

The Consistency of Machiavelli's Practical Intention — *The Prince* and the *Discourses*

Introduction

This report is based on *Conquest and Liberty — Machiavelli's Political Thought and Renaissance Florence*, published in 2013. Since this research monograph has not been published in English, it is worth presenting here. In that book, I dealt with the problem of the intellectual consistency of Machiavelli's two major political works, namely, *The Prince* and the *Discourses*. Although these two classical works were written at almost the same time, the contents of their respective arguments appear so far apart that the question of how Machiavelli's practical political intention can be coherent has been debated for several centuries.[1]

Here, because of the constraints of time and space, I will narrow the issues concerning Machiavelli's intellectual consistency to the following single question. What kind of rule did he aim at, taking feasibility into account: free government or despotism? In other words, which regime did he support, monarchy or republic?

(1) Machiavelli as a Monarchist

From the standpoint of this report, let us first arrange the traditional interpretations. One typical interpretation understands his thought as that of an “advisor to tyrants” or a “Machiavellist,” and this interpretation places particular emphasis on *The Prince*. [2] For those who interpret him in this way, Machiavelli was a hateful thinker, more than a mere supporter of monarchy. On the other hand, even if one does not go so far as to call Machiavelli a supporter of tyrants, there are also extremely many studies that interpret him as a supporter of monarchy in Florence or Italy. [3] According to this interpretation, for example, Machiavelli keenly felt the limits of the urban republic and conceived the construction of a powerful monarchy responding to the needs of the age. However, interpretations that understand Machiavelli as a monarchist do not substantiate from the text the claim that he thought the republican framework was unsuited to the course of the times.

(2) Machiavelli as a Republican

On the other hand, there is an interpretation that stands in direct opposition to these. From a standpoint that emphasizes the *Discourses*, this interpretation understands Machiavelli not as an advisor to tyrants, but rather as a celebrant of liberty. He is often said to have been a republican, and moreover a defender of democracy.[4]

When Machiavelli is interpreted in this way, *The Prince* tends to be explained in one of the following two ways. The first is the explanation that the work is merely an abstract work, or else nothing more than satire or an epigram.[5] For example, according to J. G. A. Pocock's interpretation, Machiavelli, from the distinctive political position of the Medici family who returned to Florence in 1512, intended a change in the form of government from republic to principality.[6] However, *The Prince*, though inspired by the concrete situation of Florence, is said to be a highly theoretical work not directed there in any direct way.[7] Yet the difficulty with this hypothesis, which denies the practical intention of *The Prince*, is that it cannot but ignore the fact that Machiavelli himself emphasizes the practical usefulness of his argument in Chapter 15 of *The Prince*.

The second way is the explanation that *The Prince* occupies, as it were, a subordinate and instrumental position to the *Discourses*. [8] For example, according to Meinecke, focusing on the argument in *Discourses* I.18 that the strength of a single ruler is necessary to overcome corruption in Florence or Italy, he sees from this passage that the intention behind writing *The Prince* lay in a prince's overcoming corruption or founding a new order.[9] Machiavelli's purpose, it is said, was the realization of liberty or republic, but he sought to introduce monarchy as the means.

However, such explanations have been criticized on the grounds that the basis for relating the two works is extremely weak.[10] Furthermore, according to the argument of *Discourses* I.18, even the superhuman legislator Romulus is concluded to have been unable to overcome corruption, and therefore it is difficult to find there Machiavelli's realistic expectation toward the Medici. In the first place, the content of *The Prince* itself does not appear to have as its theme the overcoming of corruption.

Indeed, in this interpretation, the creation of princely power becomes the way to arrive at liberty, yet in actual politics is it not precisely that extraordinary means that would cause the fatherland to lose its liberty? If Machiavelli believed in such a legislator-prince with pure good intentions and thought that he would abandon his absolute

power immediately after the legislative act, then this political thinker would have possessed an all too naïve political sensibility.

(3) Opportunist Machiavelli

The third tendency in interpreting Machiavelli assumes that there was, from the outset, no consistency at all in his ideals concerning government. This interpretation points out that he simply underwent an intellectual development or conversion.[11] For example, Q. Skinner seems to think that Machiavelli underwent a practical conversion.[12] From this interpretation, it follows that he merely changed the regime he supported from republic to monarchy.

However, one of the difficulties of this theory, which argues for a conversion from the *Discourses* to *The Prince*, is that it cannot properly explain the fact that a considerable part of the *Discourses* was written after the completion of *The Prince*. [13] Conversely, one might interpret his preferred regime as having changed from monarchy to republic. Yet if one points out just a single textual fact, that will be sufficient to overturn the premises of both interpretations. That fact is that Machiavelli refers in the *Discourses* to *The Prince*. [14] Therefore, the reader is led to *The Prince* with regard to the argument referred to. [15] Hence, no matter when *The Prince* and the *Discourses* were completed, so long as there is a reference to the other work, the problem of the intellectual consistency of his thought at that point should not be dismissed as a “myth.”

(4) Conclusion

Let me state at the outset the conclusion of this report. Machiavelli was a Florentine republican, and he pursued the liberty of his fatherland. But this fact does not contradict *The Prince*, which is a consideration of monarchy. In fact, in *The Prince* and the *Discourses* he is, basically, considering different objects of government in each. The principal object of consideration in the former, with some exceptions, is the cities in the Romagna region that were acquired or would in future be acquired. In his view, in this disorderly situation monarchy, or rather despotism, was unavoidable, but such rule should never have been applied to Florence. Machiavelli recognized that different political situations require different forms of rule.

