

PART I

*The Politique Problem*

## CHAPTER I

*Politics and Politiques*

Throughout the sixteenth century in Europe, the possibilities of politics in theory and practice were uncertain, and in the intellectual sphere politics was gaining new prominence as a discipline in its own right. During the French Wars of Religion, politics was sometimes offered as a solution to civil discord, sometimes presented as fatally corrupted, itself the source of strife. Politics was a problem, in the sense both of intellectual or cognitive challenge, and of conflict or unhappiness. The figure of the *politique* person, a kind of proto-politician, emerged in political imagination and in altered socio-political structures as a key character in the transformation of France's fortunes. The noun *politique* was strikingly flexible, invested with significance and danger; language used by the *politique* was considered powerful, and suspect. The problem of politics was in large part a problem of language. Towards the end of the Wars of Religion, writers were especially conscious that the term *politique* had changed, now carrying – for some – a strongly negative charge:

This name, *Politique*, was a name of honour,  
 It was the just name of a just Governor;  
 Of a prudent Magistrate, who by civil reason,  
 Knew well how to rule ['policer'] the constituents of a town,  
 And who, wise and agreeable, harmonising discord,  
 Drew good agreements between diverse Citizens,  
 Just as Edinthon calls forth harmony from different notes,  
 When playing his lute; and so directs our minds,  
 and with conquering sound,  
 Ravishes our ears and steals our hearts.  
 Today this good name, sullied by a thousand vices,  
 Is no more than a name of horror, which destroys polities;  
 A name filled with filth, and which is disdained,  
 Thanks to the crime of those who misused it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Ce nom de Politique estoit un nom d'honneur, / C'estoit le juste nom, d'un juste Gouverneur. / D'un prudent Magistrat, qui par raison civile / Sçavoit bien policer les membres d'une ville, / Et qui saige & accord, par accordans discords, / De Citoyens divers tireroit de bons accords. / Comme fait

This is the opening of a pamphlet written in verse and printed in 1588, entitled *Description de l'homme politique de ce temps* ('Description of the *politique* man of this time'), composed in support of the radical Catholic faction known as the League. The author regrets the degradation of 'this name, *Politique*': once honorific, now horrific. The first ten lines are devoted to what this term formerly referred to: a special kind of person – a 'just Governor', a 'prudent Magistrate' – able to employ their powers of reason to create harmony among a diverse population; who could, then, fully activate the potential of the verb 'to rule' ('policer'). The author draws an analogy with Edinthon, a lute player who creates musical harmonies of different tones, and in so doing is master of the ears, hearts, and minds of listeners.<sup>2</sup> From François I's reign onwards, musicians were courtiers with formal offices, and lute players, considered to play with particular finesse, had high status among them; musicians, in other words, held political positions, none more so than lutenists.<sup>3</sup> Music is therefore only partially analogous and metaphorical here. The harmonies of the lute player, and of the *politique* as [he] formerly existed, are figured as a kind of conquest of the crowd, with the images of the 'ravished' ears and stolen hearts perhaps anticipating the negative turn to come.<sup>4</sup> The majority of rhymes in lines 1–10 of the French version are rich, and the lines often tied together by internal rhymes and repetitions, aligning form and content. The last four lines mark a change in tone: today, the poet announces, the word *politique* is sullied by a thousand vices. The noun itself ('a name of horror') is the destroyer of civic harmony. Here, the poetic harmony also suffers a slight decline in standards; the rhymes of lines 11–12 are *suffisantes*, mirroring the moral decline in the meaning of *politique*, which has been degraded ('mesprisé') through misuse ('abusé').<sup>5</sup>

