MACHIAVELLI ON GROWTH AS AN END

One of the major, well-recognized aims of Renaissance scholarship in recent decades has been the reconstruction of the historical context of the writings of Niccol6 Machiavelli. Calls for a "contextualized" Machiavelli have come from many scholars, some in reaction against the idealized readings of the past, and some in an honest effort to resolve the widely disparate interpretations that have been advanced concerning a relatively small and well-defined group of texts. Understanding Machiavelli's ideas by placing them "in context" has been a cherished goal of members of the so-called "Cambridge School" in the history of political thought, but these scholars have by no means been alone in looking to Machiavelli's intellectual and political environment for answers to what Felix Gilbert used to call "the Machiavelli question.'" In the absence of a consensus on Machiavelli--and some scholars still see him as a counselor to tyrants, while others view him as the advocate of moderate Aristotelian republicanism--there is something eminently sensible in looking to contemporary ideas and events for aid in understanding not just the meaning of important phrases and passages, but also the author's general intent.

Indeed, the appeal to context was not really new in Machiavelli scholarship, where it had already developed out of earlier research. It used to be the case that most historians

1. See the collection Meaning &Context: Ouentin Skinner and his Critics, ed. Jarnes Tully (Princeton, 1988), esp. pp. 29-67 (Skinner), 194-203 (Nathan Tarcov), 218-228 (Charles Taylor), and 246273 (the kernel of Skinner's response).

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who studied Machiavelli belonged to one of two groups, each of which emphasized a particular Machiavellian "context" in developing its interpretations. Thus, Meinecke, Chabod and others preferred to study Machiavelli with a view to the international diplomacy of the early sixteenth century.[2] These historians emphasized the politics of power, realism in historical and political writing, and the transformation of Europe's national monarchies into modem states. The texts they privileged were The Prince and the dispatches ftom France, Germany and the Papal Court. A second group of scholars instead preferred to interpret Machiavelli in the context of the republican politics of Florence, and its relation with the tradition of classical republican thought. Such scholars as Hans Baron and J.G.A. Pocock and (more recently) Quentin Skinner and John Najemy tended to see the republicanism of the Discourses on Livy as indicative of Machiavelli's genuine political beliefs, and they treated The Prince as something of an exception in Machiavelli's oeuvre.[3]

It was argued by some that apparent differences between what might be called the "internationalist" and the "republican" approaches to Machiavelli, stemmed from substantive changes in the Florentine writer's own political ideas, changes that would have occurred in the period between the completion of The Prince and the completion of

[2.] Friedrich Meinecke, Die Idee der Staatsraison in der neueren Geschichte (Munich and Berlin, 1924); Eugenio Duprd Theseider, Niccol6 Machiavelli diplomatico, 1. L'arte della diplomazia nel Quattrocento (Como, 1945), esp. pp. 197-204 on the Venetian relazioni; Federico Chabod, Scritti su Machiavelli (Turin, 1964); Sergio Bertelli, "Machiavelli e la politica estera florentina," in Studies on Machiavelli, ed. Myron P. Gilmore (Florence, 1972), pp. 31-72.

[3.] Hans Baron, "Machiavelli: The Republican Citizen and Author of The Prince" (1961) in his In Search of Florentine Civic Humanism (Princeton, 1988), IL 10 1- 15 1; J. G. A. Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition (Princeton, 1975); Quentin Skinner, Machiavelli (New York, 198 1); idem, in Machiavelli and Republicanism, ed. Gisela Bock, Quentin Skinner and Maurizio Viroli (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 121-141, 293-309; John M. Najemy, Between Friends: Discourses of Power and Desire in the Machiavelli-Vettori Letters of 1513-1515 (Princeton, 1993). See also William J. Connell, "The Republican Idea," in James Hankins, ed., Renaissance Civic Humanism: Regppraisals and Reflections (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 14-29.

the Discourses.[4] But students of Machiavelli's style and imagery, and even more importantly, of his anthropology and ethics, have confirmed time and again a fundamental consistency in the outlook of the Florentine secretary's major works.[5] As Felix Gilbert demonstrated, however, the two approaches may be susceptible of synthesis, once the historian's method comprises both the way in which citizens of the Florentine Republic viewed the outside world and the way it perceived them.[6]

In another effort to bridge the gap between the "internationalist" and "republican" readings of Machiavelli, a few scholars have recently indicated another context for Machiavellian research, namely the territorial state in Tuscany that was administered by Florence in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[7] The suggestion would seem to make good sense, for it was in the Florentine "dominion" --the territory that lay between the city walls and the Republic's outer political boundaries--that Machiavelli received his own apprenticeship in statecraft. In his position as Second Chancellor, he oversaw

[4.] The argument for a strong distinction between The Prince and the Discourses on grounds of intention, content and date of composition was made by J. H. Hexter, "Seyssel, Machiavelli and Polybius VI: The Mystery of the Missing Translation," Studies in the Renaissance, 3 (1956), pp. 75-96; and Baron, "Machiavelli: The Republican Citizen." Compare the remarks of Felix Gilbert, "Machiavelli in Modem Historical Scholarship," Italian Quarterly, 14 (197 1), p. 25 n. 20. On a longstanding tendency to find "dichotomies" in Machiavelli's work see Dante Della Terza, "The Most Recent Image of Machiavelli: The Contribution of the Linguist and the Literary Historian," Italian Quarterly, 14 (1971), pp. 91-113.

[5]. For the most forceful statement of the coherence of Machiavelli's thought, see Gennaro Sasso, Niccol6 Machiavelli. Storia del suo pensiero politico, 2 vols. (Bologna, 1980-93). Mark Hulliung, Citizen Machiavelli (Princeton, 1983); Sebastian de Grazia, Machiavelli In Hell

(Princeton, 1989); Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, Fortune is a Woman: Gender and Politics in the Thought of Niccolb Machiavelli (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1984); and Victoria Kahn, Machiavellian Rhetoric: From the Counter-reformation to Milton (Princeton, 1994), pp. 15-59, argue (each in an original way) for a single Machiavelli.

