Machiavelli and the principles behind authoritarian rule; Could he explain the fate of Muammar al-Gaddafi?
Bachelors Theses
Abstract

This study will try an Hypothesis built on Machiavellis principles of power and examine the position of Machiavellis importance in the world of today. The Hypothesis contains principles of Machiavellis thought on power and is ment to be used as an analytical tool to understand the downfall of totalitarian leaders.

The hypothesis gains strength from this study due to the fact that it could explain the fall of Colonel Gaddafi and may even have predicted the downfall of Muammar Gaddafi based on the violation of several of the principles that build up the Hypothesis. The hypothesis however, needs more testing to be able to be accepted as a generalization.

The importance of Machiavelli and his school of though is strengthened by the fact that the principles shown in the hypothesis are viable and the fact that Machiavelli still contributes to discussions on modern principles of power.

Through the glasses that are the hypothesis we get a clear picture that tells us why Colonel Gaddafi got overthrown; He simply pushed the people to far.

Keywords

Machiavelli, Libya, Gaddafi, Khaddafi, Kaddafi, Qaddafi, totalitarian rule, autocratic rule, Power plays, principles of power
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1. Introduction

We live in a world of constant change, kingdoms rise and kingdoms fall, leaders come and leaders go. For the people, by the people, they rant; just before they emerge as ruthless dictators thriving for power. The conquest for power is not a new sensation but rather an old tradition. Not anyone can become a successful autocratic ruler since life does not bless everyone with the same social and tactical skills. Niccolò Machiavelli describes how one should or could act to rise to power and to keep it. Machiavellis line of thought have been a subject of discussion for hundreds of years, ever since the sixteenth century. Some people claim that Machiavellis most famous book, the prince, was written with sarcasm and irony and some people claim that it was written as a guide to power plays. I do believe in Machiavelli, but I do not concede to either side, for it is of no concern to this study. I do however claim that Machiavelli held the secret to explaining political revolution, subconsciously so, or not.

By digging deep in to the works of the great Machiavelli one might find pieces to form a template that would tell us when the dawning of change is upon the world, or at least a nation.

‘The empires of the future are the empires of the mind’ - Winston Churchill

2. Problem

With this essay I aim to test my hypothesis; that with the help of Machiavellis principles of power plays, one could explain political revolution. By investigating this hypothesis we could get an insight in how Machiavellis thoughts fare today and if Machiavellis line of thought is outdated or still viable. Another reason for this essay is to try to build a template for future use, to foresee political revolution. The template will be used to analyze actions presumably taken by an autocratic ruler.

A very important part to being able to understand why someone does not succeed in holding and maintaining power may consist in knowing and understanding how that person got the power in the first place. The more enemies you gain growing up the more enemies you have to fend off growing old. It is also a possibility that the subject matter already got the peoples disfavor before he or she
even got to power, which would arguably put this person into a clear disadvantage when waging pros and cons in the question of maintaining power.

The questions I will examine are; What is the reason behind the overthrowing of Colonel Gaddafi? This is important to know to be able to evaluate the hypothesis, it is also of major interest to the political science scene because it may show how fragile the systems of power can be.

The second question I will try to answer is whether or not Machiavellis line of thought is at all valid in the world of today, or if it can be deemed obsolete. This is also, of course, of importance to the validation of the hypothesis, If Machiavellis thoughts concerning the abuse and use of power are shown to be obsolete, the hypothesis can never get any validation.

By conducting the study, and getting answers to these questions, we can achieve an understanding as to why a certain ruler lost his or her power.

3. Theory

Niccolò Machiavelli was born in Florens, Italy in the fifteenth century. Machiavelli indulged to philosophy, politics and writing. In his later days of life Machiavelli wrote several books and one book in particular that would turn out to be an unending success across the world, *The Prince*. In this book Machiavelli discussed the correct way to act and what to say to gain and to keep power. This book is, of course, written in the earlier part of the sixteenth century which mean that one could argue that the insights of the author are now obsolete due to a different political climate. However, Machiavelli made some points thru out this book that, according to me, still holds a viable point.¹

Thomas Hobbes proclaims in his book *Leviathan* that ‘Because the right of bearing the person of them all, is given to him they make sovereign, by covenant only of one to another, and not of him to any of them; there can happen no breach of covenant on the part of the sovereign; and consequently none of his subjects, by any pretense of forfeiture, can be freed from his subjection.’² By saying this

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Hobbes tells us that the subjects of a dictatorship must follow the dictator in any case because they have once bestowed upon him his power. This tells us that for the people to turn on their master there has to be a valid reason, crimes or injustice against the population perhaps? And maybe this is the kind of behavior that Machiavelli was warning the hypothetical leader about. Maybe the bible had a point in the saying ‘Do to others as you would have them do to you’. Or maybe it is just common sense, if you beat the mutt eventually it will bite back.

Machiavellis theory consists of a set of principles that, in the hands of the right subject, could make the ultimate autocratic ruler, in terms of power that is. Machiavelli describes the do’s and do not’s of the dictator, and following Machiavellis advice one could seize and then keep the power over a people with or without their immediate consent. People need governing and with a strong leader who acts in the right way they will submit to his or her will. The people will not turn on their master easily because without a master there will be anarchy and anarchy brings the state of nature, meaning war amongst everyone, and survival of the fittest. The dictator may of course act in the wrong way, which would lead to his or her undoing. By collecting the machiavellian principles and separating the ones that refer to gaining and maintaining power, and then picking out the ones that can be generally applied to all dictatorships, I hope that a frame will emerge, piece by piece. Gathering these pieces and employing them to a certain man or woman, in power, at a certain time we could find out if that person will remain in power or is to be overthrown.