Edinthon, quand son Luth il manie / Qui de tons differends fait naistre une armonie, / Dont il pointe nos esprits, & par un son vainqueur / Des-robbe nostre aureille & nous pille le cœur. / Aujourd'huy ce beau nom, souillé de mille vices / N'est plus qu'un nom d'horreur, qui destruit les polices, / Un nom rempli d'ordure, & qui est mesprisé / Par le crime de ceux qui en ont abusé.' *Description de l'homme politique de ce temps avec sa foy et religion qui est un catalogue de plusieurs hérésies et athéismes, où tombent ceux qui préfèrent l'estat humain à la religion catholique* (Paris: G. Bichon, 1588), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> The Edinthons were royal musicians of Scottish origin: the first, Charles, joined the musicians of the Royal Chamber late in the reign of François I. His son Jacques played for Charles IX and Henri III. The present tense here implies that the poem is referring to the latter. See Christelle Cazaux, *La musique à la cour de François Ier* (Paris: Ecole nationale de Chartres, 2002), p. 139.

<sup>3</sup> Jeanice Brooks, *Courtly Song in Late Sixteenth-Century France* (Chicago, IL and London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> See Kate van Orden, *Music, Discipline, and Arms in Early Modern France* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

<sup>5</sup> According to conventional French versification (which was being formalised in the sixteenth century), rhymes can be 'riche' (rich), 'suffisant' (sufficient), or 'pauvre' (poor), depending on the

The verse gives a highly polarised sense of what *politique* could mean: 'honour' on the one hand and 'horror' on the other. The rest of the poem describes how *politique* became degraded, and extends the musical metaphor, portraying French society as a grotesque chorus following the wrong conductors. In the view of the poet, toleration of religious difference strikes a fatally false note, and *politique* has become a problem precisely because it has come to mean endless negotiation, and endless quarrelling, between different groups who ought instead to have had religious harmony imposed upon them. Bemoaning this lack of accord, the poem is the expression of an angry stalemate. What it offers beyond the immediate argument about how and why *politique* went wrong is precisely this evocation of perpetual quarrelling and degradation of meaning through misuse of language. The opening line creates an analogy between harmonious government and clearly defined meaning; the dissonance caused by bad politics is equally analogous to an uncontrollable proliferation of negative associations.

The close connection between government and music in this poem, as well as the poetic form, demonstrates the important role of creative and liberal arts in thinking about politics in this period. With its alexandrine verse (its fourteen lines recall a sonnet, even if it doesn't follow Petrarchan or *Pléiade* convention), the poem shows cultural practices put to use in a text that serves ideological functions somewhat removed from concerns traditionally associated with lute music, the *Pléiade*, or innovation in the sonnet form. The violence of confessional disputes in the sixteenth century is more often associated with baser human drives and expressions; Donald Kelley called the Reformation a 'primal scream', expressed in a traumatic complex of human experiences.<sup>6</sup> This book explores uses of *politique* that belong to discursive traditions of both Renaissance and Reformation, and of both high and low culture.

Attention to writing about politics, and uses of the word *politique*, provides insight into politics as a discursive experience and literature as a political phenomenon. As a discursive experience, that is, mediated by discourse and to an extent created by it, politics is always on a dialogic spectrum, from convivial conversation to quarrel, to violent hostility and

number of syllables that rhyme. It does not follow that a sufficient rhyme is less poetically desirable than a rich one, but it does mean that the lines (and sounds) are less tightly tied together.

<sup>6</sup> Donald R. Kelley, *The Beginnings of Ideology: Consciousness and Society in the French Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 7.

vituperative condemnation of the other.<sup>7</sup> As a political phenomenon, literature is a location for these friendly or hostile conversations, exposing, articulating, and adjusting the balance of power between ideas and interlocutors. The connection between politics and language use, particularly the literary kind, has been fundamental to Western definitions of the political since Plato apparently banned poets from the Republic (*Republic*, 595a5) and Aristotle declared man a political animal distinct from all others because of [his] capacity for complex linguistic interaction (*Politics*, 1253a2). An idealistic view of literature as a privileged form of linguistic communication is that it can enable a more convivial experience of politics. Humanism as expressed in France and Italy c. 1400–1550 is sometimes thought to have espoused precisely this kind of optimism about the beneficial effects of the rhetorical upon the real.<sup>8</sup> One argument, which I explore in Chapter 2, is that this was precisely the vision inherited from Erasmus and developed in the politico-poetic circle around Michel de L'Hospital. This was an age that promoted civil conversation (epitomised by Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*) that developed, however, into an age of civil war. The links between so-called 'civility' and violence, along with the violent, destructive potential of language, have been extensively probed.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Charles Taylor has argued for the primacy of the dialogic and conversational in language itself and in the construction of all meaning. See Charles Taylor, *The Language Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2016), esp. pp. 49–50.