6. See especially, Felix Gilbert, "Florentine Political Assumptions in the Period of Savonarola and Soderini," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 20 (1957), pp. 187-214; and idem, Machiavelli and Guicciardini: Politics and History in Sixteenth-Cengia Florence, rev. ed. (New York: Norton, 1984). For another treatment of the changing mutual perceptions of an Italian republic and the outside world, see William J. Bouwsma, Venice and the Defense of Republican LibeM: Renaissance Values in the Age of the Counter Reformation (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968), esp. pp. 162-231, 417482.

7. Elena Fasano Guarini, "Machiavelli and the Crisis of the Italian Republics," in Machiavelli and Rgepublicanism, pp. 17-40; Giovanni Silvano, "Dal centro alla periferia. Niccol6 Machiavelli tra stato cittadino e stato territoriale," Archivio storico italiano, 150 (1992), pp. 1105-1141.

correspondence with Florentine officers in the dominion; as Secretary to the Ten of Liberty and Peace, he helped manage the defense of Florentine territory; and as Chancellor of the Nine of Militia, Machiavelli raised and trained troops in the dominion. Moreover, Machiavelli's writings as a chancery officer reveal a close attention to the mechanics of territorial government.[8] But what is perhaps most surprising is that, in contrast with his diplomatic experience, where influence on the later writings has often been demonstrated, there is a disjunction between Machiavelli's work in Florentine territorial administration and the later discussions of The Prince and the Discourses.

Notwithstanding the many claims that have been made with respect to Machiavelli and the development of the concept of the modem state, there was a decided primitivism to his treatment of the actual administration of states by their own governments. Certainly, Machiavelli was no Weberian. One finds in his writing little recognition of the growth of bureaucracy, the legal revolution of the later middle ages, or the rise of a capitalist economy. The department of government he treated most extensively was the military, and here Machiavelli was both unreasonably idealistic and technically backward.[9]

Especially indicative is Machiavelli's near silence about the two areas of Renaissance state building in Florence that have been most investigated by modem historians: the chancery and the fisc. [10] The chancery was the area of administration that

8. Fredi Chiappelli, "Machiavelli as Secretary," Italian Quarterly, 14 (1971), pp. 27-44, suggested Machiavelli's thought could be discovered in nuce in these writings, but the resulting Machiavelli was stripped of many essential qualities. Jean-Jacques Marchand, NiccoI6 Machiavelli. I primi scritti politici (1499-1512). Nascita di un pensiero e di uno stile (Padua, 1975), in an exemplary study, squeezed as much as possible from the early works, but he found more "stile" than "pensiero."

[9]. Piero Pieri, Il rinascimento e la crisi militare italiana (Turin, 1952). Felix Gilbert, "Machiavelli: The Renaissance Art of War," in The Makers of Modem Strategy, 3rd ed., ed. Peter Paret (Princeton, 1984), pp. 11 -3 1, was only slightly more sympathetic to Machiavelli.

[10]. On the Florentine fisc in relation to state-building, see Anthony Molho, "L'amministrazione del debito pubblico a Firenze nel quindicesimo secolo," in I ceti dirigenti nella Toscana del Quattrocento (Monte Oriolo: Papafava, 1987), pp. 191-207; and idem, "Lo Stato e la finanza pubblica. Un'ipotesi basata

Machiavelli knew best, yet he referred to it not once in The Prince, the Discourses or the Florentine Histories. Two chancellors, Leonardo Bruni and Poggio Bracciolini, were remembered as "historians," but there was no mention of their service to the Florentine government. I I The only person mentioned as a "chancellor" in the Histories was Cola di Rienzo, a figure Machiavelli possibly admired, but who abandoned that line of work in 1347 when he seized power in Rome and declared himself Tribune. [12] Machiavelli shows a similar lack of interest in fiscal matters. The argument in the Discourses and the Art of War against the common opinion that "money is the sinews of war," underlined his consistently held view that fiscal might was a secondary factor in the government of states. [13] A state's fisc might reflect the "industry" of its citizens, [14] but wealth alone would not always enable it to find good soldiers when they were needed. In the Florentine Histories, he discussed the imposition of the 1427 catasto primarily in terms of the political struggle between the grandi and the popolo. [15] He overlooked the catasto's formidable centralizing role when he discussed its imposition on the dominion; and he seems to have viewed the Volterrans' resistance to it with sympathy. 16 Discussing the
sulla storia tardomedioevale di Firenze," in Origini dello Stato. Processi di formazione statale in Italia fra medioevo ed etA moderna. eds. Giorgio Chittolini, Anthony Molho, and Pierangelo Schiera (Bologna, 1994), pp. 225-80. On the chancery, see especially Alison Brown, Bartolomeo Scala, 1430-1497, Chancellor of Florence: The Humanist as Bureaucrat (Princeton, 1979), pp. 161-192; and Robert Black, "The Political Thought of the Florentine Chancellors," Historical Journal, 29 (1986), pp. 991-1003.

[11]. Istorie, Proemio, p. 632.

[12]. Note the assimilation that takes place when Machiavelli, Istorie ' D 1, p. 653, calls him "Niccol6 di Lorenzo, cancelliere in Campidoglio," using the Tuscan form of Cola's Christian name. Machiavelli preserved the dialect form, "Cola," for another historical figure, "Cola Montano," at Istorie, vii.33, p. 814.

[13]. Niccol6 Machiavelli, Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio, ii. 10, in Tutte le opere, ed. Martelli [cited hereafter as Discorsi , p. 159; idem, Arte della guerra vii. in Tutte le opere, p. 386.

[14]. Istorie florentine, Proemio, in Tutte le opere, ed. Martelli [cited hereafter as Istoriel p. 633, referring to Florence's war with Filippo Maria Visconti.