Since the Machiavellian theory built up by the The Prince have been under consistent debate I do realize that I have to argue for the validity of the book itself, even though I consider the point of the book to be irrelevant for my research. It is however of the out most importance to mention the background of Niccolò Machiavelli since this show what grounds he had for his statements. Machiavelli was born into a family that did not have extended means of economics. Which may be the reason for the struggle Machiavelli later would take to return to political power under the Medici reign. This underlines the fact that Machiavelli would not risk sending the Medici a book of

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5 Locke, John. Two Treatises of Government. Phoenix 1993
7 Machiavelli, Niccolò Fursten. Natur och Kultur 2008 - (Authors own interpretation)
sarcasm of shenanigans in form of *The Prince*. He would rather do it to get the favor of the Medici so that he could get back into politics. The fact that Machiavelli was captured and tortured by the Medici on suspicion of conspiracy contradicts the above stated argument, however Machiavelli was used to being influential since he had been the political, diplomatic and military advisor of Piero Soderini (8, Page XII), which makes him liable to wanting that position back, but for the Medici faction.

As mentioned Machiavelli worked as a political, diplomatic and military advisor for several years, which gave him the unique insight in the organization of power. These circumstances offers validity the statements in *The Prince* due to Machiavelli's expertise in the fields of politics, diplomatics and military strategies. The fact that Machiavelli operated in the hallways of power also gives his thought somewhat more credibility then if it was plain theory. This is why I found it a necessity to examine Machiavelli's background.

Machiavelli did get in favor of the Medici faction after the announcement of *The Prince* (8, Page XIII) which tells us that at least the Medici did not find it sarcastic or otherwise untruthful. In fact the Medici were so grateful and favor full towards Machiavelli that he got offered a job as a political advisor, a job that he coveted for many years, which he turned down in favor of being able to stay in Florence writing (8, Page XVII). Why would Machiavelli risk all this by writing a book that would insult the Medici or contain facts that Machiavelli himself thought of as untruthful?

Another thorn in the side of the validity of *The Prince* is the fact that Machiavelli wrote *The Discourses* that promotes a republic rather then the autocratic ruler (8, Pages 101 - 288). I do not find this argument valid at all. Great thinkers have argued for and against positions they themselves do not support, thru all times. After all is this not what philosophy is all about?

Further evidence for Machiavellis character can be found in his *Letters*. Machiavelli portrays himself as a man of integrity although in search of influential positions. He surrounds himself with influential people and he is a man who grew up reading Plato and Aristotle. Machiavelli is capable of being both serious and undemanding at the same time. The sort of man that is exposed in *Letters* could be able to write a sarcastic book portraying an evil dictator. However this is unlikely due to

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Machiavellis urge to get in favor with the Medici faction and his strong will to be influential and to stay in Florence to write.

Machiavelli, much like Hobbes and Locke, believed that people need governing and that ‘man is more likely to blame than to praise the actions of others’ - Niccolò Machiavelli (8, Page 105). This might be one of the underlining ideas that made Machiavelli formulate The Prince. Mans need of governing and mans nature of looking down on other mens actions.

I conclude that Machiavelli was not only a great thinker; but through his work in the offices of power he got the experience that solidify his line of thought.

*By showing that Machiavelli is not alone in his thoughts the credibility of the hypothesis is strengthened. This is the reason for anchoring the line of thought in other thinkers, such as Hobbes and Locke.

4. Method and Materials

As a starting point I will present to you, my hypothesis; with the help of Machiavellis principles of power plays, one could explain political revolution. I will examine this by applying the principals of acquiring power and keeping power to a dictator that were overthrown. I will do this so that the principles that mattered to his or her failure can be isolated and later used to examine other cases, although not in this essay.

To get the information I need I will study the writings of Niccolò Machiavelli starting with The prince. When this is done I will isolate the principles that describe how to obtain power and how to keep power. These principles will be submitted to a discussion, to gain validity for each principle.

To gain further understanding about Machiavellis line of thought I will indulge myself in two other books, namely; The Essential writings of Machiavelli and Letters. By doing this I hope to get to know Machiavelli as a thinker since this is important to understand his way of portraying the perfect
leader. It is important to try to gain information about every possible aspect of Machiavelli. Not only did he write a manual for how to thrive as an autocratic ruler, he also wrote about democracy and was quite joyful in some of his letters to friends and colleagues.

When this is done a test subject is going to be studied, in this essay I will use the reign of Colonel Gaddafi as a case study. I will do this because, Firstly the Libyan revolution against Colonel Gaddafi occurred fairly recent which makes it interesting from a political science point of view and secondly there have been a lot of writings about Colonel Gaddafi’s reign. I will research the facts I need to assess Gaddafi’s behavior from, mainly, three books; Colonel Gaddafi’s Hat, Gaddafi’s Harem and A Brief History of Modern Libya from the Barbary Wars to Gaddafi’s reign. Besides these books I will gather facts from the United Nations, the American government and different renowned newspapers. When it comes to using newspapers as a source of information for scientific work I find myself divided. Newspapers themselves might not be the safest way to acquire accurate information about a certain event. However I will argue that the specific details of a certain event might not always be of the highest importance. The media holds a tight grip of the general public therefore it is rather the aspect of; if the people think that someone did something or not that matters rather than if the person actually did do just that. This is why I will deem newspapers as a valid source of information in this essay.

When the information is gathered and assessed I will compare the information of how Gaddafi acted in several occasions and compare this to the principles of Machiavelli. If the Hypothesis is correct Colonel Gaddafi’s behavior will deviate from these principles in several occasions, or at least one very important occasion. This would in it’s turn give the hypothesis the support it needs to be further tested or to be put aside if it proves obsolete.

After the information has been compared and assessed to the principles; I will argue the importance of the Libyan peoples reactions to Colonel Gaddafi’s actions. Since it is the peoples reactions and thoughts about a leaders actions that are of importance here, not the action itself when it is to determine a dawning revolution, I feel that this must be included in the study. I will only use

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10 There are several ways of spelling Muammar Gaddafi, this is the spelling that will be used thru out this essay.

principles that can be generally applied to all dictatorships. This is of course done so that the template can be used and tested again on every possible subject even in the future, should it be deemed valid.

Finally with this information, I will try to pinpoint why Colonel Gaddafi got overthrown by arguing for different views based on the information and knowledge I have gathered thru out this essay. By this pinpoint we will be able to see if the Hypothesis is correct or not.