<sup>8</sup> Victoria Kahn writes that 'early' humanism evinced faith in the potential of rhetoric to achieve moral good, but that in the later Renaissance, this faith gave way to intense scepticism; she writes that the works of Erasmus, Montaigne, and Hobbes 'reveal an awareness of the ideal alliance of rhetoric and prudence, [but] their rhetorical strategies prove to be symptomatic of an increasing anxiety or scepticism about the power of rhetoric to persuade to right action'. See Victoria Kahn, *Rhetoric, Prudence, and Scepticism in the Renaissance* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 27. J. H. M. Salmon and Jan Miernowski also refer to a crisis of faith in the humanist project in the context of the civil wars. See J. H. M. Salmon, 'Cicero and Tacitus in Sixteenth-Century France', *The American Historical Review*, 85.2 (1980), 307–31; Jan Miernowski, "'Politique" comme injure dans les pamphlets au temps des guerres de Religion', in *De Michel de L'Hospital à L'Edit de Nantes: Politique et religion face aux Eglises*, ed. by Thierry Wanegffelen (Clermont-Ferrand: Presses universitaires Blaise Pascal, 2002), pp. 337–56.

<sup>9</sup> As Teresa Bejan points out, 'polemic' derives from the Greek word for war. See Teresa M. Bejan, *Mere Civility: Disagreement and the Limits of Toleration* (Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press, 2017), p. 4. On civil war and the connection between civil wars and wars of words, see David Armitage, *Civil Wars: A History in Ideas* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017), esp. pp. 232–40. See also Denis Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu. La violence au temps des troubles de religion (vers 1525–vers 1610)*, 2 vols. (Paris: Champ Vallon, 1990); *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Keith Thomas*, ed. by Peter Burke, Brian Harrison, and Paul Slack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Stuart Carroll, *Blood and Violence in Early Modern France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 83–108 and 264–84, and his chapter 'Violence, Civil Society, and European Civilisation' in *The Cambridge World History of Violence Volume 111*, ed. by Robert Antony, Stuart Carroll, and Caroline Dodds Pennock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020),

This book, while subscribing in part to the view that literature can or could be a non-violent space for political conversation, shows that literary forms are just as much a space for quarrels, vituperation, and virtual violence that in some cases can be quite concretely tied to real acts of violence on real bodies.<sup>10</sup> The poem just quoted, which ultimately attempts to incite murderous action, calling for *politiques* to be burnt at the stake, is a case in point.<sup>11</sup>

In this study of politics and *politiques*, I give an account of the political struggles acted out in uses of *politique*. In this first chapter, I explore the historiographical and theoretical contexts to the enquiry and describe the methods employed. Specifically, this investigation of politics and *politiques* is conducted with a focus on language that is indebted to word history and keywords studies, and also to literary and historical studies that emphasise the connections between the imaginative and the real. I have already indicated that sixteenth-century writers were conscious of the controversy and flexibility associated with the word *politique*, especially the noun; what follows is a discussion of the particularities of the sixteenth-century in histories of early modern political thought and the place of France in those histories, as well as the special place of the so-called *Politique* party or tendency in accounts of the French civil wars. All these contexts point to *politique* being an especially unstable and dynamic term, associated with conceptual shifts and socio-political conflict.

### Histories of Politics

Politics, and political thought, occur in every era and every inhabited place. Modern political theory sometimes supposes a timeless aspect to such concerns:

We are all concerned with our relationship to authority, with notions of good social arrangements, with hierarchies of urgency and significance in deciding whether to support or resist public policies, with ways of asserting our will over others, and with the need to succeed or defend ourselves when faced with competing views in those areas.<sup>12</sup>

pp. 660–78; and Emily Butterworth, *Poisoned Words: Slander and Satire in Early Modern France* (London: Legenda, 2006).

