

## Machiavelli in Tumult

Among the theses that for centuries have ensured Niccolò Machiavelli an ambiguous fame, a special place is reserved for his extremely positive opinion of social conflicts, and, more particularly, to the claim that in ancient Rome “the disunion between the plebs and the Roman senate made that republic free and powerful” (*Discourses on Livy* 1.4). Contrary to a long tradition that had always valued civic concord very highly, Machiavelli thought that – at least under certain conditions – internecine discord could be a source of strength and not of weakness, and built upon this daring proposition an original vision of political order. *Machiavelli in Tumult* (originally published in Italian in 2011) is the first book-length study entirely devoted to analyzing this idea, its ancient roots (never before identified), its enduring (but often invisible) influence right up to the American and French Revolutions (and beyond), and its relevance for contemporary political theory.

**Gabriele Pedullà** is Professor of Italian and Comparative Literature at the University of Rome 3 and has been a visiting professor at Stanford, UCLA, and the École Normale Supérieure (Lyon), Francesco De Dombrowski Fellow at “Villa I Tatti” – the Harvard University Center for the Italian Renaissance, Fellow at the Italian Academy for Advanced Studies in America (Columbia University), and Belknap Visiting Fellow in the Humanities Council at Princeton. His English-language publications include *In Broad Daylight: Movies and Spectators after the Cinema* (Verso, 2012) and many essays on Renaissance political thought. With Sergio Luzzatto, he edited the three-volume *Atlante della letteratura italiana* (Einaudi, 2010–2012). His new edition and commentary on Machiavelli’s *Prince* (Donzelli, 2013) is due to be published in English by Verso and is under translation in French, Spanish, and Portuguese. He is also the author of two prize-winning works of fiction: the short-story collection *Lo spagnolo senza sforzo* (Einaudi, 2009, partially translated into English), and the novel *Lame* (Einaudi, 2017, due to be published in English by Seagull Books as *Blades*).

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## *The Discourses on Livy and the Origins of Political Conflictualism*

GABRIELE PEDULLÀ

*Università di Roma 3*

Translated by

PATRICIA GABORIK AND RICHARD NYBAKKEN

Revised and updated by the author



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*Corrado Vivanti* in memoriam

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## Acknowledgments

I do not believe it has ever been noted that the literary genre of acknowledgments is meant to offer a sort of “census” of one of the main families of characters described by Vladimir Propp in his classic *Morphology of the Folktale*: the *pomošćnik*, namely the “helpers” of the hero (in this case the author himself). Perhaps this is why academic monographs’ opening pages so often indulge in autobiography – in a sort of instinctive reaction of personal history against timeless narrative structures, or as the revenge of the very human passions that lurk behind any book against the dry protocols of scholarly research.

A similar rite seems all the more necessary with works that had a particularly laborious genesis, as in the case of this book. An earlier version of this study was presented as a *tesi di laurea* at the University of Rome “La Sapienza” in April 1997 (advisors: Giulio Ferroni and Nino Borsellino) and then discussed as a Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Milan “La Statale” in January 2002 (advisor: Michele Mari). Two long stays in Paris (an Erasmus fellowship at Paris X “Nanterre” with Paul Larivaille in 1993–4 and a PhD fellowship at the “École Normale Supérieure” of Fontenay-Saint Cloud with Jean-Louis Fournel and Jean-Claude Zancarini in 1998–9), as well as a year-long fellowship at “Villa i Tatti,” the Harvard University Center for the Italian Renaissance in Florence (2007–8), were particularly important in the book’s maturation.

Portions of the text have already been published and reappear here in revised form; in particular, paragraphs 1–3 of Chapter 3, first presented to a Machiavelli conference in Paris (November 1998), came out in A. Fontana, J.-L. Fournel, X. Tabet, and J.-C. Zancarini (eds.), *Langues et écritures de la république et de la guerre: Études sur Machiavel* (NAME, 2004), pp. 299–334; some pages of paragraph 5 of Chapter 3 and of paragraph 3 of Chapter 6 synthesize a paper given at a conference on the state of exception held in Teramo (December 2004) and then published in F. Benigno and L. Scuccimarra (eds.), *Il governo dell'emergenza. Poteri straordinari e di guerra in Europa tra XVI*

*e XX secolo* (Viella, 2007), pp. 35–73; Chapters 5 and 6 have respectively appeared in “Storica,” 9 (2003), nn. 25–26, pp. 105–73, and in “Storica,” 10 (2004), n. 28, pp. 7–90; while paragraph 1 of Chapter 7 develops some passages of my introduction to N. Loraux, *La città divisa*, ed. G. Pedullà (Neri Pozza, 2005).