In the first section of this report, I shall first clarify that *The Prince* takes as its object of consideration the “new principality.” A new principality is a situation lacking

legitimacy of rule, in which the prince is thought unavoidably to have to employ violence and vice. Moreover, as I will make clear in the second section, one of the princely types belonging to the category of new principalities, especially the princely type in Chapter 7, coincides with the position of the young Medici readers. What the third section points out is that they in fact were confronted with political problems in the papal territories of the Romagna region. Even so, *The Prince* is not entirely confined to that region. As the fourth section shows, Machiavelli develops his argument in Chapter 9 of that work with his fatherland Florence in mind, and on the “civil prince” presented there, he advises the policy that the Medici ought to pursue in this republic. The consideration there is directly connected with the ideal republic of the *Discourses*. He sought to use the Medici family’s power at that time for the sake of a “true” republic. In the fifth section, I will show that Machiavelli thought that a monarchy could not be introduced into Florence because of its political conditions, thereby confirming that he was a consistent Florentine republican.

Section 1 The Object Called the New Principality

Let us look at the table of contents of *The Prince*. It can broadly be divided into three parts according to theme. The first part is the theory of classifying states (Chs. 1–11), the second part is advice to the prince (Chs. 12–23), and the third part is the discussion of Italy (Chs. 24–26).

The especially famous part is the second part, where Machiavelli argues that the prince must exercise vice. For example, “a prince must be parsimonious rather than generous (IP, 16).” “A prince must be feared rather than loved (IP, 17).” “A prince must be cruel rather than merciful (IP, 17).” “A prince may break his promises (IP, 18).”

But why did Machiavelli offer such advice, which may appear bizarre? The most important reason lies in the fact that *The Prince* takes the “new principality” as its theme. In order to understand this, let us cast light on the first part, that is, the theory of classifying states (Chs. 1–11).

In Chapter 1 of *The Prince*, Machiavelli presents an overview of the classification of states that is to be developed thereafter. According to that classification, all states are either principalities or republics. Principalities can in turn be divided into “hereditary principalities” and “new principalities.” A hereditary principality is a state in which the ruler’s family line has ruled for a long time on the basis of bloodline. At the beginning of Chapter 2, Machiavelli argues that, because he has discussed republics “at length elsewhere,” in this book he will confine himself to principalities.

Principalities are divided into hereditary principalities and new principalities. In Chapter 2, hereditary principalities are the object of consideration, and according to its explanation, it is easier to rule a hereditary principality than a new principality. In a hereditary principality, succession of power is based on the principle of bloodline, and the maintenance of power there is easily possible if one preserves ancient customs. In modern terms, there is here a legitimacy of rule based on custom and tradition. Therefore, subjects will have loyalty toward the hereditary prince, and they will obey voluntarily.

By contrast, as Machiavelli states at the beginning of Chapter 3, the rule of a new principality is accompanied by great difficulty:

Changes arise first from a natural difficulty which is common to all new principalities: namely, that men willingly change their ruler, believing that they will improve their condition, and because of this belief they take up arms against him. ... Another obvious and very natural necessity that brings about change is that the man who becomes a new prince, in newly conquering, is always compelled to injure the inhabitants by means of soldiers and innumerable other acts of violence.

As is clear from this passage, a new principality, unlike a hereditary principality, is not a situation in which subjects obey voluntarily. Rather, the subjects will resist the new prince actively, with arms. One reason for this active resistance is that the new prince has harmed the subjects at the time of conquest.

Furthermore, unlike the hereditary prince, the new prince does not possess a rightful qualification or title as prince. That is, at least at the point of conquest, the prescription of time has not yet occurred, and therefore his rule lacks legitimacy based on custom. The new prince is merely a person who has acquired power by force. It is only natural that a prince who has become ruler *de facto* cannot expect the voluntary

obedience of his new subjects. A new principality is a situation in which the old princely power has been usurped by force, that is, a situation of conquest.

The reason Machiavelli offered the strange advice mentioned above lies in this circumstance of conquest. One reason is that the prince has harmed the subjects in the course of conquest; another is, as Pocock and L. Strauss have pointed out, that the prince lacks legitimacy for his rule.[16] Therefore the subjects actively seek to attack the prince, and consequently it is extremely difficult for the new prince to maintain his position. In this exceptional situation the new prince cannot but use violence, and must also exercise vices such as cruelty. This rule cannot but be despotic, at least for the time being.

Section 2 The Further Classification of New Principalities

In this section I focus on the princely type in Chapter 7 of *The Prince*. From Chapter 3 onward, Machiavelli continues to classify new principalities further and presents several concrete situations. First, the object of consideration is the case in which a prince possesses a hereditary state and newly adds to it another state or territory. This discussion continues through Chapter 5, but I must omit it here.

From Chapter 6 onward, the situation discussed is one in which the prince possesses no such hereditary principality and acquires a wholly new state. More specifically, the classification is carried out from the viewpoint of whether the acquisition of power was based on one's own power or on the power of others. The former is *virtù*, the latter *fortuna*; in this context these may be paraphrased as ability and fortune. Thus, Machiavelli presents this pair of contrasting princely types and treats them in Chapters 6 and 7 respectively.