There are always going to be assumptions and pre understandings connected to the choices you make when deciding what facts to gather or what arguments to choose (11, Page 127). Since the social sciences differ from the physical sciences in that of certainties and defined laws of nature, I will have to argue for every single principle I plan to use in this study. This is a necessity since we have to be able to understand the importance of every single principle to understand what it may or may not affect in the ruling life of a dictator and the opinions of the people. Therefore I will choose principles to study and apply; by the importance they bare to the hypothesis and the importance of the affect on the dictators reign based on how strongly the arguments are for and against rather then some laws of nature.

One must remember that a certain pattern from one individual might not occur in the other and all or any templates, like the one this essay aims to create, will be an estimate, since people are and always will be submitted to change and circumstances as well as their own free will and fear of consequences (11, Page 129). Research also has to be done to test if the action of the dictator did in fact lead to the reaction of the people, since the reaction of the people could derive from something else. This will be tested by argumentation about probability and causality. We have to be able to see a causality between what the dictators action and the peoples reaction to that action and not just a covariance between the two encampments12.

Creating laws in the social sciences is hard and could even be proven impossible, and have been so before. This is however something that could benefit science in a way that the social sciences would be easier to handle, much like the sciences of nature.

5. The Hypothesis and the Analytical framework

The Hypothesis is as explained earlier an analytical tool. This tool is built up by principles building a framework from which to analyze situations and/or texts explaining actions or situations, keeping in mind that the actions and situations are valid as long as they are believed to be true, by the people. Once applied to a text or a situation one could get information that could tell us how someone handles ones power. But first, lets review the principles building the framework.

The first principle, Avoid violating anyone on your way to power, is fairly logical but may prove impossible. Machiavelli mentioned this for the simple reason that people that you have violated will become your enemies or, at least, carry a strong resentment towards you (1, Page 48, 49). This principle is very much supported by Marx and Engels in *The Communist Manifesto*. Marx and Engels argues for that the proletarians i.e working class, should rise up against the bourgeois, one of the reasons for this is that the bourgeois have violated the rights of the proletarians.13 The main argument against this principle could be that anyone seeking to gain power, especially if it is the power of controlling an entire nation, can not do this without violating someone on the way, thusly making this principle applicable to any case. This may be true, however it is still of vital importance to anyone seeking to gain or keep power, to keep ones enemies to a minimum.

The second principle, Getting rid of your predecessors power structure, is brought up by Machiavelli for the thought of loyalty. If someone have once been loyal to someone else, he or she might still be loyal to that person (1, Page 61). This is of course not a necessity but it will doubtfully hurt someone seeking to keep power to have people close to him or her that are loyal to the former steward of that power. This argument can be exemplified by studying the animal kingdom. When a new alpha male takes control over a herd of lions, he will kill the cubs of his predecessor so that he won’t be rivaled once the cubs grow up. One might hold this argument towards Machiavelli and claim that Machiavelli in fact, as he was part of the power structure of the Medicis predecessor, told the Medicis he should be killed. I argue that this is proof that Machiavelli really did believe that he could earn the favor of the Medicis and that he was so sure of this that he believed this principle was safe to proclaim.

The third principle, *Stick to controlling one nation at any one time*, was of course mentioned by Machiavelli in the sixteenth century, however it is, like the others, just as viable today (1, Page 66). One of the world’s most notorious totalitarian leaders, Adolf Hitler, fell into the trap of trying to gain to much power; so much so that he in fact lost control over the ongoing war. Another notorious leader of about the same time, Joseph Stalin, decided to go forth and empower the Soviet Union instead of trying to push the communist line of thought further.14 This was not what the rival politicians wanted, but as history tells us, it strengthened Stalin’s power in the Soviet Union. Since Stalin in fact did do this and not try to take control of a larger part of the world we stand without evidence for what had happened if he had tried which weakens the argument for this principle. I will let Hitlers power hungry tactics speak for themselves in this case. We can also rely on logic for this principle. If one tries to carry more than he or she can, chances are that something will be dropped.

The fourth principle, *A nation that was a dictatorship before the new autocratic ruler claims power, is easier to keep*, is based upon the argument of the will for freedom (1, Page 46). It is easier to keep someone from freedom if that person never tasted freedom. A person that have lived a life of freedom will not easily be subjugated. John Locke formulates the impossibilities of subjugating someone to give up their freedom like this - "The Natural liberty of man is to be free from any superior power on earth, and not to be under the will or legislative authority of man, but to have only the law of nature for his rule" (5, Page 125) and - "This freedom from absolute, arbitrary power, is so necessary to, and closely joined with a man’s preservation, that he cannot part with it" (5, Page 126). Locke talks about how freedom is a right that one is born with and not easily can or will give up. Therefore, and because of the fact that logic tells us that it is easier to keep someone subjugated rather than to subjugate someone, the credibility of this principle is good.

The fifth principle, *The autocratic ruler should be the only one with actual power*, refers to the division of power. One should not entrust ones ministers or military with any power, but rather keep all the power to oneself (1, Page 59,60). What Machiavelli talks about here is a fear of that ministers or others with power may collaborate against the ruler if they are given to much power and starts to disagree with the ruler. This is, according to Machiavelli, avoidable by not entrusting the ministers with any power. This principle gains credibility by Stalin or Idi Amins rise to power.

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Stalin gained power of the political party and Idi Amin seized power thru a coup d’état. This was truly avoidable should someone have robber them of all their power and influence before it happened. Another example on someone who got overthrown by a resistance force with which had been let to much power was Soviet Union first president Mikhail Gorbachev. President Gorbachev got submitted to a coup by a fraction of politicians who did not believe in the newly elected presidents ideas about breaking up the Soviet Union. Even though the coup of August 1991 did not work as planned, it still ment the end for President Gorbachev. Adolf Hitler was also a subjected to a coup by Claus Schenk von Stauffenberg among others, i.e operation valkyrie.