<sup>10</sup> On the nexus of cultural, social, and political causes of violence in early modern France, see Natalie Zemon Davis, 'The Rites of Violence: Religious Riot in Sixteenth-Century France', *Past and Present*, 59 (1973), 51–91, and *Ritual and Violence: Natalie Zemon Davis and Early Modern France*, ed. by Graeme Murdock, Penny Roberts, and Andrew Spicer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

<sup>11</sup> 'Description de l'homme politique', p. 11.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Freedon, 'Thinking Politically and Thinking about Politics: Language, Interpretation, and Ideology', in *Political Theory: Methods and Approaches*, ed. by David Leopold and Marc Steers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 196–215 (p. 196).

We generally identify early modern experience as 'political' and certain textual production as 'political thought' if it can be categorised as treating these concerns. Thinking historically about early modern politics, then, relies on acknowledgement of the particularity of institutions, representations, and vocabularies that express and facilitate this eternal and eternally flexible concept, politics: contingencies that provide its variations. Many historians view the early modern period as a time of cultural and socio-political changes – and developments in practices of politics and habits of political thought – that were the seeds of the modernity we know today: hence 'early' modernity.<sup>13</sup> Histories that focus on French political ideas (largely written in French) see this period as a transition from constitutional monarchy to more centralised forms of monarchic power (sometimes referred to as absolutism, though this term has been extensively problematised).<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, this moment in French history is sometimes treated by Anglophone historians of modern political thought looking at politics from a supranational perspective as a transitional phase between Machiavelli, where everything begins, and either Hobbes, or the American and French Revolutions, which represent points of culmination.<sup>15</sup> Writing on politics during the Wars of Religion more specifically has tended to focus on socio-political structures, or on religion and community, although at the time of writing Sophie Nicholls's history of political thought during the wars was forthcoming.<sup>16</sup> This book by contrast is about how politics itself was understood, and represented in language.

<sup>13</sup> For reflections on the definition of early modernity, see Terence Cave, 'Locating the Early Modern', *Paragraph*, 29.1 (2006), 12–26.

<sup>14</sup> *L'absolutisme en France*, ed. by Fanny Cosandey and Robert Descimon (Paris: Seuil, 2002); Arlette Jouanna, *Le pouvoir absolu: Naissance de l'imaginaire politique de la royauté* (Paris: Gallimard, 2013).

<sup>15</sup> See Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), *Hobbes and Republican Liberty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), and *From Humanism to Hobbes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and Government 1572–1651* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975). Two recent historical studies of political thought pay close attention to the early modern period but mention France only briefly and comparatively: David Runciman's *Political Hypocrisy: The Mask of Power, from Hobbes to Orwell and Beyond* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), and Armitage, *Civil Wars*.

<sup>16</sup> Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France. Eight Essays* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975); Robin Briggs, *Communities of Belief: Cultural and Social Tensions in Early Modern France* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989); Crouzet, *Guerriers de Dieu*; Mark Greengrass, *Governing Passions: Peace and Authority in the French Kingdom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Joseph Bergin, *The Politics of Religion in Early Modern France* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014); Sophie Nicholls, *Political Thought in the French Wars of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming); see also Sophie Nicholls, 'Political and

