

Panel 1.2 Abstracts

Machiavelli and the Autonomy of Politics Thesis**Augusto Dolfo**

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What Carl Schmitt said of the name Leviathan of Thomas Hobbes, i.e. it casts a rather long and ominous shadow on his name, seems to have been tailor-made for The Prince and Machiavelli's name. Indeed, the figure of Niccolò Machiavelli was for a long time synonymous and on many occasions even parody of evil, something that tarnishes his works on politics. It is worth remembering that Machiavelli is well known as master of politicians, who advises that, in the name of the *mantenere lo Stato*, the prince should guide his actions without paying too much attention to the moral consequences his actions may have. Even if, for long time also many interpretations of The Prince have eclipsed his reputation, the winter of discontent with his entire work has begun to melt, thank to studies of important philosophers and historians of ideas such as Viroli and Skinner. Strictly speaking, the Machiavelli's renaissance of contemporary republicanism scholarship, political science and political philosophy, suggests that he has still something to say that is worth the candle. In point of fact, the republican scholarship agrees with the idea that Machiavelli's counsels and political theory could be put at the service of a republican regime for its conservation and foundation. Given that situation, I would like to put attention on the important studies of Viroli and Skinner, specially, on their rejection of the attribution of the "autonomy of politics" to Machiavelli in open opposition to the early twentieth Italian interpretations of Croce, Chabod and the German historian Felix Gilbert. In front to such rejects, I would like to argue that Machiavelli's political thought could be compatible with the "autonomy of politics" thesis but not in the same line that Croce, Chabod or Gilbert have suggested. Therefore, to show that it is possible to synchronize Machiavelli's political reasoning with the "autonomy of politics" thesis, on one hand, I would like to offer an alternative manner to understand the thesis of the "autonomy of politics". Indeed, I would like to show that Croce's, Chabod's and Gilbert's exegesis do not offer proper interpretations of the "autonomy of politics". In first place, because they have misunderstood in some degree Machiavelli's political reasoning and, in second place, on this basis they have done attributions that do not hold the water, as Viroli and Skinner have shown. So, to complete in some extent the historical-conceptual task initiated by Viroli and Skinner, on the other hand, I would like to treat *vis-à-vis* Machiavelli's political language that he employs in the *History of Florence III.1* and *Discourses on Livy I.3-5* and *I.9*, to show that his political reasoning and tone of voice offer a particular conception of politics according to which is possible to figure out the name "politics" according to the "autonomy of politics" thesis in a proper interpretation of it.

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The Continuity of Political Power in Machiavelli and the Problem of Sovereignty**Zeliha Dişci**

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This study aims to comprehend and ground the existence of sovereignty as the modern form of power through the nature of political power in Machiavelli. It asserts that enforcing the law and going out of law are a compulsory part of the existence of the sovereign. It turns to Machiavelli's studies in order to support this assertion. The sovereignty of the state, which finds its intellectual roots primarily in the theory of social contract, becomes concrete by means of law. The law is the promise/word of the sovereign. The promise/word is proper to a human being, that is, it excludes the animal. With the social contract, the state of nature and the animalistic remain behind. But this assumption is invalid in practice. As a form of political power, sovereignty actually exists by involving both the law and the out of the law. We can reveal this mechanism of sovereignty through advices given by Machiavelli to the prince. In other words, we can read the existence of sovereignty in the context of the continuity of political power. As Machiavelli said in the Prince, the prince who wants to make his power permanent must be both man and animal. The sovereign's right to suspend the law coincides with the prince's being animal. While the law is the word which is proper to a human being, the out of the law is a space which is proper to the animal. While the political power that complies with the law keeps its promise, the power that suspends the law suspends its promise. The decision of power is determined by the effective reality. Reality has not limits such as human, animal, etc. A power who makes a choice according to the circumstances can only perpetuate its existence. Thus sovereign acts of political power do not turn into the end of its sovereignty.

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Machiavelli against Machiavellianism: The new “arte dello stato”**Dimitrios Kotroyannos**

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A common interpreting perception of Machiavelli's thought is based on the paradox that state feasibility uses not only knowledge but also any form of immoral act in order to preserve power. Thus, state feasibility legitimizes the means and extreme manifestations of violence in order to achieve state preservation. It commits the vigor of power and its deceit to achieve this purpose. Against this position that draws its origin in Meinecke, we will show that the new “arte dello stato” (art of the state) is based on the new form of rationality which has its roots on naturalism and history, as a precondition for the prince's unobstructed action. Machiavelli is a thinker of liberty, which evokes the Machiavellian concept of *virtu*, which refers to the human excellence through which the man responds to opportunities while the world is revealed in the form of *fortuna*, in which the man with *virtu* aims to dominate. In this way, Machiavelli may be seen as the ancestor of the new state rationality, through which the man regulates the diverse competitions that distinguish the political condition. This paper aims to study the ways that the notion of liberty is interpreted by Machiavelli as well as the impact of this contribution to contemporary policy making. Furthermore, through this study, the diversification between the real Machiavellian contribution to modern thinking and Machiavellianism, will be thoroughly analyzed.