiveness prevents them from flourishing.

Nietzsche is more famous as a moral philosopher. He proposed the principle of power in ethics and developed the school of powerism in moral philosophy, while Machiavelli is more famous as a political

philosopher. (Ref: *Nietzsche, 2018, Sections: 222&260&205; Machiavelli, 2011, Vol. 5: 50*)

He held that instead of insisting on the equality of human beings, we should think about the superior man or superman and consider gaining of power as one of our goals. To achieve this goal, we need an ideology that makes the strong man stronger and the tired ones paralyzed and destroyed.

However, religions, especially Christianity, have taken a completely different path. (*Ibid*)

- Power and its Relationship with Perfection and Human Goals

Machiavelli has not clearly described power in his works, but he has referred a lot to keeping the power of the prince (Ruler, Superman and Model of the Perfect Man).

It seems that for Machiavelli, power is a political activity.

One of the French philosophers influenced by Machiavelli defines power as follows:

Power is a strategy of a complex position in the social environment. (Foucault, 2022: 1926-1984)

In his famous book “*The Prince*”, Machiavelli considers the main goal of political activity as the achievement of political power, then he does not consider politics to be limited to any moral discipline. So, he considers it permissible to use any means to reach a political goal. (*Machiavelli, 2019b: 14*)

Machiavelli, like other proponents of the school of power, regards the perfection of man as increasing the apparent power of the ruler and the continuity of the government in a city and in a country.

According to him, a perfect person is a ruler or a prince who was able to gain power. (*Edwards, 1967, Vol. 4: 424*)

It should be noted that Machiavelli asserts increasing the power of the ruler and establishing a powerful government is the highest purpose of an ethical act, and they bring honor.

Machiavelli considers it permissible to use any means for achieving the goal of the prince (ruler) and gaining power in society. (*Ref: Machiavelli, 1984: 165*)

He regards it as one of the natural and common desires of humans and believes that the desire to have a goal, the desire to command others and the desire to rule (having power) is a natural desire. (*Ibid, 2019a: 8*)

Machiavelli raised three important arguments for gaining power:

- *Separation of Politics from Ethics*: The field of politics, which is one of the keys of having power, is separate from ethics; politics has nothing to do with ethics.

- *The Personal Nature of Ethics*: Observing moral rules is a personal matter, so if a politician wants to observe ethics and stick to it, he should do it in his personal life, not in the political environment; Because observing ethics does not allow a politician to reach his goal as he wishes.

- *Precedence of Political Issues over Moral Issues*: Machiavelli believes that since the issues of ethics and politics are separate, political interests take precedence over moral issues, and dealing with political issues is more

important than moral issues.
(*Machiavelli, 2019a: 68-69*)

Evaluation of Machiavelli's Viewpoint Based on the Anthropological Foundations of Ayatollah Misbah

In this section, the summary of Machiavelli's view on the criteria of moral action is reviewed and then it is evaluated from Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi's viewpoint.

1. Machiavelli considered man as a one-dimensional being.

Allameh Misbah, contrary to Machiavelli's view, considers man having two physical and spiritual dimensions. (*Misbah Yazdi, 2012: 39*)

2. Machiavelli considered man inherently evil and bad and described him as subject to natural determinism. Machiavelli believed that man is naturally ambitious and tends to evil.

Allameh Misbah rejects Machiavelli's view of natural

determinism and asserts that the condition of moral actions is that they are performed voluntarily.

So only the attributes that have come into being with human free will can be qualified as moral and can change with this free will and with great effort. Otherwise, ethics and the efforts of social reformers and educational philosophers will be meaningless and useless.

As a result, Allameh Misbah does not accept Machiavelli's claim that a man cannot change due to natural determinism (the impossibility of changing the original nature) and the difficulty of changes in external traits and states. (*Ibid, 2011: 49*)

Allameh believes that due to the divine nature that God has bestowed the human being, he tends to do good deeds more than bad deeds;

Because of self-love, every person likes to do something that causes him to be praised, not something that causes him to be condemned. (*Misbah Yazdi, 2012: 123-125*)

3. Machiavelli considered the perfection of man in material power, and the perfect man in his opinion is a prince or a ruler.

Unlike Machiavelli, Ayatollah Misbah does not consider the true perfection of man as material and natural perfection. He believes that humanity depends on his divine spirit and human evolution is actually the evolution of the soul that is dependent on the nearness to God. (*Ibid, 1998: 460*)

Allameh Misbah believes that anyone who pays attention to his inner motivations and psychological tendencies will find that the root of many of them is to achieve perfection. Basically, no person tends to

have a defect in his existence and he tries to eliminate any deficiency and flaw as much as possible from himself in order to reach his desired perfection. He hides defects before he can remove them. (*Ibid: 28*)

Therefore, from his viewpoint, the true perfection of a human being is actually the evolution of the soul, and the acquisition of power should be consistent with strengthening the spiritual dimension of the individual, not in line with fleeting material goals.