In Chapter 6, Machiavelli posits a person who relies almost exclusively on his own ability. Examples of this outstanding prince are Moses, Romulus, Cyrus, and Theseus, and they depended merely on opportunity alone. If a new prince has ability in this way, he can easily maintain the new regime, but if he does not, great danger accompanies it. In this context, military power is the core meaning of this *virtù*.

By contrast, Chapter 7 takes as its object a person who has acquired his position without possessing ability of his own. In other words, because this new prince is based

on the military force of others, the recommendation of being armed is again the central message in this chapter. Let us follow Machiavelli's argument.

A private man who has become prince merely through fortune becomes prince without effort but maintains his position only with great effort. This man, because he flew there, encountered no difficulty on the way. But all the difficulties arise when he has taken his place there (IP, 7).

According to Machiavelli, this position is based on the favor of the people who gave him power, and because this favor or fortune is extremely unstable, this new prince is liable to lose power. Moreover, according to Chapter 7, because this new prince has always lived in a private condition, he does not know how to command and has no loyal army. Therefore, what such a prince must urgently do is, as considered again from Chapter 12 onward of *The Prince*, to construct a military force of his own.

The model that this new prince dependent on fortune should imitate is Cesare Borgia. In Machiavelli's view, he acquired his state through the fortune of the authority of his father, Pope Alexander VI. Furthermore, his *fortuna* consisted in the fact that, when conquering the cities of Romagna, he depended on French troops and the mercenaries of the Orsini family. In Machiavelli's account, Borgia resolved to form an army loyal to himself in order to eliminate these unstable elements. According to Machiavelli's explanation, Borgia consolidated his foundations through means such as cruelty and stratagem, and conquered the whole of the Romagna region.

Skinner interprets the section on the types of principality from Chapter 1 to Chapter 7 of *The Prince* as an argument intended to narrow the object down to Florence after the return of the Medici.[17] But in fact, Chapter 7 discusses "new principalities acquired by the arms or fortune of others," and that does not seem to fit the Medici who had returned to Florence. Yet one of the concrete examples in Chapter 7 is a person who became ruler "from a private station" (*di privati*) because of money or favor, as when King Darius let others rule Greek cities, and in the opening explanation the fortunate new prince is a person to whom "dominion has been granted." It is difficult to interpret the Medici family as "private men," or, as Skinner claims, as having had dominion "granted" to them by the king of Spain. It is also strained to understand the Medici family as having "flown" into the position of rulers of Florence "without any difficulty."

Rather, the prince of Chapter 7 of *The Prince* should be seen not as referring to the Medici family in general in Florence, but to Giuliano or Lorenzo the Younger of that family as a “private man.” They, and they alone, depended wholly on the favor of Pope Leo X and perfectly fit the princely type in Chapter 7 of *The Prince*.

Section 3 The Political Background of the Papal States

a. 1513

If so, then, as will be shown next, the object Machiavelli had in mind in Chapter 7 of *The Prince* should be interpreted as the papal states in the Romagna region north of the Apennines. In 1513 Giulio de’ Medici became Pope Leo X. The birth of a Medici pope gave rise, as a by-product, to the task of acquiring and maintaining part of the Church’s territories or neighboring states. At that time, it was customary for a pope to grant political position to his relatives.

According to Machiavelli’s letter at the end of March 1513, he was thinking of dedicating *The Prince* to Giuliano. In this letter he says that this work “will be welcome to princes, especially to new princes,” confirming that he had the new prince in mind.

What must first be noted is that Giuliano had already left Florence around the summer of that same year and headed to Rome.[18] It is difficult to think that Machiavelli, at this time, when Giuliano had left Florence and had already been in Rome for nearly half a year, was trying to give Giuliano advice concerning the government of Florence.

It was generally recognized that Giuliano had abandoned power in Florence, and therefore rulers of states had no choice but to inquire where the pope would grant a state to his brother.[19] Leo’s policy was based on judgments suited to circumstances, especially in political maneuvering with the great powers of France, Spain, and the Holy Roman Empire. Various conjectures were circulating about where Giuliano would acquire rule, and Machiavelli, secluded at his villa, probably could not predict where this new state would be. Because of these unpredictable circumstances, Machiavelli may have developed the classification of states in the first half of *The Prince*. His complicated classificatory work was not merely a theoretical arrangement; it may also

have been a practical device to prepare the reader to cope with whatever sort of state he might acquire.

b. 1515

A letter of January 31, 1515, confirms that Machiavelli was still trying to ingratiate himself with Giuliano. Considering the antagonistic relationship between Giuliano and Lorenzo at that time, *The Prince* at this point should be regarded as still not containing the dedication to Lorenzo. In the same letter he argues that Giuliano would come to rule the following four states belonging to the Romagna region.

I heard not from Paolo but from common rumor that Giuliano is to become ruler of Parma, Piacenza, Modena, and Reggio. If his rule is first properly organized, I think it will become splendid and powerful and will be maintained in any event. If one wishes to govern it well, one must understand the nature of the object. New states acquired by a new prince involve extremely many difficulties, if one seeks to maintain them.[20]

This letter is extremely important because it contains an argument strikingly similar to the content of *The Prince*. What must first be confirmed is, as in the earlier letter, the statement that Giuliano is to become a “new prince.” Furthermore, this letter argues that, because the rule of a new state is accompanied by difficulties, foundations must be laid without delay. It also presents the same view as *The Prince* in saying that what a new prince must understand is the nature of the new state.