[15]. Istorie iv. 14, pp. 722-3.

[16.] Ibid., iv. 15-7, pp. 723-5.

French, Machiavelli suggested the absence of fiscal uniformity helped keep their kingdom united. [17]

Clearly, Machiavelli found little that was worthy of imitation in Florentine administration. And yet, it was once assumed that Machiavelli was an advocate of the processes that transformed Florence into an early modem territorial state. An early proponent of this idea was Francesco Ercole, who in 1926 wrote that Machiavelli "recognized [...] the [...] tendency of the city-state to [...] transform itself, in one way or another, into a unitary and territorial state." [18] But the adjectives "unitary" and "territorial" as used by Ercole are quite misleading. One of the reasons Machiavelli stood out among the political writers of his day was that he rejected such conventional legal and institutional understandings of the territorial state. As we shall see, Machiavelli remained the consistent advocate of a quite different mode of government. For throughout his writings, the Florentine argued against the territorial state and in favor of an expansionist republican empire. In wishing to be free of the mistakes of the present, Machiavelli was thus rebelling against his "context." [19]

Machiavelli's most careful formulation of his views on territorial expansion can be found in Book I, Chapter 6, of the Discourses. Here, in a passage that has sometimes been misunderstood, Machiavelli examined the differences that distinguished a popularly based republic such as Rome from narrowly based aristocratic republics such as Venice

[17.] Il Principe, ed. Giorgio Inglese (Turin, 1995) [cited hereafter as PrinciRel, iii. 10, p. 13.

[18]. Francesco Ercole, La politica di Machiavelli (Rome, 1926), pp. 106-7. For similar views of Machiavelli and the modem state, see: Alfred Schmidt, Niccol6 Machiavelli und die allgerneine Staatslehre der Gegenw (Karlsruhe, 1907); Leonhard von Muralt, Machiavellis Staatsgedanke (Basel, 1945); James Burnham, The Machiavellians: Defenders of Freedom (Chicago, 1963), p. 35; and Herfried MUnkler, Machiavelli. Die Begrandung des politischen Denkens der Neuzeit aus der Krise der Republik Florenz (Frankfurt a. M., 1984), pp. 329-337.

19. Compare Joseph R. Strayer, On the Medieval Origins of the Modem State (Princeton, 1970), whose "modem" state Machiavelli would certainly have disliked. For the Florentine context, see Lauro Martines, LgMers and Statecraft in Renaissance Florence (Princeton, 1968), which might be read as a description of the world Machiavelli was trying to escape.

and Sparta. The two kinds of republic presented the would-be founder of a republic with an important choice. As Machiavelli put it,[20] If anyone should wish to order a new republic, he would have to examine whether he wished that she expand (ampliasse) in dominion and power, like Rome, or that she remain within narrow confines. In the first case, it is necessary to order her like Rome [with a popular constitutio In the second case, you can (puoi) order her like Sparta and like Venice [with an aristocratic constitution]. But, because expansion is the poison of republics of this [latter kind], he who establishes them must prohibit their acquisition of other

territory (lo acquisire in all possible ways, because when such acquisitions are piled upon a weak republic they are invariably its ruin. Modem commentators have sometimes interpreted this passage as establishing equally suitable alternatives for the founder of a republic.[21] However, the passage was constructed in such a way as to lead the reader to believe the second alternative was less desirable. Thus, Machiavelli used an abstracted third person when speaking of the founder of a republic like Rome, but changed to a tu of condescension (with the verb puoi) when describing the founding of a republic like Venice or Sparta.[22] Sparta and Venice were thus "weak" republics because they could not stand the burden of territorial acquisitions.

[20]. Discorsi, i.6, p. 86.

[21]. Alfredo Bonadeo, "Appunti sul concetto di conquista e ambizione nel Machiavelli e sull'antixnachiavellismo," Annali dell'Istituto orientale ' 12 (1970), pp. 245-60; idem, "Machiavelli on War and Conquest," II pensiero politico, 7 (1974), pp. 334-361. Pocock, Machiavellian Moment, pp. 196-199 got it right, and so did Harvey C. Mansfield, Jr., Machiavellian Virtue (Chicago, 1996), pp. 85-92.

[22]. Machiavelli's use of the tu and the voi was more complicated than indicated in the nonetheless perceptive comment of Leo Strauss Thoughts on Machiavelli (Chicago, 1958), p. 77; later endorsed by Gian Roberto Sarolli, "Un dichirografo inedito del Machiavelii'dictante'e'scribente,'" Modem Lanauage Notes, 80 (1965), pp. 58-9. In this regard, it might be mentioned that Sarolli's article failed to distinguish between the normal use of the second person singular in letters from Florentine magistracies to their officers (a "collegial" tu) and the customary use of the voi in private correspondence in this period.

Machiavelli acknowledged that non-expansive republicanism had a certain appeal.

That he was sincere in this is confirmed by a passage in his poem, L'Asino, in which he criticized Athens, Sparta and Florence for having subjected the territory surrounding them, and also by Castruccio Castracani's deathbed wish in the Vita that he had made 'T[23] In the riends" (amici) of neighboring states, rather than try to conquer them. Discourses, Machiavelli wrote that he "would like to believe" that a long-lived republic might be founded by establishing it on a strong site and endowing it with only as much power as was needed for its own defense. "And without doubt I believe that if the thing (i.e. the constitution) could be kept balanced in this manner, that this would be the true political life (vivere politico and true peace for a City."[24]

But, reading further, it becomes clear that Machiavelli thought the alternative represented by Sparta and Venice was a false one. Since all human affairs are in motion, "necessity" forces "you',[25] to undertake "many things to which reason will not induce you." Other states have their own interests and ambitions, and inevitably, the "necessity" of warfare impinges on even the republic of limited ambition. The republic without ambitions will be faced with a choice between expanding in order to maintain its liberty or seeing its liberty extinguished.[26]

Since he did not believe that it was possible "to balance this thing," Machiavelli thought that it was necessary in ordering a republic "to think of the more honorable outcome," and to establish

the regime in such a way, "that even if necessity should induce

[23]. L'asino ch. 5, in Tutte le opere, ed. Martelli, p. 966; Vita di Castruccio Castracani da Lucca, p. 626. Careful consideration of Machiavelli's language in these two passages confirms that neither contradicts the general conclusion of the Discourses.