The sixth principle, *Do not change to much, in either direction*, means that people, when subjected to change get weary. People will put up less resistance if the new autocratic ruler keeps it the way it has been before (1, Page 63). People who are not accustomed to freedom will not seek it in any greater extent. People who are used to being punished will take the punishment without much arguments. People, however, who are not accustomed to freedom but get to taste freedom will be ever so eager to seek for more. The same applies to people who have had their freedom deprived from them. Those people will never stop trying to get that freedom back and get satisfied with being oppressed. The ruler can not grant to much freedom nor put to many restrictions, doing any of either may leads to the power being challenged. This coexists with the fourth principle. John Stuart Mill discusses the fact that no restrictions should be lady upon the people that concerns the individuals themselves. It is unnatural for the government to intervene in one individuals matters unless it concerns the society, and therefore any restrictions towards an individuals right to express him or her self and to practice things such as only concerns him or her self, are wrong.\(^\text{15}\)

The seventh principle, *Beat down on opposition swift and hard*, hails from the fact that given the opportunity; opposition may rise against the ruler. Beating down on this opposition fast and with a firm hand may stop them in time, before they have gathered enough strength to threaten the ruler (1, Page 74). It is also important for the ruler not to give anyone the freedom to act against him or her. In the light of the Arab spring rulers in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Syria, Algeria among others, tried to suppress the howling hoards of protesters. But it was to little to late. Had opposition been quenched before it reached the major public it could arguably have taken another

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turn. One reason for the success these protests was the remarkable efficiency of which they got support. This support was partly gained through media.

The eighth principle, *Try to be both loved and feared but if you have to choose; be feared*, is explained by Machiavelli as a preferable state to maintain during ones reign. It is best to be both loved and feared. People should love you but be afraid to cross or oppose you (1, Page 118). This principle may also be hard to follow in its complete stage of being both loved and feared since the reasons for being feared bring with them reasons not to be loved. The problem with fear as I see it is that it may pass. If the rulers choice of keeping people in line is by fear and not love, the people may step out of line as soon as the reason to be afraid passes. This may occur if the ruler decrease in power or if the ruler push the people so far that they no longer see fear as an option. If, however, the ruler should choose to maintain power by being loved he or she may push the people further and still be in favor. People can of course still turn against the ruler for other reasons, for example that they experience the ruler as to weak. John Locke address this issue and claims that opposition, by and for the people, towards any inferior officer is legitimate (5, page 219).

With the ninth and final principle, *Never make any decisions that you will later take back*, Machiavelli is saying that ones decisions can light up ones weaknesses and faults, especially if they are taken back (1, Page 126). A decision that is made and later taken back is proof of that the autocratic ruler can be made faulty, and this is un except able. Some may argue that an autocratic ruler that can openly regret his or her decisions is a sign of humanity, - "Have no fear of perfection-you’ll never reach it", Salvador Dali. It is however undoubtedly a sign saying that the ruler can infect be wrong, whether or not one would consider that to be a weakness. An autocratic ruler that shows signs of not being complete will have a harder time keeping people in fear, due to the same fact. It may also prove that the ruler might have a problem with keeping people in line with love since people now would be allowed to look at the rulers former decisions in the new light of

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19 Finn, Tom. *Yemen protests see tens of thousands of people take to the street*. The Guardian 2011-02-03
imperfection. - "The true genius shudders at incompleteness - imperfection - and usually prefers silence to saying the something which is not everything that should be said" - Sir Edgar Allan Poe.

The principles addressed above are those that will create the foundation of the Hypothesis. Through these principles an analytical tool, a framework, emerges. And through this scheme of principles of power I will study the events and actions of Libya and Muammar Gaddafi. One could argue whether or not these principles bare any meaningfulness to them; I have argued above that they do, and through this study it will be examined. The Hypothesis will be tested by application. By applying certain consequences to the hypothesis; namely, the fact that refracting from above mentioned principles, the ruler will get overthrown. If the ruler did break the principles and get overthrown, the hypothesis is correct. Even if the hypothesis should prove to be correct in this one case, it is not enough to deem the hypothesis true. To be able to do that we will have to test this on several cases. One major issue does however occur when testing a hypothesis; Is it solely because of this that the event occurred? Ignaz Semmelweis, a hungarian doctor of medicine, conducted an experiment in the years between 1844 through 1848 where he tried to conclude why children died at a certain hospital due to high fevers. He did this by adding and deducting different possibilities. The same would have to be done to truly test this hypothesis to achieve high legitimacy.

Some of these principles are worse to refract than others; But together they build up a template for how an autocratic ruler should act to maintain power. We have to remember at this stage, and this is imperative, that an autocratic ruler necessarily is not bad or evil in any way. An autocratic ruler is simply a ruler that has the total control of a nation and its people, fulfilling the job with grace or not. Fulfilling most of these principles will indicate that the ruler in question is in fact a diplomatic, uncompromising force that acts in the interest of the people. The second, fourth, sixth and seventh principles are not kindly broken. This is something that can be logically viable but it will show in the study if this is in fact true. What can be claimed through logic is that the refraction of all of these principles can and will significantly lessen the rulers standing with the people. - "I believe the root of all evil is abuse of power" - Patricia Cornwell. I will always argue that the favorable position of any ruler, autocratic or otherwise, is gained through his or hers standing with the people of his or her nation. A disfavor able position amongst the people leaves the ruler with to many

insecurities and this is what Machiavelli's principles of power is all about; namely the balance between the amount of power one can possess and the respect one carries from the people (1)\textsuperscript{21}.

Some principles have only been argued for on a theoretical level, this is due to the fact that no concrete examples have been found, and no empirical research could be done. I will count these principles as just as strong as the others even due to this fact.

6. Demarcation

Due to limitations in time and space this study will be focusing on one totalitarian ruler as a test subject. This will give the hypothesis a weaker testing than if tested on multiple subjects and situations. This is however a new hypothesis and it is open to any and all to test this further in the future. I will also limit the situations and actions of Colonel Gaddafi to mainly consist of such actions and issues that break the principles. This is also done due to the limitations in time and space.

The third part of the demarcation process is to limit the number of valid principles for the hypothesis. Machiavelli brings a lot to the table of how one should or should not act. The principles chosen for the hypothesis are the ones that would transfer best in to the modern era of totalitarian rule.