Moreover, immediately after the passage, Machiavelli says that, if he himself were to become a new prince, he would certainly wish to take Cesare Borgia as his model. In urging Borgia’s methods upon Giuliano, the argument of that letter accords with the analysis of Chapter 7 of *The Prince*. Judging from these points, Machiavelli in that chapter should be seen as having basically in mind the cities of the Romagna region. In fact, at the end of February 1515 Pope Leo X was trying to grant Giuliano these several states.

From this circumstance one may perceive the practical meaning of Machiavelli’s discussion in Chapters 3 to 5 of *The Prince*, where he treats the case of mixed principalities consisting of a hereditary principality and new states.[21] Skinner does not consider the practical significance of the argument in this range, but if the discussion from Chapter 1 to Chapter 7 of that work were merely intended to limit the

object of consideration to Florence, Machiavelli would have had no need to develop his argument at length in Chapters 3 to 5.

Section 4 The “Civil Prince”

Thus, the argument of *The Prince* up to Chapter 7 can be understood as having been directed mainly to the papal states in the Romagna region. It is not impossible that other regions were included as well, for example part of Tuscany. But this means that Machiavelli was presenting separately the rule of the papal states and the government of Florence. Indeed, one should not overlook the fact that contemporaries, too, while clearly distinguishing Florence and other states as distinct objects of rule, advised the Medici to adopt different methods of governance for each.[22]

Some studies, from a standpoint seeking to understand *The Prince* and the *Discourses* coherently, interpret Machiavelli as separately envisioning in each work a principality in the papal principalities in *The Prince* and a republic in Florence in the *Discourses*. [23] Yet his political consideration in *The Prince* cannot be confined to the papal states outside Florence. The structure of *The Prince* is complex. In fact, in part of that work he also considers Florentine politics and gives a practical message.

As has already been shown, the completion of *The Prince* with its dedication to Lorenzo was probably after 1515. Giuliano died in March 1516, but before that he had fallen into a critical situation. The exact time when Machiavelli changed the dedicatee is unknown, but what should not be overlooked here is the fact that Lorenzo, unlike Giuliano, was also involved in the government of Florence. Moreover, he was to acquire another “new principality,” such as Urbino. When Machiavelli tried to dedicate *The Prince* to Lorenzo, he could not but be conscious of Lorenzo’s position. It had become necessary to give this young reader advice concerning the government of his fatherland together with advice about “new principalities.”

First, let us return to the first part of *The Prince*, that is, the theory of classifying states. In Chapter 1 of that work, an overview of the subsequent classification of states is presented, but there are only the types of princes up to Chapter 7. Yet in fact there are four princely types from Chapters 8 to 11. It is possible that these chapters, or one of them, were added at the stage of dedicating the work to Lorenzo.

At the beginning of Chapter 8 of *The Prince*, Machiavelli, while still using the mode of acquisition of power as his criterion, presents yet another pair of contrasting princely types. These paired princely types are treated respectively in Chapters 8 and 9. One is a person who became prince by means of extreme wickedness, and the other is a person who became prince supported by other citizens.

What should first be noted is the criterion of classification in Chapters 8 and 9. The prince of Chapter 8 is a person who rose “through wickedness,” and Agathocles is the concrete example. His wickedness is severely condemned. On the other hand, the “civil prince” of Chapter 9 is a person who became prince without using such violence. Rather, the seizure of power by the “civil prince” is based on the support of “his fellow citizens” (*suoi cittadini*). This criterion of classification, whether violence is used and whether the support of other citizens exists, had already been employed earlier when analyzing republics.[24] Moreover, considering that in these two chapters it had been a “republic” prior to the revolution, it would have been clear to contemporary readers that this typology was an artifice meant to bring Florence into relief. In fact, if one looks at the princely type in Chapter 9, it perfectly matches the manner of the Medici return to Florence.[25] Unlike the prince of Chapter 8, the Medici did not use force when they returned to Florence, but obtained their position through the support of some influential citizens, that is, the anti-Soderini faction.

What, then, is Machiavelli urging in Chapter 9? Let me mention two principal points. One is that even if one has acquired power through the support of the nobles, one should make the people own basis of support. In fact, the Medici recovered power through the backing of the city’s powerful nobles; however, Machiavelli insists that even in that case the popular forces should become their base of support.

The other point is that one must not move “from a civil order to an absolute one (*da lo ordine civile allo assoluto*)”. It is clear from the contrast with Chapter 8 that a civil order is one that uses violence as little as possible. Then, what kind of government ought to be realized within the framework of a “civil order”? Machiavelli had already announced in Chapter 8 that he would discuss the “civil principality” “more fully where republics are treated.”[26] From this promise, the Medici readers would naturally be led to the work that treated republics, namely the argument of the *Discourses*.

If so, the message Machiavelli was trying to convey to the Medici as “civil princes” was that they ought to realize the republic expressed in the *Discourses*. Since he knew that

power had been concentrated in the Medici family in Florence after 1512, he probably did not greatly hesitate to call this condition a “principality.” Yet, as the adjective “civil” indicates, that condition was one that could be called both monarchical and republican. He sought to use this power for the realization of the desirable republic. Moreover, as we shall see below, that was also in the interest of the Medici family.