[24]. Discorsi, ii.6, p. 86.

[25]. Again, a tu accompanies the lesser alternative.

[26]. Discorsi, ii.6, p. 86. Pocock, Machiavellian Moment, p. 199, rightly explained Machiavelli's choice of Rome over Sparta on the grounds that "to reject expansion is to expose oneself to fortune without seeking to dominate her."

it to expand, it would be able to preserve that which it had occupied." Sparta and Venice, the republics of reason, were not ordered with empires in mind, and both lost within brief periods the empires that necessity forced them to acquire.[27] Only the German city-states of Machiavelli's day were able to be free (and also economically and militarily strong) while also being unacquisitive--but this was owing to their living under Imperial protection.[28] Were such protection removed, Machiavelli implies, the Germans, too, would be forced to expand, if they wished to preserve their liberty.

Machiavelli's argument is stated so plainly that it might be easy to overlook the extent to which his endorsement of the imperialism of the republic of "necessity" marked a significant break with earlier republican theorists. For Plato, Aristotle and Cicero, the purpose of government was the inculcation of virtue in the citizens of a regime: in Machiavelli's writings empire takes the place of virtue as the end of the republic. Thus Plato and Aristotle condemned territorial expansion because they believed city-states would lose their ability to effectively shape citizens when they grew too large. The large polis would lose its "political" character.[29] Among Roman writers, similar views were expressed by the historians Sallust and Livy, but this was not the opinion of Cicero in one of the most influential discussions of the problem of imperialism. In the De officiis--a text Machiavelli knew from his boyhood--Cicero argued that empire was a consequence

[27]. Here, as has often been noted, Machiavelli ignored the astonishing revival of Venetian fortunes after the battle at Agnadello (known to him as "VailA"). For Machiavelli's consistent belittling of Venetian political achievements, see Innocenzo Cervelli, Machiavelli e la crisi dello stato veneziano (Naples, 1974).

[28]. On the strength (potentia) of the German cities that yet resulted in no acquisition (acquisto),see the Ritracto delle cose della Magn , in Marchand, Niccolo Machiavelli. I primi scrittil pp. 525-32 (esp. 525,
530). Similarly in a draft version, the Rapporto di cose della Magn , ibid., p. 480: "le comunita sanno che
lo acquisto d'talia farebbe pe'principi e non per loro, potendo questi venire ad godervi

personalmente li
paesi d'Italia e non loro."

[29]. Plato, Republic, 423b-c; Aristotle, Politics, 1324b-1327b, 1333b-1334a.

of Roman virtue.[30] Although Cicero's position was quite different from Plato's and Aristotle's, the Roman orator agreed with Plato and Aristotle on the crucial point that the "end" of the republic was virtue: empire was a manifestation of virtue, not an end in itself. [31]

That Machiavelli disagreed with the republican theorists of antiquity on the question of imperialism is notable, since it shows him diverging from another of the "contexts" in which he is often discussed, namely classical republicanism. Of course, Plato was not always taken seriously, but Aristotle and Cicero were authorities of a
different order. Interestingly, Machiavelli only once cited Aristotle favorably in his writings--on the violence done to women by tyrants--and elsewhere he preferred to criticize him.[32] Was Machiavelli thinking of Aristotle's moderate politei --and not only of the regimes of Plato and Xenophon--when he wrote in The Prince against "republics and principalities that have never been seen to exist or known to exist in truth"?[33] But it was by inverting the key terms of Cicero's position that Machiavelli really changed the nature of the discussion concerning empire. Machiavelli's vocabulary was

[30]. Cicero, De officiis, 2.26-27. Roberto Ridolfi, Vita di Niccolo Machiavelli, 7th rev. ed. (Florence, 1978), p. 424 n. 7, noted the presence of a borrowed copy of the De officiis in the home of Machiavelli's father, Bernardo. For Ciceronian influences on Machiavelli, see Marcia L. Colish, "Cicero's De officiis and Machiavelli's Prince," Sixteenth Cengn Journal, 9 (1978), pp. 81-93. See also Patricia J. Osmond, "Sallust and Machiavelli: From Civic Humanism to Political Prudence," Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 23 (1993), pp. 407-38.

[31]. For Cicero's views on Roman expansion, see Hans Dieter Meyer, Cicero und das Reich (Cologne, 1957); and P.A. Brunt, "Laus Imperii," in Imperialism in the Ancient World, ed. P.D.A. Garnsey and C.R. Whitaker (Cambridge, 1978), pp. 159-191.

[32]. Discorsi, iii.26, p. 233. For Machiavelli's otherwise negative view of Aristotle, see his letter to Francesco Vettori of 26 August 15 13, in Tutte le opere, ed. Martelli, p. 1156, referring to the Politics, and compare Vettori's previous letter of 20 August 1513, ibid., p. 1153. See also the Discursus Florentinarurn Rerurn Post Mortem lunioris Laurentii Medices, ibid., p. 30.

[33]. Principe, xv.4, p. 102. More's Utopia, published in 1516 and therefore after the first redaction of The Prince, was known to Francesco Vettori, who mentioned it in his Sommario della storia d'Italia dal 1511 al 1527, published in Francesco Vettori, Scritti storici e politici, ed. Enrico Niccolini (Bari, 1972), p. 145.

perfectly Aristotelian and Ciceronian in its discussion of "ends," their tele or fines becoming his fini, but the conclusion he reached was directly opposite. In Book 1, Chapter 29, of the Discourses, Machiavelli stated that the city has "two ends" The first is "to acquire" (lo acquisire)

territory; the second is "to maintain its independence." In Discourses, Book II, Chapter 2, Machiavelli stated even more directly that "increase" (accrescere is "the end of a republic" il fine della republico. Thus expansion, not the inculcation of virtue, was the goal of Machiavellian government. To virtue in the classical sense Machiavelli assigned a subordinate role, as one of the means assisting expansion; and in so doing, he changed the meaning of virtue itself.