Throughout the stages of my research I have benefited from the comments and the help of a number of friends and colleagues, including Walter Barberis, Francesco Benigno, Amedeo De Vincentiis, Jean-Louis Fournel, Miguel Gotor, Laura Marvasi, Michael Rocke, Alessandro Schiesaro, Luca Scuccimarra, and Jean-Claude Zancarini. When the book was almost complete I had the pleasure of discussing some of its topics with Jérémie Barthas: many traces of our conversations can be found in the final version. Special thanks finally go to Amedeo Quondam, to whose research on European classicism *Machiavelli in Tumult* owes so much; his close reading of the manuscript as the editor of the series in which the book originally appeared in Italian in 2011 was invaluable to its ultimate form.

However, two people deserve special mention. In the fall of 1993 the discovery of the seminar held by Nicole Loraux at the “École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales” marked a point of no return. Her lectures, which that year dealt with the issues discussed in *La cité divisée* and *La tragédie d’Athènes*, are behind my decision to study Machiavelli’s theory of conflict. Of course, Loraux was not an expert on Machiavelli. But as an incredibly learned and curious person, she knew about his positive assessment of Roman tumults and sufficiently admired the speech given by an anonymous plebeian in book III of the *Florentine Histories* to listen with indulgence and generosity to the odd comparison between Athens and Florence that a young Italian did not shy away from presenting to her. The fact that she was not able to read these pages is for me, even today, a source of regret.

Most of all, though, my debt goes to Corrado Vivanti, who followed this work from the very beginning. In my catalog of “helpers,” he is the good wizard of my humble fairytale, the one who in moments of despair gave me the magic comb or the enchanted ring with which to overcome the inevitable stalls of research: the friend who never, for almost twenty years, failed to mentor. This tumultuous Machiavelli is dedicated to his memory.

Compared to the Italian volume, this is a considerably shorter book. For editorial reasons I had to cut the footnotes drastically, beginning with the extensive bibliographic discussions and the original Latin texts (including the humanistic translations of the Greek works). However, the English edition gave me also the opportunity to return to the volume, further clarifying some points in light of the new studies that have accumulated since 2009, when the manuscript was delivered to the Italian publisher. Major interventions have been made, especially in Chapter 7 whose first two sections come from the original introduction, while the third and fourth sections of this chapter are entirely new. Since the publication of my book in Italian I have changed my mind only

## Acknowledgments

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on a single point: the judgment on the impasse Machiavelli faces in *Disc.* 1.37 and the role Cleomenes' model plays in it (here discussed in Chapter 2); a few passages of the new version are from my essay 'Umori e tumulti,' published in E. Cutinelli-Rendina and R. Ruggiero (eds.), *Lessico critico machiavelliano* (Carocci, 2018, pp. 225–43).

At its final stage my reworking has benefited from the comments of the reviewers of the Italian monograph,<sup>1</sup> the opinions of two anonymous readers of Cambridge University Press and some stimulating conversations with Jérémie Barthas, Filippo Del Lucchese, Romain Descendre, Marco Geuna, John McCormick, John Najemy, and Ronald Witt. To all of them I express my most sincere gratitude.

Last but not least, I want to thank Robert Dreesen, for welcoming my volume into his collection; Elisabetta Tomassini for the graphics; Maddalena Spagnolo for the artistic and iconographic suggestions; Anna Carocci for the index; and the translators, Patricia Gaborik and Richard Nybakken, for their inspired and thoughtful work – if my *Machiavelli in tumulto* has successfully passed through that difficult step in a book's life which is the rendition in another idiom, the merit goes entirely to them.