I will examine the problem in several different levels. First I will present the events chosen for this study and prepare them for analysis by digging out the principles that have been violated in each case. Secondly I will use the hypothesis to analyze how the broken impacts may have swayed the tide to turn against Gaddafi, thus explaining his fate. I will then explain the strength of the hypothesis based on the results in explaining Muammar Gaddafi's fate. Last I will argue for the importance of Machiavelli based on the outcome of the two foregoing chapters.

\textsuperscript{21} Bauhn, Per. Mänskliga rättigheter och filosofi. Liber 2006. Pages 28 and 29
7. Muammar Gaddafī and Libya

The principles picked out from Machiavellis book the prince will now be used to analyze the actions of Muammar Gaddafī during his rise to power and until the time of his death in Sirte on the 20th of October 2011. Firstly; the material used will be gathered and composed. Secondly; the material will be analyzed. The chapter is divided into two parts; International events and the National events. It is important to remember that it will count as an action by the Gaddafī regime if the people believe that so is the case, even if the sources are accurate or not.

It is imperative to remember that the Hypothesis claimed that it is worse to break the principles than to follow the principles. Therefore this study will mainly bring up issues violating the principles and will not focus on issues that may have followed the principles due to the limitation in time conducting this study.

**International events**

**Libyan history** consists of a long line of autocratic rulers. Ever since early 16th century Libya has been under the control of autocratic rulers. From Sinan Pasha of the Ottoman empire to king Idris I when Libya gained independence in 1951.

**In the 1990s** Colonel Gaddafī sought to unite the Arab nations in something he called the 'United States' of Africa. Gaddafī allegedly started wearing sporting clothes bearing emblems of African leaders or of the African continent itself (22).

**In 2003** Tripoli, still under the control of the Gaddafī regime, claimed responsibility for the Lockerbie incident; the bombing of an airplane over the town of Lockerbie. Libya, which at that time was the prime suspect, now got a chance to approach the west. Whereafter the United Nations lifted its sanctions against the nation. After the sanctions were lifted the Gaddafī regime abandoned their plans to develop weapons of mass destruction which also made them more accepted by the west. The abandonment of the 'WMD project’, was seen by the Gaddafī regime to make amends for
several indiscretions formerly conducted. Such as the backing of several militant groups for example the Irish Republican Army.\footnote{Profile: Muammar Gaddafi. \textit{BBC News Africa} 2011-06-27}

\textbf{In 2008} Gaddafi ensured the world that there will be no more acts of terrorism and no more wars (22).

\textbf{In 2009} newly elected African Union president Gaddafi claims that his main goal will be to get compensations for the colonial era and to limit the power of all western nations. During his inaugural tour Gaddafi held several speeches. During those speeches Gaddafi explained that the piracy in Somalia was not a crime, upsetting the west. Claiming that it was in fact in self defense and that the proclaimed pirates were defending the Somali children's food. He also claimed that the western nations that were using those waters for transporting oil and cargo were in fact intruding on Somali national waters and thus breaking international law. Piracy, he said, was just a label by the west to justify their own actions. Gaddafi also added -that if the west doesn't want to meet our demands and live as equals, it is the african peoples planet and the western nations can go live on another planet.\footnote{Ashine Argaw. Gaddafi defends Somali pirates. The Daily Nation 2009-02-02}

\textbf{In 2010} Colonel Gaddafi's reign as the head of the African Union was ended when President Bingu we Mutharika was elected for the seat.

When Muammar Gaddafi was elected the head of the African Union in 2009 he is said to have asked the other members to call him the 'King of traditional kings of Africa'. Gaddafi is also said to have tried to deliver an unscheduled speech by turning to an organization he himself had created, consisting of traditional princes and sultans. During his speech Colonel Gaddafi, the king of kings, wearing lots of jewelry and carrying a scepter, claimed that he had the support of all the people of Africa and that he should be followed. One official from the African Union later told the press that Gaddafi's time as the African Union president had been very harmful to their image.\footnote{Malawi's President Bingu wa Mutharika was chosen to succeed Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi at the helm of the rotating African Union presidency on the first day of the group's summit in Addis Ababa on Sunday. France24 2010-02-01}
In may of 2011 Colonel Gaddafi was accused by the International Criminal Court, henceforth ICC, for crimes against humanity. The ICC prosecutor claimed that Gaddafi held the responsibility for systematic and widespread attacks against civilians (22). 

Libya has laws preventing political activities conducted in groups since this goes against Colonel Gaddafi’s revolutionary theories. As a following to Gaddafi’s disagreement with political gatherings hundreds of people have been imprisoned and some have been sentenced to death according to the Human Rights Watch. There have also been reports of disappearances and torture (22).

Hillary Clinton, acting United States foreign minister, says that the US is reaching out to the Libyan opposition. Governments from the European Union are signing sanctions against Colonel Gaddafi. Decisions that were meant to take place at a later time, however the severity of the situation has forced international governments to act faster. The Italian government, who had been a close friend to and investor in Libya, now suspends all relationships. Officials from the United Kingdom have tried to make Libyan officials abandon the regime to make it collapse rather than to sustain months of fighting. Reports from Moscow claim that the Russian government could lose up to 4 billion US dollars due to the arms embargo25.

National events

In 2011 the International Federation for Human Rights, henceforth FIDH, claimed that their fears had been confirmed. FIDH claimed that Gaddafi was implementing a scorched earth strategy, a military strategy that involves eliminating everything that can benefit the enemy. FIDH claimed that Gaddafi had gone on an elimination tour to get rid of any and all of those who had opposed him in Libya. FIDH had earlier published a list containing 640 names of people that had been executed during Gaddafi’s elimination tour, and they expressed a fear that this number would quickly rise. The list contained people being executed for refusing to follow orders as well as the execution of injured enemies in hospitals26.


26 Libya: Strategy of scorched earth, desire for widespread and systematic elimination. FIDH.org 2011-02-24, updated 2011-05-16
The Observer gained access to some of the orders given out by Colonel Gaddafi to his generals. Among the documents containing the orders are evidence that show Gaddafi ordering his generals to conduct torture, arrests and bombings against the opposition. According to those who have red the documents there is a document dated March 4th were Gaddafi ordered starvation on the entire city of Misrata due to recent uprising. Another document, bearing the mark of the Anti-terrorist committee, allegedly orders the execution of wounded protestors in the city of Zlitan. Other documents are said to contain orders that mention civilian casualties as acceptable27.