Concomitant with the redefinition of virtue, which scholars have often discussed, Machiavelli's endorsement of expansion predicated his reworking of other aspects of contemporary political language.[34] It is true that Machiavelli's political vocabulary and his stock of metaphors remained essentially those of the political writers who preceded him, and also of contemporary politicians, statesmen and bureaucrats; however, in the pages of Machiavelli's chief works, some of these traditional elements assumed novel meanings. [35] Time and again the reader of Machiavelli encounters words and images

[34.] The best discussions of Machiavellian virtit remain J. H. Whitfield, Machiavelli (1946; rpt. New York, 1966), pp. 97-105; and Neal Wood, "Machiavelli's Concept of Virtii Reconsidered," Political Studies 15 (1967), pp. 159-172.

[35.] For the context, see Allan H. Gilbert, Machiavelli's "Prince" and Its Forerunners: The Prince as a typical Book "De Regimine Principurn" (Durham, N.C., 1938); Felix Gilbert, "Florentine Political Assumptions in the Period of Savonarola and Soderini," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 20 (1957), pp. 187-214; Federico Chabod, "Alcuni questioni di terminologia: 'stato', 'nazione', 'patria'nel linguaggio del Cinquecento," in his Scritti sul Rinascimento (Turin, 1967), pp. 627-61; Mario Santoro, Fortuna, ragione e prudenza nella civiltA letteraria del Cinquecento (Naples, 1967); Nicolai Rubinstein, "Notes on the word stato in Florence before Machiavelli," in Florilegium Historiale, ed. J.G. Rowe and W.H. Stockdale (Toronto, 1971), pp. 313-326; idem, "Florentina Libertas," Rinascimento, ser. 2, 26 (1986), pp. 3-26. A helpful introduction to Machiavelli's vocabulary may be found in appendix to Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince ' trans. Quentin Skinner and Russell Price (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 100-13. Fredi Chiappelli, Studi sul linLyuap-2io del Machiavelli (Florence, 1952), by design paid little attention to contemporary usage, which sometimes makes his study all the more useful.

employed in ways that would have run counter to such medieval and Renaissance expectations.[36]

After virtu, the most frequently discussed word in the Machiavellian vocabulary is stato. An older dispute--whether Machiavelli's use of the word corresponded with the modem impersonal meaning of the word "state" [37]--has been answered in the negative, inasmuch as in Machiavelli's use of stato. the word can be shown always to stand for the stato of someone--of a person or a group of people.[38] The modemiuridical understanding of the "state" reached maturity only in the decades after Machiavelli's death.[39]

The argument has since been recast, however, to show that Machiavelli's use of stato differed from that of medieval writers in that he used stato in "exploitative" and "predatory" contexts, so that stato was generally the object of verbs of aggression, acquisition, and manipulation.[40] It has been suggested rightly that Machiavelli's "predatory" use of stato developed among preceding

generations in the grasping, competitive world of Florentine oligarchical politics, in which "status" might be both acquired and lost.41 Finally, further study has shown that because of Machiavelli's

36. Cf the description of Machiavelli's refutation of the traditional catalogue of virtues in Felix Gilbert, "The Humanist Concept of the Prince and The Prince of Machiavelli," in his History: Choice and Commitment (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), pp. 91-114, esp. I I Off.

37. A position advanced by Ernst Cassirer, The Myth of the State (New Haven, 1946), pp. 133-134, 140-141, 154-155. Compare also Chiappelli, Studi sul linguaggio, pp. 59-73.

38. J.H. Hexter, "The Predatory Vision: NiccoI6 Machiavelli. 11 Principe and lo stato in his The Vision of Politics on the Eve of the Reformation: More, Machiavelli, Seyssel (New York, 1973), pp. 173175; further supported by Skinner, Foundations, 11:353-354.

39. J.W. Allen, A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century, (1928; New York, 1960), pp. 407ff.; and Skinner, Foundations, 11:349-358. Alberto Tenenti, Stato: un'idea, una logica. Dal comune italiano all'assolutismo francese (Bologna, 1987), offers a rich discussion (esp. pp. 15-97), but does not change the overall conclusion.

40. Hexter, "The Predatory Vision."

41. Martines, LMers and Statecraft, pp. 390-391.

advice to both princes and republics to aggrandize themselves, stato becomes in his work not merely a static quality, but a quality whose possession brings with it an inherent obligation to increase.[42] Thus, as others have shown, the word stato, as Machiavelli uses it, ceases to indicate an "estate" as a "static" quality, becoming instead a quality the possession of which entails further increase or promotion.

Machiavelli worked a similar transformation of the metaphor, traditional to both earlier and contemporary political writing, which likened the political regime to a human body.[43] Although Machiavelli made use of the ancient and medieval metaphors that spoke of the relationship between a king and his subjects as similar to that between a body's head and limbs, it has by now become commonplace that Machiavelli interjected into this image an "organic" conception of the regime; that is, he thought of the regime as a living thing, subject to cycles of birth and death. An essentially traditional use of body imagery to describe political situations was already present in Machiavelli's earliest chancery writings of 1498,[44] in accordance with a typical usage of state scribes.[45] Thus Machiavelli's writings include a number of customary arguments regarding the relative importance of various parts of the body. An annexed province is "like an added member."[46] A policy of disarming one's own people is mistaken, "because the heart and

42. Mansfield, Machiavellian Virtue, pp. 281-294. On the obligation to acquire, see, for example, Discorsil i.5, p. 84: "la paura del perdere genera in loro le medesime voglie che sono in quelli che desiderano acquistare; perch6 non pare agli uomini possedere sicuramente quello che Nomo

ha, se non si acquista di nuovo dell'altro."