Section 5 Florence’s Political Conditions

In previous studies there appears to be a strong bias toward the notion that the Medici after 1512 were trying to introduce monarchy into Florence. One reason for this probably lies in the fact that after Machiavelli’s death this republic became, both in name and in reality, a monarchy. But this interpretation may fall into anachronism.

The idea that liberty can be maintained only within the framework of a republic had been shared by Florentine citizens for several centuries, and even after the return of the Medici many citizens held the same ideal. The issue in domestic politics was what sort of government should be adopted on the assumption of a republican framework; that is, whether aristocracy or democracy was the preferable regime.[27] It may be said that Machiavelli’s defense of democracy rather than aristocracy in *Discourses* I.4–6 corresponded to this issue. In fact, some of the Medici faction were trying to take into account the city’s traditional and customary “civility.”[28] Indeed, Giulio de’ Medici, that is, Pope Leo X, was trying to introduce the Medici method of republican government from the age of Lorenzo the Magnificent.[29]

In Machiavelli’s understanding, monarchy should not be adopted in Florence, and indeed it was not possible to adopt it there because of the city’s social conditions. According to him, in general, “where there is equality, one cannot establish a principality, and where there is no equality, one cannot establish a republic (DT, I, 55).” According to the explanation in that chapter, these powerful nobles, unlike the city’s powerful nobles, are a class that lives idly on income from landed property and has no need to concern itself with cultivation and other labors.[30] According to him, such powerful nobles exist in the Kingdom of Naples, the Roman territories, Romagna, and Lombardy, and therefore inequality exists there. For him, because of this condition, the foundation of a republic is almost impossible.[31]

On the other hand, in the same chapter Machiavelli argues that there is equality in Tuscany.

‘The reason can be confirmed from the example of Tuscany. For a long time, within that narrow space, there have existed in that region three republics—Florence, Siena, and Lucca—as well as other cities that are now in a state of subjection. Judging from their spirit and institutions, one can see that they maintain their liberty or at least seek to maintain it. All these things arise from the fact that in the Tuscan region there are no lords possessing fortresses, and there are no powerful nobles, or if there are any, very few’. (DT, I, 55)

Thus, in Machiavelli’s understanding, the Tuscan republics, especially Florence, have a great degree of equality compared with other regions of Italy. Therefore, republican government is suited to Florence.

The same view is presented in the *Discourse on the Reform of the Florentine State*, written at a time not very different from the completion of the *Discourses*.

Unless it is a true republic or a true monarchy, no regime can be said to be stably organized. For the intermediate forms between these two are defective. The reason is quite clear. A monarchy proceeds toward ruin only when it descends toward a republic, and conversely a republic proceeds toward ruin only when it ascends toward a monarchy.[32]

In this work, Machiavelli first points out that it is difficult to introduce a “true monarchy” into Florence. The basis for this lies not only in the reality that no successor exists, but also in the condition already discussed above in the *Discourses on Livy*, namely, the social condition of equality.

Furthermore, in Machiavelli’s understanding, even restoring a Medici regime tilted more toward monarchy, as had been seen in the fifteenth century, would have been foolish. One important basis for this is that the city possesses by nature a “popular” form of government. If one takes into account the traditions of Florence and the experience of democracy after 1494, the only safe means for preserving the family’s power was to adopt a popular republic. This is one line of the “civil principality” of Chapter 9 of *The Prince*.

It should be noted that the *Discourse on the Reform of the Florentine State* was written in response to an inquiry from the Medici and was a practical message from Machiavelli to that family. That is, he urged the Medici to adopt democracy in Florence for the sake of the family's interest, that is, for the preservation of its rule. He saw that if the Medici attempted institutionalization in a form going beyond the traditional republic, that attempt would only endanger the family's securing power in Florence.

Notes

[1] cf. Hans Baron, 'Machiavelli the Republican Citizen and the Author of *The Prince*', in *In Search of Florentine Civic Humanism: Essays on the Transition from Medieval to Modern Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp. 101–151.

[2] "My purpose is only to show that Niccolò Machiavelli, formerly secretary of the Florentine Republic (now a duchy), understood nothing at all of the political science we are discussing, and that he devised exceedingly wicked maxims, and on their basis constructed not a science of politics but a science of tyranny." Innocent Gentillet, *Anti-Machiavel* (Genève: Droz, 1968), p. 31. William Shakespeare, *The Third Part of Henry the Sixth* (New York: Penguin Books, 1967), pp. 72-73. Cf. Mario Praz, 'Machiavelli and the Elizabethans', in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 14 (1928), pp. 49-97. Denis Diderot, *Encyclopédie*, IV (Paris: Hermann, 1976), p. 3. Friedrich II, *The Refutation of Machiavelli's Prince or Anti-Machiavelli*, tr. by Paul Sonnino (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1981).

[3] J. W. Allen, *A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Methuen, 1928), pp. 465-471. Sergio Bertelli, 'Nota introduttiva', in *Il Principe: Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio* (Opere di Niccolò Machiavelli, vol. 1) (Verona: Edizioni Valdonega, 1968), pp. ix-xxxix, at xxviii. Giorgio Cadoni, *Machiavelli: Regno di Francia e «principato civile»* (Roma: Bulzoni Editore, 1974), ch. 2. Myron P. Gilmore, *The World of Humanism, 1453-1517* (New York and Evanston: Harper & Row, 1962), pp. 134-135. Raffaello Ramat, 'Il Principe', in *Per la storia dello stile rinascimentale* (Messina: Firenze: G. D'anna, 1976), pp. 77-118, esp. pp. 94-101. Silvia Ruffo-Fiore, *Niccolò Machiavelli* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982), p. 36. George H. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1937), pp. 338-339. Peter Stacy, *Roman Monarchy and the Renaissance Prince* (Cambridge: Cambridge

University Press, 2007), pp. 309-311. J. N. Stephens, *The Fall of the Florentine Republic, 1512-1530* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), pp. 51-52, 161-163.