Within their *longue durée* accounts of how social change was wedded to intellectual tendencies and processes, intellectual historians have long seen language use as a key indicator of socio-political experience, and of change; *Begriffsgeschichte*, as Reinhart Koselleck makes clear, is a form of conceptual history that depends to greater or lesser degrees on semantics.<sup>17</sup> Quentin Skinner's analysis of rhetoric has also been highly influential, as has his emphasis on the agency of language users in the construction of new institutions and ideologies. He argues in the second volume of his *Foundations of Modern Political Thought* that the crisis and conflict of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries fundamentally destabilised political categories and led to the establishment or recalibration of alternatives both conceptual and practical: his examples are the sovereign, the city, and particularly the various vernacular words for the state (*l'état*, *lo stato*, the state, etc.).<sup>18</sup> Viroli, meanwhile, refers to a 'forgotten revolution' in early modern conceptions of politics, which he sees as being articulated through change in language, from 'art of government' to 'reason of state' (a process started, for Viroli, by Machiavelli, and inaugurated by Botero with *The Reason of State* in 1589).<sup>19</sup> In a different way, Viroli makes a similar argument to the anonymous author of the sonnet quoted above – that 'the word politics' became somehow degraded over the course of the sixteenth century:

Legal Thought', in *The Cambridge History of French Thought*, ed. by Michael Moriarty and Jeremy Jennings (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 90–96.

- <sup>17</sup> Koselleck goes as far as saying that there is no such thing as society without common concepts and, above all, no field of political action; he differs from Skinner in placing more emphasis on 'the autonomous power of words', whereas Skinner sees the centre of power as those who use words and is more careful to acknowledge socio-political experience beyond particular or specialised linguistic frameworks. See Reinhart Koselleck, 'Begriffsgeschichte and Social History', in *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 77–92 (p. 81). For a comprehensive account of the place of linguistic analysis in intellectual history, and its possibilities, see Annabel Brett, 'What Is Intellectual History Now?', in *What Is History Now?*, ed. by David Cannadine (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 113–31.
- <sup>18</sup> Skinner writes, 'The surest sign that a society has entered into the secure possession of a new concept is that a new vocabulary will be developed, in terms of which the concept can be articulated and discussed', in *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, II, p. 352. Harro Höpfl, in his analysis of Justus Lipsius, has commented that 'Much of the most valuable historiography of political thought has resulted from treating terms like *jus*, *virtù*, *arête*, *respublica*, *polis*, *state*, *civitas*, *commonwealth*, *politique*, *libertas*, etc. as requiring historical exegesis, rather than casual modernization.' See Harro Höpfl, 'History and Exemplarity in the Work of Lipsius', in *(Un)masking the Realities of Power: Justus Lipsius and the Dynamics of Political Writing in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Erik de Bom (Leiden & Boston, MA: Brill, 2011), pp. 43–72 (p. 44).
- <sup>19</sup> Maurizio Viroli, 'The Revolution in the Concept of Politics', *Political Theory*, 20.3 (1992), 473–95. See also *From Politics to Reason of State: The Acquisition and Transformation of the Language of Politics, 1250–1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).



Before the revolution, the word politics had only a positive connotation. Afterwards, it acquired, for the most part, only a negative connotation. Having enjoyed for three centuries the status of the noblest human science, politics emerged from the revolution as an ignoble, depraved, and sordid activity: it was no longer the most powerful means of fighting oppression and corruption but the art of perpetuating them.<sup>20</sup>

Skinner and Viroli tell the history of politics in sixteenth-century Europe as a narrative of progress towards something new (the modern state; reason of state) if not necessarily towards something good. Hiding in plain sight within these arguments is a network of terms – politics, *politique*, *politica*, *politicus*; the ‘word politics’ that Viroli refers to in the quotation above, in much of his source material, was not ‘politics’, for example, but a neo-Latin or vernacular equivalent. Skinner shows how new ways of thinking about politics emerged; Viroli tells a story of ethical deterioration; Ian Maclean has argued that the terminology of politics, between ‘prudence’ and ‘policy’, underwent significant shifts in the early modern period.<sup>21</sup> In this book I show that such shifts were staged and argued over in uses of the term *politique* itself. If the concept of politics was changing, and if it was generating a new set of vocabulary around figures and institutions (the sovereign; the state), what might ‘the word politics’ have meant for the people who used it? How did these words and their meanings operate in debates about the nature of political community, how it should be formed, and who should direct it?