[43.] Jacques Le Goff, "Head or Heart? The Political Use of Body Metaphors in the Middle Ages," in Fragments for a HistoKy of the Body, 3 vols. (New York, 1989), 1: 12-27; Paul Archambault, "The Analogy of the 'Body' in Renaissance Political Literature," Biblioth6gue d'Humanisme et Renaissance, 29 (1967), pp. 32-53.

[44.] Chiappelli, "Machiavelli as Secretary," pp. 34-35.

[45]. See, for example, James S. Grubb, Firstborn of Venice: Vicenza in the Early Renaissance State (Baltimore, 1988), pp. 26-27.

[46.] Principe, iii. 1, p. 10. For the prince/general as head, and individual Italians as limbs, see Xxvi. 16, p. 172.

the vital parts of a body should be kept covered, and not its extremities. "[47] Machiavelli also used a rich store of medical analogies to describe the illnesses of a state, and the methods for healing them.[48]

But at some point in the development of Machiavelli's thought, his use of the metaphor of the body took a novel turn. For Machiavelli attributed to the political body an appetite. Herein lies the significance of the story that Machiavelli borrowed from Vitruvius of Alexander the Great, who, when the architect Deinocrates proposed building a city in the shape of a human body on Mount Athos, rejected the plan for the reason that the inhabitants would have nothing to feed them.[49] In the Discourses, Machiavelli stated the position even more forcefully, asserting that "the end (Line) of a republic is to enervate and to weaken all other bodies in order that its own body might increase."[50] The republican regime that Machiavelli praised was a regime that consumed.

Expansion was necessary, then, but how was the state to go about it? Machiavelli made it clear that he favored some modes of expansion over others. These were discussed in Book II, Chapter 4, of the Discourses. Machiavelli wrote that the ancient republics employed three modes in aggrandizing themselves.[51] The first was to form a league of several republics, none of which had precedence over the other: Machiavelli adduced the example of the ancient Etruscans, whom he called "Tuscans."[52] The ancient

[47.] Discorsi, ii.30, p. 191.

[48.] E.g., Principe, iii.26-8, pp. 17-8; Chiappelli, Studi sul linguaggio pp. 78 and 88-89; Luigi Zanzi, I "segni" della natura e i "Paradigmi" della storia: il metodo del Machiavelli. Ricerche sulla logica scientifica depli "umanisti" tra medicina e storiografi (Manduria, 198 1); and especially the rich and suggestive treatment of Anthony J. Parel, The Machiavellian Cosmos (New Haven, 1992), pp. 101-112 et passim.

[49]. Discorsi i. 1, p. 78.

[50.] Discorsi, ii.2, p. 150.

[51]. Discorsi, ii.4, pp. 1524.

Tuscans ruled all of Italy north of Rome and south of the Alps. The first mode had significant drawbacks, however. The ancient Tuscans were incapable of extending their rule beyond Italy and proved unable to defend Lombardy against the Gauls. They also left no history of themselves. [53] A second mode of aggrandizement, the one followed by the Romans, was for a republic to make partners (compagni: the word for "business partners") of other states, however always reserving to itself the commanding rank, the seat of empire, and the title to all undertakings. The third mode was immediately to make subjects rather than partners of other states. This was the mode employed by Athens and Sparta in antiquity (although Machiavelli distorted both examples [54]), and by the Florentine and Venetian states in his own day.

Machiavelli rejected the last method--immediate subjugation--on the grounds that governing cities with violence, especially cities that had been accustomed to liberty, was a difficult and costly business.[55] The Athenian and Spartan empires were both ruined, he said, by the inability to maintain such dominions once they were acquired. The mode Machiavelli recommended most highly was the Roman mode, which operated through the adoption and creation of slightly inferior partner regimes. Although these partners were afforded equality in most matters, Rome reserved for herself the place of honor in their endeavors. The result was that unawares the partners spent their own labors and blood in subjecting themselves to Rome. For after the Romans had led their partners outside of

[52]. On this theme, note Peter Godman, From Poliziano to Machiavelli: Florentine Humanism in the HiA Renaissance (Princeton, 1998), pp. 258, 288.

[53]. Discorsi, ii.4, p. 154: "La quale potenza e gloria ... fu tanto spenta, che ... al presente non ce n' e'quasi memoria." And again in the following chapter, Discorsi, ii.5, p. 155: "Talchd, come si e` detto, di lei ne rimane solo la memoria del nome."

[54]. Machiavelli's presentation of the Athenian and Spartan modes of expansion is misleading, since both Greek cities were the heads of "leagues" for many years before transforming them into empires. For Machiavelli's use of Thucydides (but not on this point), see Marcello Simonetta, "Machiavelli lettore di Tucidide," Esperienze letterarie, 22, n. 3 (1997), pp. 53-68.

[55.] This explains the seeming anti-imperialism of the statements in The Ass and the Life of Castruccio, cited at note 23 above.

Italy and reduced many foreign lands to the status of subject provinces, the partners found they were both surrounded by Roman subjects and oppressed by a greatly reinforced Rome. The partners revolted (in the Social War), and they were suppressed and reduced to the status of

subjects. Thus, the final result of the Roman mode of aggrandizement differed little from that of the mode of the Athenians and the Spartans. But the more efficient Roman mode of expansion required delaying the final subjection of a republic's neighbors until such a moment when the partners forced the republic to subject them. To be sure, the "partnership" of this mode of expansion was in effect a kind of fraud--and Machiavelli praised the Romans for their use of fraud as well as force in their conquests.[56]

Since Machiavelli evidently thought that Florence had made the mistake of immediately subjecting her neighbors, the first method, illustrated by the Etruscan league, merits further attention. Machiavelli suggested that this might be the best option still open to the Tuscans of his day. Castruccio seemed to indicate this path when he spoke of befriending neighboring states in the Life.[57] And, as Machiavelli argued elsewhere, "men born in one province keep almost the same nature for all times." [58] A league at least appeared to offer the possibility of prolonged independence, if not the greatness that had been Rome's.