[4] “He [Machiavelli] was a advocate of democracy and its most zealous defender. Since he was born, educated, and honored under a democratic form of government, he was the greatest enemy of despotism. Therefore, naturally, he did not like tyrants. His purpose was not to instruct tyrants, but to expose them by revealing their secret counsels, stripping them bare and exposing the prince to the suffering peoples.” Alberico Gentili, *De Legationibus Libri Tres*, tr. by Gordon J. Laing (New York: Oxford University Press, 1924), III, 9, p. 156. James Harrington, *The Commonwealth of Oceana and A System of Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 30. John Milton, *The works of John Milton*, vol. 18 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931-1940), p. 199. There is also an interpretation according to which Machiavelli merely wrote works suited to the needs of rulers and therefore held no values or convictions regarding any specific form of government such as monarchy or republic. Humfrey Butters, ‘Good Government and the Limitations of Power in the Writings of Niccolò Machiavelli’, in *History of Political Thought*, 7 (1986), p. 412. Peter Herde, ‘Humanism in Italy’, in *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, pp. 519–520. But this claim would surely not be supported, for example, if one simply cites *Discourses* II.2, which discusses republic in opposition to monarchy: “The reason for this (the Romans’ attachment to liberty) is easy to understand. It is not private interest but the public interest that makes cities great. And there is no doubt that the public interest is safeguarded only in republics, because everything is carried out there that accords with that end”.

[5] Cutinelli-Rèndina, *Introduzione a Machiavelli*, pp. 54, 109-111. Garrett Mattingly, ‘Machiavelli’s *Prince*: Political Science or Political Satire?’, in *The American Scholar*, 27 (1958), pp. 482-491. Cf. Id., ‘Machiavelli’, in *The Horizon Book of the Renaissance* (New York: American Heritage, 1961), pp. 57-76. Antonio Gramsci, *Note sul Machiavelli sulla Politica e sullo Stato Moderno* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1966), pp. 3-4. Luigi Ricci, ‘Preface to Niccolò Machiavelli’, in *The Prince* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. v. Rudolf von Albertini, *Firenze dalla repubblica al principato: Storia e coscienza politica*, tr. by Cesare Cristorolini (Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1955), p. 52. Oliver Francis, ‘Afterward’, in *The Prince and The art of War* (London: CRW Publishing Limited, 2004), pp. 429-439, at pp. 434-435. Giuseppe Toffanin, *Machiavelli e il Tacitismo: la Politica storica al tempo della controriforma* (Padova: Angelo Draghi Editore, 1921), pp. 28-30.

[6] J. G. A. Pocock, 'Custom and Grace, Form and Matter: An Approach to Machiavelli's Concept of Innovation', in *Machiavelli and the Nature of Political Thought* (London: Lowe and Brydone, 1972), pp. 153-174, at p. 167. Id., *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 160. Id., 'Machiavelli and Rome: the Republic as Ideal and as History', in *The Cambridge Companion to Machiavelli*, pp. 144-156, at p. 146.

[7] Pocock, 'Custom and Grace', pp. 167-168. Id., *Machiavellian Moment*, p. 160. According to Pocock's interpretation, Machiavelli thought that, so far as practicable, a republic was desirable; however, he recognized that the Medici were trying to impose princely rule on Florence at that time, and that one could no longer expect civic political participation there. Id., *Machiavellian Moment*, p. 160. Id., 'Machiavelli and Rome', esp. p. 152.

[8] Dominic Baker-Smith, 'Introduction', in *The Prince*, tr. by W.K. Marriott (London: David Campbell, 1992), pp. xi-xxiv, at xvii-xix. Sebastian De Grazia, *Machiavelli in Hell* (London: Picador, 1992), pp. 235-236, 240. Mikael Hörnqvist, *Machiavelli and Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 221-226, 269, 281-282. Harvey C. Mansfield and Nathan Tarcov, 'Introduction', in *Niccolò Machiavelli: Discourses on Livy*, tr. by Harvey C. Mansfield and Nathan Tarcov (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), pp. xx-xxvii. Robert A. Kocis, *Machiavelli Redeemed: Retrieving His Humanist Perspectives on Equality, Power, and Glory* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 1998), ch. 6. Vitorio Masiello, *Classi e Stato in Machiavelli* (Bari: Adriatica Editore, 1971), ch. 2. Mario Martelli, 'Popolo e principe in Niccolò Machiavelli', in *Belfagor*, 14 (1959), pp. 447-453. Maurizio Viroli, *Machiavelli* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 146. Id., *Machiavelli's God* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 204.

[9] Friedrich Meinecke, *Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison d'Etat and Its Place in Modern History*, tr. by Douglas Scott (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), pp. 32-33. Such interpretations overlap, in the point that they construe Machiavelli's attempt as problem-solving through the introduction of monarchy, with the view already indicated under the first tendency, namely, that Machiavelli conceived a political shift from the urban republic to a powerful monarchy, though they differ in what they emphasize concerning his ideal of government.