On June the first of 2011 the Office of the high Commissioner for Human Rights, henceforth OHCHR, issued a report of concerning the abuse of human rights in Libya. In the report the OHCHR recognized the vast amount of information and reports sent to them from different sources. The OHCHR also recognizes the reality of the abuse from several visits to different areas in Libya. The OHCHR however points to the fact that their investigation time was greatly limited and they request more time to secure the investigation. The OHCHR has, in the report, set up a series of recommendations for the Libyan government; To immediately cease all acts of violence committed against civilians, to unconditionally and immediately release any and all that are being held captive due to peaceful demonstrations, to reveal the names of all those within its custody swell as those who died in custody, to grant adequate reparations to the victims and/or their families, to ensure free, full and unrestricted access to all places of detention for humanitarian and human rights organizations and to bring all Libyan’s laws and policies into the conformity with the international human rights standard28.

The International criminal courts, chief prosecutor could add sexual crimes to the case against Colonel Gaddafi. Evidence points towards rape as a tactical and systematic tool in the Gaddafi regimes war against rebels. The evidence is said to be solid and that there are documents supporting viagra being issued to soldiers as an encouragement to commit sexual attacks29.

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Also in 2011, Sky News reporter Alex Crawford, is smuggled inside Libya to follow the rebellion. Crawford, who is a seasoned war reporter, spends time with the rebels during a critical time of the Libyan civil war. In the second chapter of her book *Colonel Gaddafi’s Hat* she speaks about an attack on the city of Zawiya. Panic stricken civilians join the rebel forces to fight for their freedom, to fight against an oppressor, for freedom. Crawford finds herself taking refuge in a mosque with other civilians as well as rebel soldiers and doctors trying their best to take care of the vast amount of casualties pouring in. A young boy is brought in, screaming, with a shot wound, apparently he was shot as he sat on a doorstep playing with friends. The Gaddafi forces do not seem to make any difference between civilians and soldiers as they launch mortars against the city. Mrs Crawford speaks of children who have been caught up in the fighting, mostly as casualties (28, page 41).

Crawford speaks about the widespread hate the Libyans share for Gaddafi. She is also shown evidence for that the Gaddafi forces use mercenaries to fight against the Libyan population (28, page 51). Crawford reports of Gaddafi forces shooting against ambulances and is shown several ambulances filled with bullet holes (28, page 67).

In 2011, a reporter came across a young woman at the age of 22. This woman's name was Soraya, she had been kidnapped at the age of 15 to be taken to Gaddafi's private harem, and she told a story of severe abuse and a dictator that she herself described as a madman. Soraya got kidnapped in her home after Colonel Gaddafi had met her in a school that he was visiting. Soraya tells us that the harem consisted of a multitude of young women, some as young as 12 years old (29, Page 39). Soraya’s witness statement contains information about Gaddafi’s private life and a man that people were afraid of criticizing due to the fear of torture and execution (29, Page 49).

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30 Crawford, Alex. *Colonel Gaddafi’s Hat*. Collins 2012, Page 36

8. Analysis and Conclusions

8.1 Muammar Gaddafi and Libya, preparing the analysis

Colonel Gaddafi had an ace in his hand as he seized the power in Libya. Since Libya already had been under control, for a very long time, by an autocratic regime. Gaddafi, therefor did not have to break against the *fourth or sixth principles*. Which is two of the worst principles to violate.

Colonel Gaddafi’s efforts to unify all the Arab nations and thus becoming the leader of the entire Arab nation clearly breaks the *third principle*. As Gaddafi lacked support for the unification, it weakened his status among other nations and also revealed his intent to gain more power. One could argue that the unification attempt also could have brought the attention of the western nations.

Gaddafi broke the *third principle* again when he proclaiming to be the king of kings of Africa. This statement from Colonel Gaddafi was truly harmful for his image and status throughout the world. It showed a power-hungry, unrealistic and un tactical side of Gaddafi. Gaddafi’s support of the somali pirates also in a way breaks the *third principle* by trying to gain influence in Somalia.

By claiming responsibility for the Lockerbie incident Colonel Gaddafi showed weakness and regret in a previous decision, thus breaking the *ninth principle*. This proved that Gaddafi in fact could make wrongful decisions and the sought after ‘godlike’ status of the autocratic ruler was broken.

Once again breaking the *ninth principle* Colonel Gaddafi made a decision and promise that would later be broken, as he promised the world that there would be no more acts of terrorism or the like. This does not refract from the principle in the same way as the Lockerbie incident, however it was a reassurance and a trust that was broken. The decision to protect the Somali pirates also breaks the *ninth principle*, as Gaddafi once again takes back a decision previously made.

Although following the *seventh principle* of beating down the opposition, it is conducted by a wave of terror which creates hate and pushing people beyond fear, to the point where the populace no longer has anything to loose by acting up and so breaking the *eight principle*. Also breaking the *eighth principle* by creating hate and thus loosing the chance to be loved. By mixing in civilians into the civil war Colonel Gaddafi creates hate rather than fear and especially when dragging children in to the equation, breaking the *eighth principle*. Gaddafi is also loosing the favor of the
people as a whole by aiming attacks at ambulances and hospitals. creating hate by kidnappings, Colonel Gaddafi is breaking the *eighth principle*. Sorayas statement also show that Gaddafi was in fact feared, but in the end taking it beyond fear and beyond the borders of hatred. And by adding rape as a weapon of terror Colonel Gaddafi once again goes to far, breaking the *eighth principle*.

By terrorizing his own people Colonel Gaddafi is also creating enemy states across the world as well as enemies within his own borders, breaking the *first principle*. Taking the part of the somali pirates upset the west, thus creating tension and bad relations, also this breaking the *first principle*.

By implementing scorched earth and executing injured rebelling soldiers, Colonel Gaddafi uses pure fear as a weapon against his own people. This push the people beyond fear and into uncompromising rage, instigating a revolt and breaking the *first and sixth principles*. By executing the opposition however Gaddafi is following the seventh principle. Colonel Gaddafi is also putting to much power into the hands of his generals breaking the *fifth principle*.