But Machiavelli's recommendation of a league still has something slightly puzzling about it. Why would Machiavelli have recommended a mode of

[56]. Cf, Discorsi, 113, p. 163, "Che si viene di bassa a gran fortuna piii con la fraude che con la forza," which restates Rome's policy toward her neighbors as described in IIA as one of fraud in a laudable cause. See, too, iii.40, pp. 248-249, where Machiavelli's initial condemnation of fraud was qualified by what followed. Also Principe, xviii, pp. 115-20. R. T. Ridley, "Machiavelli and Roman History in the Discourses," Ouaderni di storia, 18 (1983), p. 200, is better than Whitfield, Machiavelli, p. 153, on this question.

[57]. Note 23 above.

[58]. Discorsil iii.43, p. 250.

aggrandizement that led the Tuscans into "oblivion"? It seems possible Machiavelli believed that the advantage offered by a league was the ease with which it could be turned into a network of "partners." Since the republic that desired to expand was supposed to deceive others into helping it expand, and since no state would willingly become a 11partner" to another republic if it knew what future was in store for it, a "league" offered the best practical beginnings for expansion along the lines laid by the Roman republic.

During the early stages of the growth of an empire, Machiavelli seems to have envisioned the preservation of substantial local autonomies. Partner republics would continue to administer justice by themselves, as Capua had done for 3 00 years while nominally under Roman control; and as Pistoia had done--though under Florentine control in other ways--during the fourteenth century.[59] In France, similarly, the provinces of Burgundy, Brittany, Gascony and Normandy were said in The Prince to have "become one whole body" with the French kingdom, not despite, but because they were allowed to retain their former laws and taxes.[60] For Machiavelli the cohesion of states was not measured by unified legal codes or by centralized administrative and territorial structures, but in terms of a psychological cohesion that could better be achieved by

preserving local autonomies. This is a far cry from Ercole's "unitary" state.

When, in The Prince, Machiavelli rejected the time-worn Florentine strategy for controlling Tuscany summarized in the maxim, "Rule Pisa with fortresses and Pistoia with factions,"[61] he was hoping for the establishment of a territorial order quite different from the one that existed in his own day. Where fortresses were garrisoned in subject towns, they proved expensive, and, worst of all, they daily incurred the wrath of the

[59]. Discorsi, ii.2 1, pp. 177-178.

[60]. Principe, iii, 7-10, pp. 12-3. Machiavelli here underestimated the royal interference in these parts of France. Compare the Ritracto di cose di Francia, in Marchand, Machiavelli. Primi scritti, pp. 507524, which gave a more accurate account.

[61]. Principe, xx, pp. 138-46.

subjects, by furnishing daily reminders of servitude.[62] In place of hostile garrisons, Machiavelli would have granted substantial autonomy to the subject towns of Tuscany. Such towns would be more likely to defend themselves if attacked. And, as partners rather than subjects, they would be more likely to give of themselves in military action together with the Florentines. Factions, for their part, rendered subject towns highly vulnerable to external enemies;[63] and there was the risk that such factions would spread to the ruling city, just as they had spread from Pistoia to Florence in the past.[64] Machiavelli's rejection of the customary policy toward factions in the territory leads us back to the capital city, however, as we explore how he tried to transform political thinking: what about factions in the capital?

As Quentin Skinner justly pointed out, one of the fundamental ways in which Machiavelli broke with the expectations of his predecessors and contemporaries, was through his striking praise, in the Discourses, of Roman civic discord.[65] Guicciardini's somewhat amazed response to Machiavelli's argument was that "to praise discord was like praising the sickness of someone who was ill.,"[66] But the extent and nature of Machiavelli's endorsement of "disunion"--and what motivated it--have not always been completely understood.67 To begin with, as we have seen, Machiavelli opposed factions

[62]. Criticisms of fortresses are at ibid.; and Discorsi, ii.24, pp. 181-184.

[63]. Principe, xx. 11, pp. 140; although such towns were difficult for a prince or republic to hold. For the proper way to acquire a town riven by factions, see Discorsi ii.25, pp. 184-5.

[64]. Discorsi, iii.27, pp. 233-234; cf. Istorie, ii.16, pp. 668ff. See also William J. Connell, "'I fautori delle parti'. Citizen Interest and the Treatment of a Subject Town, c. 1500," in Istituzioni e societa` in Toscana in eta` moderna (Rome, 1994),1: 118-147.

[65]. Skinner, Foundations L 18 1;

[66]. Francesco Guicciardini, Considerazioni sui'Discorsi' del Machiavelli, L4, in his Opere, 3 vols., ed. Emanuella Lugnani Scarano (Turin, 1970),1:616: "laudare le disunione e` come laudare in uno infermo la infermita`... ".

[67]. See Skinner, Foundations 1: 18 1, where it was argued that Machiavelli believed "that, since these conflicts served to cancel out sectional interests, they served at the same time to guarantee that the only

in subject towns for reasons of security. But if he opposed them there, would he not oppose them in the capital city for the same reasons? On closer examination, it seems that Machiavelli distinguished between a healthy form of civic discord--which was essentially a class struggle between patricians and plebs--and an unhealthy form of discord, characterized by political factions and parties.