4. According to Machiavelli, it is not enough to have a goal without power, because what makes goals come true is power. Machiavelli declares that man must have power in order to maintain his position and obtain his goals.

Ayatollah Misbah does not seek the purpose of moral action in material things.

He believes that the purpose of moral action is to get closer to God Almighty and give direction to the inner powers and inherent talents and spiritual tendencies of man such as power, pleasure, perfection, happiness, etc. (*Jørgensen and Sohrabian Parizi, 2021: 93-119*)

Therefore, according to Ayatollah Misbah, power is an instinctive ability in the path of perfection and the ultimate goals of man.

Ayatollah Misbah believes that power is not a bad thing; In society, power should be used against oppressors who violate the rights of others and are not satisfied with anything, but the use of power must also have a law.

Obtaining the goal does not justify any means, but the means must be appropriate to the goal. Every common sense acknowledges that if the end

justifies the means, then chaos in the society will be grown. (*Misbah Yazdi, 2013: 216*)

According to Ayatollah Misbah, the desire for power is instilled in man, and man seeks power as long as he lives; (*Ibid, 1997, Vol. 2: 135-136*) but it should not be forgotten that the more power a person has, the more powerful his creator is. (*Ibid, 2011: 477*)

Therefore, he does not separate ethics from politics and puts forward the priority of moral issues over all other issues and in line with the true perfection of man.

5. Machiavelli considers the moral act to be the act that brings a person closer to the goal and perfection and makes him a perfect person. This goal is the strength of man. Therefore, according to Machiavelli, the current morality

is to empower man. (*A Group of Writers, 1988: 497*)

According to Allameh Misbah, everything that can be valued should be done voluntarily, since human perfection is optional; It has real levels, and the relationship of our attributes and actions with these levels is also real. The highest level of values is God's nearness. (*Misbah Yazdi, 2011: 58*)

6. According to Machiavelli, since the goal and perfection of man is his power, then every action that brings a man closer to power has a higher priority and rank, and every action that takes a man away from this goal has lower value. He believes that power has intrinsic value and other virtues and perfections have other values, and they are valued in comparison to power.

From Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi's viewpoint, the only

thing that has intrinsic moral value is human voluntary perfection.

Contrary to Machiavelli, he believes that power cannot have an inherent moral value because it can only lead to the perfection of man in one particular way, it may also cause war, destruction and loss of man.

Therefore, the voluntary perfection of man is spiritual and unlimited; The true perfection of a human being is closeness to the source of creation, and closeness to God will definitely make a person happy and cause him to prosper in the afterlife. This nearness is a spiritual closeness. Other moral actions are graded and valued in this regard. (*Jørgensen and Sohrabian Parizi, 2021: 99-102*)

7. Machiavelli values the intention of performing moral actions if it leads to human

strength. Therefore, from his viewpoint, it doesn't matter with what intention telling the truth or lying is done, whatever makes a person more powerful is desirable and has more value

Ayatollah Misbah is against this view of Machiavelli; he contends that one of the important criteria in accepting moral actions and the basis for valuing actions in Islam is intention.

From his viewpoint, it is the conscious intention and motivation that affects the action so that when a person is in doubt, he can prefer one action over another. (*Misbah Yazdi, 2011, Vol. 1: 113-114*)

Ayatollah Misbah declares that in the Islamic value system, moral values are for eternal results. (*Ibid, 2019*)

8. According to Machiavelli's moral system, it is impossible to defend these two moral

principles accepted by all moral systems and all wise people, that "justice is good" and "cruelty is bad". Anything that serves to increase power is good and anything that causes a decrease in human power and ability is bad.

Rejecting Machiavelli's viewpoint, Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi's view, the degree of morality of an act is the extent that it leads to true perfection, the divine intention in doing the act, the voluntarily or consciously doing, and the attention that is paid to the positive effects and consequences of that act in this world and hereafter. (*Ibid, 2013: 356-357*)

9. Since Machiavelli emphasizes the originality of man, he defines human dignity according to Western humanism. From his viewpoint, human dignity must be preserved, and preserving human dignity means preserving

maximum freedom and satisfying the instinct for power.

Contrary to Machiavelli's viewpoint, Ayatollah Misbah believes that in order to achieve his desired perfection, man must be God-cantered in his entire life.

God-cantered means doing or intending to do all human actions and behaviours, based on the standards and criteria set by God, to obtain divine satisfaction.

Based on this, Ayatollah Misbah believes that first of all, with all the advances of today's man, there are still some shortcomings in human affairs that indicate his limitations.