[10] Baron, *op. cit.*, pp. 112–115. J. H. Whitfield, ‘Considerazioni pratiche sui «Discorsi»’, in *Studies on Machiavelli*, pp. 361–369. Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), vol. 1, p. 156. Id., ‘Meaning and Understanding in the History of Idea’, in *History and Theory*, 8 (1969), pp. 19–20. In fact, there appears to be no bibliographical evidence that *The Prince* was generated from that passage in the *Discourses*.

[11] Baron, *op. cit.*, *passim*. Julia Conaway Bondanella and Peter Bondanella, ‘Introduction’, in *Niccolò Machiavelli Discourses on Livy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. xv–xvi. Federico Chabod, *Scritti su Machiavelli* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1964), pp. 36–39, 42–43, 46, 52, 72. Id., ‘Machiavelli’s Method and Style’, in *Machiavelli and the Renaissance*, tr. by David Moore (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 137. Carlo Dionisotti, *Machiavellerie: Storia e fortuna di Machiavelli* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1980), esp. pp. 109–111, 121–123. Franco Gaeta, ‘Machiavelli storico’, in *Machiavelli nel V° centenario della nascita* (Bologna: Massimiliano Boni Editore, 1973), pp. 146–147. J. H. Hale, *Machiavelli and Renaissance Italy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972), pp. 136–137. Giorgio Inglese, *Per Machiavelli: L’arte dello stato, La cognizione delle storie* (Roma: Carocci Editore, 2006), p. 150. Martelli, ‘Machiavelli e Firenze dalla Repubblica al Principato’, in *Niccolò Machiavelli: politico storico letterato: Atti del convegno di Losanna 27–30 settembre 1995*, a cura di Jean-Jacques Marchand (Roma: Salerno Editrice, 1996), pp. 15–31. Roberto Ridolfi, *Vita di Niccolò Machiavelli*, terza edizione italiana accresciuta (Firenze: Sansoni Editore, 1969), pp. 234, 489. Gennaro Sasso, *Niccolò Machiavelli: Storia del suo pensiero politico* (Napoli: Nella Sede dell’Istituto, 1958), pp. 213–220, 357–360. Id., *Studi su Machiavelli* (Napoli: Morano, 1967), p. 107. Sheldon S. Wolin, *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1960), p. 250.

[12] Skinner, *Machiavelli: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 56.

[13] For example, if Machiavelli keenly felt the limits of the republic as a form of government and appealed to his contemporaries for its transformation, why did he begin or continue writing the *Discourses* and praise ancient republican Rome even after the completion of *The Prince*? The issue of the dates of composition of the two works must be omitted in this report. However, as far as I can see, there is no specialized study that has fully demonstrated that the *The Prince* we now read was

entirely written in 1513. Cf. Chabod, ‘Sulla Composizione de *Il Principe* di Niccolò Machiavelli’, in *Scritti su Machiavelli* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1964), pp. 137–193. Baron, ‘The *Principe* and the Puzzle of the Date of the *Discorsi*’, in *Bibliothèque d’humanisme et Renaissance*, 18 (1956), pp. 405–428. Najemy, *Between Friends: Discourses of Power and Desire in the Machiavelli-Vettori Letters of 1513–1515* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), ch. 5, esp. pp. 177–184.

[14] Niccolò Machiavelli, *Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio*, introduzione di Gennaro Sasso, premessa al testo e note di Giorgio Inglese (Milano: Rizzoli Editore, 1984), (DT) II, 1, p. 295. Cf. *Ibid.*, II, 20, 25, III, 19, 42.

[15] Machiavelli also informs the reader in *The Prince* that there exists a work on republics, namely the *Discourses*, and this shows his awareness that the reader of *The Prince* may consult the *Discourses* without difficulty. “Since I have discussed republics at length elsewhere, I shall omit that discussion here.” Machiavelli, *Principe*, a cura di Giorgio Inglese (Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1995), (IP) 2, p. 7.

[16] Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, esp. p. 159. Leo Strauss, *Thoughts on Machiavelli* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 56–57.

[17] Skinner, *Machiavelli*, pp. 23–28. Id., ‘Introduction’, in Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. vii–viii.

[18] Butters, *Governors and Government in Early Sixteenth-Century Florence, 1502–1519* (Oxford: Oxford, 1985), p. 219. Cf. Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

[19] “The fact that the pope allowed the Florentines to attack the people of Lucca, and that his brother Giuliano stayed in Rome after abandoning the government of Florence, caused all princes, powerful and weak alike, to feel suspicion concerning their actions in Italy. For King Ferdinand was saying that ‘Giuliano’s abandonment of the government of Florence—good in itself though this is—will lead to a design on greater things, and that can be none other than the Kingdom of Naples.’ The dukes of Milan, Ferrara, and Urbino were saying the same thing.” Francesco Vettori, *Sommario della Istoria d’Italia (1512–1527)*, in *Scritti storici e politici*, a cura di Enrico Niccolini (Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1972), p. 156.

[20] Lettera, Machiavelli a Francesco Vettori, 31 gennaio 1515, p. 490, *Lettere*, in *Opere*, vol. III, a cura di Franco Gaeta (Torino: UTET, 1984).