This book focuses on the French contribution to the network of terms that roughly align to ‘the word politics’. I have followed the historicising approach prevalent in early modern literary studies, focusing on endogenous uses of the term *politique* and excavating its meanings in sixteenth-century terms rather than proceeding from the various definitions of politics and power current in my own moment of writing, even as these inform my understanding of the political dimensions of literature. The focus is on *politique* because – as we shall see, and as the poem *Description de l'homme politique* has already shown – the meaning of the French vernacular term was the object of particularly active and self-conscious contestation. I rarely translate the term *politique* when citing primary texts, because it maps so imperfectly onto either modern or early modern English and is, in

<sup>20</sup> Viroli, ‘The Revolution in the Concept of Politics’, p. 477.

<sup>21</sup> Ian Maclean, ‘From Prudence to Policy: Some Notes on the Pre-History of Policy Science’, *Guest Lectures* (Nijmegen: Katholieke universiteit, 1993), pp. 5–27. See especially Maclean’s gloss on the semantic field and associated concepts around *politeia* in the early modern period, p. 8.

a sense, untranslatable.<sup>22</sup> It could mean, among other things, 'the intellectual discipline of politics', 'monarchic order', 'authoritarian politics', 'non-spiritual authority', 'justice', and 'toleration'; it meant 'politician', 'political actor', 'leader', 'administrator', 'lawyer', 'hack', 'hypocritical enemy', and 'atheist'. *Politique* was the name given to a powerful character in narratives, treatises, and dialogues written about politics at the time, as well as being a term that historians have used to define attitudes and allegiances during the chaotic civil war period. French texts are therefore especially productive for interrogating the connection between the literary and the political present in uses of 'the word politics' (or in fact, *politique*), and the boundaries and possibilities of verbal communication encapsulated in the history of this one crucial term.

The focus is on France, but English, Latin, and Italian terms that all correspond in some way to the idea and practice of 'politics' and the figure of the 'political actor' were mutually influential.<sup>23</sup> Chapter 2 points out the deep influence of Italian works of the previous century on sixteenth-century French conceptions of the political prior to the Wars of Religion. Indeed, Italian political writing was highly influential throughout the period, certainly on Loys Le Roy and Jean Bodin, as is clear in Chapter 3; the reception of Machiavelli is discussed extensively in Chapters 3 and 4. English connections with and responses to French *politiques* are also highlighted; Thomas More's *Utopia* and other political writings are significant intertexts in Chapters 2 and 4 (though only briefly discussed), while the final chapter opens with a reference to *Hamlet*. The Conclusion discusses the web of connections between French politics, *politiques*, and English drama at the turn of the seventeenth century. Future work could consider further Machiavelli's reworking of the 'vivere politico' in his *Discorsi* and the way in which the Italian term *politico* was part of what is now known as civic humanism.<sup>24</sup> It could also usefully explore how the French term *politique* was taken as a marker of allegiance in England

<sup>22</sup> On untranslatability, see *Vocabulaire européen des philosophes: Dictionnaire des intraduisibles*, ed. by Barbara Cassin (Paris: Seuil, 2004). Cassin defines 'untranslatable' terms as those of irreducible multiplicity, such that the act of translating them is never complete, p. xvii.

<sup>23</sup> A more comprehensive approach would not only require more time but also wider linguistic expertise, and perhaps more than one author; the recent study of the 'ingenium/ingenuity' word group demonstrates the success of collaborative word history. See Alexander Marr, Raphaële Garrod, José Ramón Marcaida, and Richard J. Oosterhoff, *Logodaedalus: Word Histories of Ingenuity in Early Modern Europe* (Pittsburgh, PA: Pittsburgh University Press, 2018).

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, Niccolò Machiavelli, *Opere*, ed. by Corrado Vivanti, 3 vols. (Turin: Einaudi-Gallimard, 1997), 1, p. 216: as part of an oft-quoted comparison between Sparta and Venice, Machiavelli suggests that the balance those states achieved between conflicting interest groups represented 'la vera vita politica' ('the true political life'). Hans Baron coined the phrase 'civic