It is debatable which principles has the most importance and this could be weighted back and forth by argumentation. What I have showed in this analysis is that Colonel Gaddafi have refracted from several principles at several different times. *The principles violated are; The first, third, fifth, sixth, eighth and ninth*. Since the *first principle* of never violating anyone on your way to the top is very hard to follow in a coup d’etat this is understandable. There really is no reason beyond the reason of hunger for more power to break the *third principle*. There is no good reason to break the *fifth principle*, sharing your power, either. The *sixth principle*, of not changing the way of life for the people, is not kindly refracted from and is likely one of Gaddafis biggest mistakes. *Principle number eight* is also not kindly refracted from, to rule while being both loved and feared, or at least feared. By constantly pushing people to far Gaddafi broke this principle many times. Finally Gaddafi also broke the *ninth and last principle* of trying to maintain a godlike status by never showing anyone that you can make mistakes.
8.2 Analysis of why Colonel Gaddafi got overthrown

The Gaddafi regime held its tight grip on Libya for 42 years. And colonel Gaddafi was seen as a liberator as he first entered the stage of power. Over the years Gaddafi grew ever more hungry for power. But where did Gaddafi cross the line between good and bad. The short explanation is that this young man probably had power aspirations from the beginning and thus already had crossed the line upon his coronation. This is of course debatable, as all good things are.

Machiavellis theory of power would propose that Gaddafi had a very good starting point in his coup d’etate as the Libyan people very accustomed to a restricted society controlled by a totalitarian leader. From the Machiavellian point of view Gaddafi lost his momentum when he started to change the nation and force new ways of life upon the citizens of Libya. Gaddafi also set up a way of ruling that led to creating fear; not only in a way that people would fear him if they crossed him, but they lived in constant fear which is not something that Machiavelli would support. When one tries to rule with fear one does not afford to push people to far. Fear is a tool that, if used to much, has an expiration date. Once people start to believe that there is no way back from misery, abuse, rape, shortage of food and water; they will do what they can to escape that situation. Colonel Gaddafi deprived his people of the basic needs and awoke the frightful hatred from mothers, fathers and brothers, as he raped their daughters and sisters.

As an addition to his lack of pure hearted leadership Gaddafi repeatedly showed weakness by exposing him as a man just like anyone else. Taking back decisions and showing regret about earlier actions derived him of his exalted status.

Gaddafis success as an autocratic ruler ended the day he pushed the people beyond the point of fear and in to a stage of hopelessness that evolves into hatred, desire for revenge and utter desperation. The people grew so desperate to reach a higher, richer way of life that the hate consumed the fear and turned the people in to ruthless opposition against Colonel Gaddafi. One might say that the very actions that put the people in misery was the same actions that at the end became the killing blow to Gaddafi himself.
Colonel Gaddafi, The king of traditional kings of Africa, sat his people down on a raft and sent them out on the sea of fear. But they returned with hate in their eyes and vengeance in their hearts. Muammar Gaddafi killed himself by making the people hate him beyond repentance.

8.3 How does the Hypothesis hold up?

The hypothesis tells us that it is harder for an autocratic ruler to gain and keep control of a nation, should this nation formerly be a democracy. Since Colonel Gaddafi seized power in Libya, a nation that even before Gaddafi was a totalitarian nation, he should have no problems gaining and keeping power. Gaddafi did change a lot of things in Libya, for example; the shift from being a traditional conservative arab state to a radical nationalist state. Colonel Gaddafi also proscribed all other political parties, shifted all its legislative and executive power to the GPC and remade the economic system. These changes made a impact on the Libyan population which was an action that clearly breaks the sixth principle. So far Colonel Gaddafi have made a very big mistake and the hypothesis clearly indicates that there will be a political revolution against him.

Gaddafi’s efforts to try to unite the arab states also speaks against him since it violates the third principle and show him off as power hungry ruler. Since Gaddafi also lacked support for this unification he is also seen as weak and unrealistic by both his own population as well as the western nations. Once again Gaddafi goes against the hypothesis and is lining up opposition.

The Lockerbie incident and the endurance that there will be no more acts of terrorism puts Gaddafi in an awkward position. By admitting that he was wrong and then promising that there will be no more he is undermining his own authority and showing himself off as weak and controllable. This violates the ninth principle and keeps Gaddafi in a bad position.

Gaddafi supports the pirates in Somalia. Clearly putting him in bad favor with the western nations and loosing favor at home by meddling in other nations affairs, breaking the third principle. Gaddafi once again showing weakness, lack of resolution and inconsistency, clearly breaking the ninth principle and falling deeper into an even worse position.

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32 Jeffreys, S.B. A brief history of modern Libya from the Barbary wars to Gaddafi’s reign. SBJ Press 2011, Page 74
Colonel Gaddafi proclaims to be the 'King of Kings' and thus show his true self to the general public. The statement leaves the proof of a power-hungry and unrealistic leader that wants to gain control over more than he can carry, breaking principle number three.

Gaddafi imprisons and kills off opposition, which according to the hypothesis may be a good move. The hypothesis however, does not encourage the killing of people, just that it is imperative to get rid of the opposition. Colonel Gaddafi keeps pushing the population to the point beyond fear. A state of such strong hatred and panic that fear can’t control the population any more, breaking the eight principle. Gaddafi is at this state sinking deeper and deeper into his own created chaos.

Gaddafi makes the decision to implement a strategy of scorched earth. This decision calles forth the attention of the high Commissioner for Human Rights and results in a report that gains the Colonel even more disfavor from the western nations. The reports of soldiers being given viagra and ordered to use rape as a weapon implements even more hatred for Gaddafi across the world as well as in Libya. Scorched earth and rape creates such a harsh reaction from the population of Libya that they can no longer be controlled. The first, sixth, fifth and eighth principles are broken.

When Sky news reporter Alex Crawford begins to broadcast from severed cities, showing injured children and men crying for help over the abuse that the Gaddafi regime is creating; Colonel Gaddafi is beyond rescue. The fear has completely evaporated and turned into blind rage. The testimony by former sex slave Soraya comes at a time when Gaddafi no longer walks this earth and adds no water to the conflict. It is proof, however, of how Colonel Gaddafi acted against his people in the most despicable way through out his reign.