[21] “For example, if there is difficulty in maintaining a state accustomed to being a unity, such as Ferrara, there is greater difficulty in maintaining a state newly composed of different parts, as in the case of His Excellency Giuliano, since one part belongs to Milan and the remainder to Ferrara. Therefore, whoever becomes prince of it must take care to accustom them as quickly as possible to being unified and to recognizing themselves as one. There are two means of accomplishing this: either that the prince himself remain there, or that he appoint a governor there. ... If [Giuliano] wishes still to remain in Rome, he can by appointing there a person well acquainted with affairs and the condition of the land establish firm foundations for the new state.” *Lettera, Niccolò Machiavelli a Francesco Vettori*, 31 gennaio 1515, p. 490. Francesco Guicciardini, in the *History of Italy*, describing probably the year 1514—at the latest, a time not yet into the following year—describes Giuliano’s position at that time as follows: “Many people advised [Pope Leo] that now was the moment to take as a model the glory of Julius, made eternal by having expanded the Church’s dominion so greatly, and that now was the opportunity to give an honorable state to his brother Giuliano. Giuliano, with immoderate expectations, willingly consented that his nephew Lorenzo should acquire Medici authority in Florence. ... The pope intended to unite this city [Modena] with Reggio, Parma, and Piacenza, and give them to Giuliano, allowing him to rule them as governor, or permanently. And if the pope should have the opportunity to acquire Ferrara, he would add it there.” Francesco Guicciardini, *Storia d’Italia*, a cura di Seidel Menchi (Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1971), XII, 7, pp. 1201–1202.

[22] Lodovico Alamanni, *Discorso di Lodovico Alamanni sopra il fermare lo stato di Firenze nella devozione de’ Medici*, in Albertini, *Firenze dalla repubblica al principato*, pp. 376–384. Guicciardini, *Del modo di assicurare lo stato alla casa de’ Medici, Discorsi e Discorsi del Reggimento di Firenze*, a cura di Roberto Palmarocchi (Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1932), pp. 267-281, at p. 269.

[23] Cecil H. Clough, *Machiavelli Researches* (Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1967). Id., *Niccolò Machiavelli’s Political Assumptions and Objectives* (Manchester: The John Rylands Library, 1970).

[24] Coluccio Salutati, *De Tyranno*, in *Il trattato «De tyranno» lettere scelte*, a cura di Francesco Ercole (Bologna: N. Zanichelli, 1942), pp. 1–38, ch. 2, p. 16. Girolamo Savonarola, *Trattato circa il reggimento e governo della città di Firenze*, con una Premessa di Luigi Firpo (Torino: Bottega D’erasmo, 1963), p. 38.

[25] For the political situation in Florence, see especially the following works: Butters, *Governors and Government in Early Sixteenth-Century Florence*. Rosemary Devonshire-Jones, *Francesco Vettori: Florentine Citizen and Medici Servant* (London: The Athlone Press University of London, 1972). Giovanni Silvano, «*Vivere civile*» e «*governo misto*» a Firenze nel prima Cinquecento (Bologna: Pàtron Editore, 1985). Stephens, *op. cit.*

[26] “But there are two further ways by which a private man may become prince, and they cannot be attributed wholly either to fortune or to ability, so they cannot be omitted. One of them will be discussed more fully where republics are treated.” (IP, 8)

[27] According to the contemporary Nerli, the choice between an open regime and a restrictive regime was the question “discussed under the Medici from 1512 to 1522 without interruption.” Filippo De’ Nerli, *Commentari de’ fatti civili occorsi nella città di Firenze dal 1215 al 1537*, Tesi di Dottorato (Università degli Studi di Napoli, 2007), p. 130. Cf. Silvano, «*Vivere civile*» e *governo misto*, p. 30. As can also be seen from Guicciardini’s account, even the citizens who expected the abolition of the Great Council were only a very small minority. Guicciardini, *Storia d’Italia*, XI, 4, p. 1089. Cf. Devonshire-Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

[28] A. Giorgetti, ‘Lorenzo de’ Medici Capitano Generale della Repubblica Fiorentina’, in *Archivio storico italiano*, 11 (1883), pp. 194–215, at pp. 190–200, 209–210. Cf. Butters, *Governors and Government*, pp. 266–267. Stephens, *op. cit.*, pp. 99–100.

[29] Vettori, *Sommario*, p. 153. Id., *Vita di Lorenze de’ Medici duca d’Urbino*, in *Scritti storici e politici*, pp. 259–272, at p. 263. Cf. Silvano, *op. cit.*, p. 36. There were also some radical Mediceans who intended the introduction of monarchy, but even such men judged that the introduction of monarchy would take a long time. Alamanni, *op. cit.*, pp. 376–384.

[30] Furthermore, the people who hinder republic or “political life” are powerful men who possess fortresses and keep subjects obedient to them. One may say that factions are formed there.

[31] “These two kinds of men abound in the Kingdom of Naples, the Roman territories, Romagna, and Lombardy. Therefore, in these regions neither republic nor political life (*vivere politico*) has ever come into being. For these kinds of men are completely hostile

to every sort of civic life (*civilità*). It would be impossible to introduce a republic into regions constituted in this way” (DT, I, 55).

[32] *Discursus florentinarum rerum post mortem iunioris Laurentii Medices, Opere di Niccolò Machiavelli*, vol. II, a cura di Alessandro Montevicchi (Torino: UTET, 1986), p. 213.