<sup>1</sup> L. Bolzoni, 'Una politica molto classica,' *Il Sole 24 Ore*, February 24, 2013; J.-L. Fournel, *Rassegna della Letteratura Italiana*, 117 (2013), pp. 566–70; A.M. Cantore, *Annali di Italianistica*, 31 (2013), pp. 64–66; P. Zito, *Esperienze letterarie*, 38 (2013), pp. 132–34; J.M. Najemy, *Renaissance Quarterly*, 67 (2014), pp. 992–93; G. Cappelli, *Cuadernos de Filología Italiana*, n. 20 (2014), pp. 354–61; J.-L. Fournel, *Laboratoire Italien*, n. 14 (2014); C. Zwierlein, *Historische Zeitschrift*, n. 229 (2014), pp. 195–99; F. Raimondi, 'Machiavelli nel quinto centenario del "Principe",' *Storia del Pensiero Politico*, 3 (2014), pp. 115–32; R. Gendre, *Giornale Storico della Letteratura Italiana*, n. 633 (2014), p. 154; L. Cuppo, *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 45 (2014), pp. 184–86; J. Barthas, 'Machiavelli e l'istituzione del conflitto,' *Rivista Storica Italiana*, 127 (2015), pp. 552–66; N. Sánchez, 'Orden, conflicto y principado civil. Un diálogo con Gabriele Pedullà en torno a la "política gris" de Maquiavelo,' *Cuadernos de Filología italiana*, 23 (2016), pp. 109–24.

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## Notes on the Text

For Machiavelli, the Italian reference edition is the one edited by Corrado Vivanti, *Opere*, 3 vols. (Einaudi, 1999–2005). His principal works are cited from these English translations:

Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ed. W.J. Connell (Bedford, 2005)

Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Art of War*, transl. Ellis Farnsworth, rev. N. Wood (Da Capo, 2001)

Niccolò Machiavelli, *Florentine Histories*, eds. L. Banfield and H.C. Mansfield (Princeton University Press, 1988)

For the passages quoted from the *Discourses*, a new version has been realized especially for this book, but two previous English editions have been given special consideration: Niccolò Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, eds. H.C. Mansfield and N. Tarcov (University of Chicago Press, 1996) and Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Sweetness of Power*, eds. J. Atkinson and D.C. Sices (Northern Illinois University Press, 2002); the latter has also been used for the translation of Francesco Guicciardini's *Considerations on the "Discourses,"* there published in the appendix.

Unless otherwise specified, for all Greek and Latin authors the versions in the Loeb collection have been followed throughout the whole book; when strictly necessary, all translations have been slightly modified to make them closer to the original.

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Abbreviations

<i>Antichi</i>	G. Sasso, <i>Machiavelli e gli antichi</i> , 4 vols. (Ricciardi, 1987–97)
<i>Atlante</i>	S. Luzzatto and G. Pedullà (eds.), <i>Atlante della letteratura italiana</i> , 3 vols. (Einaudi, 2010–12)
<i>City-States</i>	A. Molho, K. Raaflaub, and J. Emlen (eds.), <i>City-States in Classical Antiquity and Medieval Italy: Athens and Rome, Florence and Venice</i> (Steiner, 1991)
<i>Civic Humanism</i>	J. Hankins (ed.), <i>Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections</i> (Cambridge University Press, 2000)
<i>Companion</i>	J.M. Najemy (ed.), <i>Companion to Machiavelli</i> (Cambridge University Press, 2010)
<i>Contributi</i>	A. Momigliano, <i>Contributi alla storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico</i> , 10 vols. (Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1955–2012)
<i>Legacy</i>	P.A. Rahe (ed.), <i>Machiavelli’s Liberal Republican Legacy</i> (Cambridge University Press, 2006)
<i>Machiavelli and Republicanism</i>	G. Bock, Q. Skinner, and M. Viroli (eds.), <i>Machiavelli and Republicanism</i> (Cambridge University Press, 1993)

xviii	<i>Abbreviations</i>
<i>Studies</i>	N. Rubinstein, <i>Studies in Italian History in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance</i> , ed. G. Ciappelli, 3 vols. (Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2004–2012)
<i>Visions</i>	Q. Skinner, <i>Visions of Politics</i> , 3 vols. (Cambridge University Press, 2002)

“Historians, poets and orators take their start from these popular, poorly considered opinions. They represent foreign war with images of glory and conquest while speaking about civil war only in the odious terms of disorder, injustice and confusion. These are your primary teachers at an age when reason, yet to be fully developed, accepts all the errors presented to it as truths. Later on, one presumes that they had reflected on what they wrote, because they express themselves with authority. One takes them at their word, and I was duped by them like everyone else.”

Mably, *Des droits et des devoirs du citoyen*

“The only ‘civil’ wars are civil wars.”

Enzo Melandri, *La linea e il circolo*

“In his country, the desirability of a civil war had been discussed for some time.”

Giorgio Manganelli, *Centuria*

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