Thus, although Machiavelli praised Rome's disunion and her tumults when these resulted from class antagonism between nobles and plebs,[68] he was quite quick to condemn political factions (parti or sette) that sought to control the state for private benefit.[69] Class divisions, on the other hand, produced both healthy competition and good laws tending toward the expansion of the republic, so long as the demands of the competing classes did not become excessive or degenerate into private hatreds.[70] A similar tale was told in the Florentine Histories, where Machiavelli wrote that under the government of the Primp Popolo--a regime he interpreted as having originated in the conflict between Florentine magnates and popolani--"our city was never in greater or happier condition.',[71]

Machiavelli argued in the Discourses that "those who condemn the tumults between the nobles and the plebs" in ancient Rome erred by blaming "those things which

enactments which actually passed into law were those which benefited the community as a whole." Because Skinner did not gasp Machiavelli's distinction between class conflict (which Machiavelli endorsed) and factional conflict (which Machiavelli criticized), the result was a Machiavelli inordinately close to the writers of the The Federalist and Adam Smith--as in Skinner's Machiavelli, where he wrote (p. 66): "although motivated entirely by their selfish interests, the factions will thus be guided, as if by an invisible hand (sic!), to promote the public interest in all their legislative acts."

[68]. Discorsi i.4, p. 84; Alfred Bonadeo, Corruption, Conflict, and Power in the Works and Times of NiccoI6 Machiavelli (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1973), pp. 35-71.

[69]. See, for example the description of the creation of a parte by an ambitious citizen in Discorsi iii.28, p. 235.

[70]. Discorsi, i.3-7, pp. 81-88; Istorie, iii.1, pp. 690-691.

[71]. Istorie ii. 15, p. 668. Not only was there a popular army, but also "tutta la Toscana, parte come subietta, parte come amiga," obeyed Florence [my emphasis].

were the first cause of Rome's remaining free.,' [72] It has been suggested recently that Machiavelli saw these "tumults" as "a consequence of intense political involvement," and hence consistent with internal liberty. Although the airing of political differences was of a certain limited importance in Machiavelli's brand of republicanism,[73] it seems, however, that the "freedom" that interested Machiavelli was directed toward foreign powers, rather than domestic liberty.[74] And, as was shown previously, territorial expansion was necessary to the preservation of freedom. By engaging the Roman people in the business of the commonwealth, the Roman constitution harnessed popular energy for Rome's wars of conquest--toward achieving what Machiavelli considered the goal or "end" of the republic. The occasional domestic tumults of an empowered populace were a small price to pay for the advantages that accrued from a popular army.[75]

Machiavelli's ideal of an imperialistic but minimally centralizing republican state that permitted class struggle ran quite contrary to the ideas of other contemporary writers. Francesco Guicciardini, a lawyer who devoted much of his career to creating for the Papacy an "impersonal" modem territorial state for the Papacy,[76] was at great pains in his Considerations on Machiavelli's Discourses to show the extent to which Machiavelli's ideas were out of "context" in the Italy of the early sixteenth century. Thus, Guicciardini argued that the Florentine and Venetian governments were not weakened but

[72]. Discorsi, L4, p. 82.

[73]. Compare, for example, the criticism of lengthy deliberations in republics in -Discorsi, ii. 15, pp.164-166.

[74]. See Rubinstein, "Florentina Libertas."

[75]. Discorsi, i.4, p. 83: "dico come ogni cittA debbe avere i suoi modi con i quali il popolo possa sfogare I'ambizione sua, e massime quelle cittA che nelle cose importanti si vogliono valere del popolo."

[76] As papal governor, Guicciardini famously defended the territories of the Church from armed attack even while the Papacy was vacant.

strengthened by having enlarged their jurisdictions and "domesticated" their neighbors.[77] Machiavelli, as we have seen, viewed the immediate subjection of neighboring powers as creating early and unnecessary limits to a republic's expansion.

Questions of legal jurisdiction, which mattered a great deal to Guicciardini, were of minimal importance to Machiavelli. At various points in his writings, Machiavelli juxtaposed the term "imperio," his equivalent for territorial sovereignty, with "forza," which might be best translated as "strength." According to Machiavelli, the expansion of a republic's imperio had the effect of weakening its forza. For a republic to achieve greatness, it was necessary for it to finds the means to increase its forza through a form of imperialism more subtle and therefore more powerful than the simple extension of its jurisdiction. If, as Machiavelli stated in The Prince and

the Discourses, men are greedy and ambitious by nature; then the politics of ragione will invariably give way to the politics of necessita`; and necessita` requires that a state either expand or be conquered. But the preferred mode of expansion was not the simple subjection of vanquished states. That was a path to imperio--to increased jurisdiction--but not to forza.[78] While imperio was characteristic of the early modem territorial state, forza, the quality that made the Romans great, lay in the creation of partners (not subjects), in citizen arms, and in finding ways to channel the energies of class conflict between the ambitious few and the popolo into foreign expansion.

To conclude, in Machiavelli's view it was a mistake for a republic to subject its neighbors and become a limited territorial state. Far from a prophet of the unitary territorial state, our examination of Machiavelli's ideas on empire, the treatment of subject territories, and the problem of civic discord reveals him as what he in fact claimed to be at the outset of the Discourses: a writer who sought in the history of Rome's growth a new and "untrodden"[79] path for solving and moving beyond the problems of what today we call his historical "context."

[77] Guicciardini, Considerazioni, 11. 19, in Opere, ed. Lugnani Scarano, 1, p. 668. See, too, Osvaldo Cavallar, Francesco Guicciardini iziurista (Milan, 199 1).

[78] Discorsi ii. 19, p. 175. Compare Ercole, La politica del Machiavelli, pp. 114-116, who wrote that there were two kinds of imperio in Machiavelli, one backed by sufficient forza ("la ... forza effettiva di attuarsi e di farsi rispettare"), the other not. Ercole overemphasized, however, the jurisdictional aspect of the first kind of imperio. On iMperio in the Florentine context, see Alison Brown, "The Language of Empire," forthcoming in William J. Connell and Andrea Zorzi, eds., Florentine Tuscgny: Structures and Practices of Power.

[79] Discorsi ' i, preface, p. 76: "ho deliberato entrarae per una via, la quale, non essendo ancora trita... ". On the passage, see Najemy, Between Friends, pp. 337-338, esp. n. 10.