As argued earlier it is worse to break principles than to follow them. An exception to this may be the first principle as this molds the entire foundation of the new regime. Colonel Gaddafi, the 'King of traditional Kings of Africa’ makes so many misstakes; most of which seem to be hailing from his hunger for an increasing amount of power. The downfall of Gaddafi could not have been hard to foresee to anyone with access to the information that I had, conducting this study, even without the background of the hypothesis. The true nail in the coffin for Colonel Gaddafi could have been the abuse of fear as a method of control. When people no longer fears death because life is ultimately worse, fear is no option. When people would rather die than live in oppression, the autocratic ruler is destined to be discarded (15, Page 68, 69).
The Hypothesis binds together the toughest of Machiavelli. This creation of a behavioral pattern that a ruler should not break. Any diversion from the Machiavellian pattern puts the ruler at risk. Since Colonel Gaddafi so recklessly violates several of the principles; he digs himself so deep into the peoples disfavor that he was destined to be overthrown.

The Hypothesis do gain strength from this study and passes the first test of elimination. For the hypothesis to become acceptable as a generalization it does require more studies, primarily field studies conducted on totalitarian states. The Hypothesis also requires a lot of background information regarding a certain nation and ruler that can be weighed in as part of the calculation, which in a true totalitarian state can be hard to acquire during the autocratic regimes reign.

8.4 The Importance of Niccolò Machiavelli, as of today?

The importance of Niccolò Machiavelli is as valid today as it was yesterday. Machiavellis thoughts and writings about the balance of power give us a sort of lens through which we can behold the game that is power and government. Machiavellis line of thought is of the kind that never grows old since it can be modernized. And the fact that power today is what power was yesterday.

The discussion concerning Machiavellis importance often concerns the fact that scientists do not recognize 'The Prince' as a guide, but rather as an ironic text. I do maintain my belief that it is in fact a guide. It may not be the preferable way of government chosen by Machiavelli himself, but a way to govern that does exist and if it is to be done, this is the way that machiavelli believes it should be done (1). The true beauty of Machiavellis importance and the backbone of this study is that the purpose of 'The Prince' does not matter. The point is that through 'The Prince' Machiavelli made a series of good points. As stated earlier Machiavelli created principles that put together a clear behavioral pattern that can be used to analyze the behavior of totalitarian rulers.

An argument that goes against Machiavelli and his theories concerning government is that it is impossible to create laws in the social sciences due to individualism. One can not predict happenings due to the fact that people do not think alike. This is an argument that I do not agree with, for logical reasons. First; It is logical that people pushed to far will try to break free from
subjugation. Any individual, given the possibility, will try to escape the chains of bondage. This is one of the main aspects of liberal feminism\textsuperscript{33}. It is also one of the foundations of Marxism (13) and democracy. Second; Peoples actions are not that hard to read and estimate. It may not be correct in 100\% of the cases, but it can be applied to a general public. One could look at Germany in the 1930s and 1940s as an example. A nation that suffered greatly by unemployment. It was likely an easy choice to fold for the rhetoric of the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei when they promised employment and better conditions overall. The authors behind the book ‘\textit{Den svenska väljaren}’ set up estimations based on how people in different social conditions and with different social backgrounds had voted in the past\textsuperscript{34}. These are both examples of estimations and predictions made in the past that have proven to be correct to some extent.

In this study I have shown that Machiavelli is still very much as significant today as he was in his own time, mainly because of this pattern and the hypothesis. Machiavelli did give us a logical, and reasonably easy to agree with, answer to why Colonel Gaddafi faced the fate that he did. Regarding Machiavelli outside of this hypothesis; he was a great thinker and sparked a debate that lives still today. There always will be a debate concerning Machiavelli, therefore if nothing else Machiavelli is still important due to the fact that he sparked a debate and inspires to criticism and discussion.

\textbf{Analysis and conclusions summary}

The rise and fall of Colonel Gaddafi can be explained by the Hypothesis, by using the principles as an analytical tool. The hypothesis show that Muammar Gaddafi got overthrown by pushing the people of Libya to such an extent that they no longer saw it as a viable option to live under his rule. This conclusion was achieved by applying the principles taken from Machiavellis book, \textit{The Prince}. The fact that the hypothesis could be proven to work in this essay means that Machiavelli, at least to some extent, is viable still today.

\textsuperscript{33} Østerud, Øyvind. \textit{Statsvetenskap Introduktion i politisk analys}. Universitetsforlaget Oslo 1996, Page 223

\textsuperscript{34} Hagevi, Magnus. \textit{Den svenska väljaren}, Boréa Bokförlag 2011
9. Further research

The hypothesis and the importance of Machiavelli in modern times can and should be tested further. The hypothesis can be tested further by applying it to other totalitarian leaders for example Idi Amin, Vladimir Putin and Saddam Hussein. The true importance and meaning of the hypothesis should be field-tested on a totalitarian ruler still in action and not yet rebelled against. The possibility to apply this Hypothesis on active, autocratic rulers to foresee a political revolution; could also be examined.

The importance of Machiavelli in modern times can be tested by the continuation of this study. By continuing to test Machiavellis principles on different scenarios and different rulers in modern time one would gain information as to how much Machiavelli means today.
Authors own thoughts

It is not without an icy chill and tears in my eyes that I have conducted this study. The pure inconsideration towards civilians and the disgraceful neglect of human rights conducted over the years by the Gaddafi regime is a crime against all that is human. This study is, however, conducted with objectivity and precision to ensure the scientific value that it deserves.

As we walk down this road of life, concerned by the little things that make up our own life and those big things that enclose our life in the big picture. We can not help to wonder, will there ever be a quiet world; No wars, hate or hunger for power?

‘Id say its safe to surmise there be storm at times.’

Benjamin Gibbard, american folksinger.

Extending a heartfelt thank you to all the brave men and women who risked their lives in the name of truth, honesty and humanity to gather and record the information that was used in this essay. And that keep risking their lives to uncover the truth still today.
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