Secondly, the existence and complicated structure of man indicates that he has a Creator and his Creator cannot be unconscious nature.

Thirdly, the one who created man is a wise being, and he is

the only one who has full knowledge of man, and because he has complete knowledge about man, he can and should be his true lawgiver. (*Misbah Yazdi, 2012: 124-125*)

Therefore, from Allameh's viewpoint, originality is God-cantered, not man-cantered, and man reaches true evolution only by being near to his Lord.

10. Machiavelli somehow accepts human dignity, but not its true meaning, this is because he considers the dignity he gives to the nobles to be different from the dignity he gives to the weak.

Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi's view on human dignity is different from Machiavelli's.

He Refers to a part of human dignity as inherent and God-given. He believes that it is instilled in all human beings; Another part of human dignity can be an acquired

dignity. Man has to work hard to get it. (*Misbah Yazdi, 2007: 49*)

Therefore, a person (doesn't matter if he is a noble or weak and poor) reaches true dignity according to his efforts; Of

course, the acquired dignity is also raised in consistent with the intrinsic value, that is, the ultimate perfection of man, so it is from the moral and spiritual aspect, not from the material aspect.

Table 1. Comparison of two views

Row	<i>Machavelli's View</i>	<i>Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi's View</i>
1	Considered man to be a one-dimensional being and inherently evil	Man is a two-dimensional being with a pure and good nature, his true perfection is also dependent on abstraction of his soul.
2	The true perfection of man depends on his power and of course material power	The goal of moral action should be to achieve spiritual advancement
3	Does not include intention in ethics	Intention plays an important role in actions
4	Criterion of moral action should be based on the ultimate goal of man, i.e. to reach power.	The criterion of moral action and its value is based on the degree to which it reaches the final goal, and this goal is divine nearness.
5	Originality is with man and that his status in creation is so high that he does not need to be managed by any other creature	Man is the Caliph of Allah on earth, this does not mean his absolute originality, but his great need and dependence on God.

Conclusion

The anthropological viewpoint has a direct effect on presenting people moral ideas. Ethical schools in ethics, according to the goal they introduce for performing moral action and the type of attitude they have towards man, his talents and capacities, his needs and perfection, introduce the criterion of moral action.

According to the findings of the research, Machiavelli considered man to be a one-dimensional being and inherently evil; he believed that the true perfection of man depends on his power and of course material power.

According to Machiavelli, ultimate goal and perfection of man from his viewpoint is to become absolutely powerful at any cost, even at the cost of violating all moral and human principles.

Machiavelli does not include intention in ethics and still believes that the criterion of moral action should be based on the ultimate goal of man, i.e. to reach power.

Machiavelli believes that originality is with man and that his status in creation is so high that he does not need to be managed by any other creature.

On the opposite point, Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi Contrary to Machiavelli, considers human beings to have a pure nature and inherent human dignity and believes that the goal of moral action should be to achieve perfection and spiritual advancement.

He believed that man is the caliph on earth, and it is important to have divine intention and consciously perform an action and pay attention to its positive and

negative effects in this world and the hereafter.

The result is that Both Machiavelli and Ayaullah Misbah are eschatological philosophers. However, according to Machiavelli, the criterion of moral action is the realization of materialistic power, while Ayatollah Misbah's viewpoint is focused on spiritual power.

Acknowledgment

Hereby we appreciate all those who assisted us in research and writing of the present article specially Members of Scientific Department Bintul-Hoda Institute in Al-Mustafa International University.

List of References

1. **The Holy Quran.**
2. A Group of Writers. (1988). **Thesaurus of Philosophy of Ethics.** Qom: The Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute Publications. [In Persian]
3. Benner, Erica. (2009). **Machiavelli Ethics.** Princeton: Princeton University Press.
4. Caplestone, Frederick. (1996). **History of Philosophy.** Translated by: Ebrahim Dadjo. Tehran: Elmi-Farhangi Publishing Company. [In Persian]
5. Duwell, Marcus. Braavig, Jens. Brownsword, Roger. and Mieth, Dietmar. (2014). **The Cambridge Handbook of Human Dignity.** Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
6. Edwards, Paul. (1967). **Encyclopedia of Philosophy.** London: Pearson College Division.
7. Fayoumi, Ahmad ibn Mohammad. (1984). **Misbah al-Munir.** Qom: Dar al-Hijra. [In Arabic]
8. Foucault, Michel. (2022) **Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.** Stanford: Stanford University.
9. Holler, Manfred. (2009). **Niccolo Machiavelli on Power.** Edited by: Michael Baurmann and Bernd Lahno. *Perspectives in Moral Science*, 335-354. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789042032781_004
10. Jørgensen, Nour Tessie. and Sohrabian Parizi, Mohammad. (2021). **A Comparative Analysis of Ethical Thoughts of Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi and Søren Kierkegaard.** *International Multidisciplinary Journal of Pure Life*, 8(25), 93-119. <https://doi.org/10.22034/imjpl.2021.5431>
11. Jurdjevic, Mark. (2014). **A Great and Wretched City.** Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
12. Machiavelli, Niccolo. (2011). **History, Power, and Virtue.** Edited by: Leonidas Donskis. Leiden: Brill Publishers.
13. Machiavelli, Niccolo. (2019b). **The Art of War & the Prince.** Translated by: Peter Whitehorne and Edward Dacres. Michigan: Independently Published.

14. Machiavelli, Niccolo. (1984). **The Discourses**. London: Penguin Classics.
15. Machiavelli, Niccolo. (2019a). **The Prince**. Edited by: Quentin Skinner. London: Queen Mary University.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/978131653622313>
16. Madadpour, Mohammad. (2010). **Introduction to the Course of Contemporary Thought**. Tehran: Surah Mehr. [In Persian]
17. Misbah Yazdi, Mohammad Taqi. (2013). **Criticism and Review of Ethical Schools**. 5th Edition. Qom: Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute. [In Persian]
18. Misbah Yazdi, Mohammad Taqi. (1997). **Ethics in the Quran**. Research and Writing by: Mohammad Hossein Eskandari. Qom: Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute. [In Persian]
19. Misbah Yazdi, Mohammad Taqi. (2011). **Philosophy of Ethics**. Qom: Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute. [In Persian]
20. Misbah Yazdi, Muhammad Taqi. (2012). **Prerequisites of Islamic Management**. 4th Edition. Qom: Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute. [In Persian]
21. Misbah Yazdi, Mohammad Taqi. (2007). **Self-Knowledge for Self-Improvement**. 3th Edition. Qom: Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute. [In Persian]
22. Misbah Yazdi, Mohammad Taqi. (2019). **Social Ethics in Islam (Second Session: Characteristics of the Moral School of Islam)**. [In Persian]
<https://mesbahyazdi.ir/node/7299>
23. Misbah Yazdi, Mohammad Taqi. (1998). **Teaching Beliefs**. Tehran: Islamic Development Organization. [In Persian]
24. Misbah, Mojtabi. (2011). **Ethical Foundation (A New Method in Teaching Moral Philosophy)**. 7th Edition. Qom: Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute. [In Persian]
25. Motahari, Morteza. (2005). **The Collection of Works (13)**. 2th Edition. Tehran: Sadra Publications. [In Persian]

112) / International Multi. J. of PURE LIFE. 10(34), Spring. 2023

26. Nietzsche, Friedrich. (2018).
The Sunset of Idols. Translated
by: Dariush Ashuri. 14th Edition.
Tehran: Agah publications.
[In Persian]

27. Ragheb Esfahani, Hossein ibn
Mohammad. (1995). **Al-Mufradat
fi Gharib al-Quran**. Beirut: Dar
al-Shamiya. [In Arabic]

28. Rajabi, Mahmoud. (2001).
Anthropology. 4th Edition. Qom:
Imam Khomeini Education and
Research Institute Publications.
[In Persian]

29. **The Stanford Encyclopedia
of Philosophy**. (2017). Edited by:
Edward Zalta. Stanford: Stanford
University.

AUTHOR BIOSKETCHES

Kabiri, Zeinab. Assistant Prof. in Department of Islamic Education, Faculty of Hazrat Masoume Qom, Farhangian University, Tehran, Iran.

✓ Email: zekabiri60@cfu.ac.ir

✓ ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5035-8826>

Hashemi, Ashraf. PhD Student in Department of Women Studies, Faculty of Woman and Family, Religions and Denominations University, Qom, Iran.

✓ Email: andishehashemi@yahoo.com

✓ ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4977-9097>

Abbogun, Kuburat. BA in Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Management Studies, Kwara State Polytechnic Institute of Technology, Kwara, Nigeria, and PhD Student in Bintul-Hoda Institute of Higher Education, Al-Mustafa International University, Qom, Iran.

✓ Email: kubratagbogun@gmail.com

✓ ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0009-4924-9791>

HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE

Kabiri, Zeinab. Hashemi, Ashraf. and Kuburat, Agbogun, Kuburat. (2023). **A Critical Analysis of Machavelli's View on the Criterion of Moral Action based on the Anthropological Basics of Ayatollah Misbah Yazdi.** *International Multidisciplinary Journal of PURE LIFE*, 10(34), 87-113.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.221234/imjpl.2023.16081.1101>

DOR: <https://dorl.net/20.1001.1.26767619.2023.10.34.3.5>

URL: http://p-l.journals.miu.ac.ir/article_8223.html

