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THE CONCEPT OF PEACE IN MACHIAVELLI'S POLITICAL THOUGHT

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DEDICATION

To My Preceptor

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ABSTRACT

This work is aimed at studying the question of peace both at the national level and international levels from the political thought of Niccolò Machiavelli. The interest in this question relies on the fact that violence dominates the world today and that the promotion of peace appears more and more to be an emergency. The question of the modalities of peace promotion was already preoccupying in the days of Machiavelli. It appears to be more preoccupying today with the threats of nuclear weapons. Strategies to preserve and promote peace in the world are often neglected. They have not yet succeeded in realising humankind's aspirations towards peace. Sub-regional organisations and the United Nations Organisation are some instruments through which humankind hopes to promote lasting peace. These instruments were at the same time frameworks for pacific and legal alliances within member-states. They have even been considered as strategic collaborative frameworks to neutralise common enemies. Hence, despite the settlement of such instruments, conflict remains in expansion in the world. Peoples are more and more waging wars, thus jeopardizing state power. At the same time, states themselves are facing violence in a larger scale through the development of global terrorism which jeopardizes global peace. This is visible through global warfare dramatised by the New Technologies of Information and Communication. These technologies manifest the global character or the omnipresence of violence because it affects all the regions of the world. The perpetual globalisation of violence is therefore the right expression of the crisis of peace. It is legitimate to think that the recurrence of conflicts inside and outside states, added to the inefficiency of the instruments in charge of the promotion of social peace, can also be at the origin of peace jeopardy. This is why we thought that reading Machiavelli's political thought could enable us to understand the reasons which engender conflicts that jeopardize peace in the world. The choice of Machiavelli seems to be relevant to us in as much as he is one of the thinkers whose reflection is really centred on the causes which can destabilise a state and jeopardize its freedom and sovereignty, which is the harmonious living-together of its citizens.

Key Words: Coercive Diplomacy,Logic of Predation, Machiavellism, Peace, War, Violence.

RESUME

Ce travail se propose d'étudier la question de la paix aussi bien dans la sphère nationale que dans la sphère mondiale à partir de la pensée politique de Nicolas Machiavel. L'intérêt pour cette question vient du fait que la violence domine le monde aujourd'hui et que la promotion de la paix se présente davantage comme une urgence. La question des modalités de promotion de la paix se posait déjà à l'époque de Machiavel et se pose encore plus aujourd'hui avec l`accroissement de la violence par les armes nucléaires. Les stratégies mises en place pour préparer l'avènement de la paix ne se sont pas toujours imposées. Elles n'ont pas toujours répondu aux attentes de l'humanité qui, de par de multiples efforts qu'elle fait dans ce domaine, aspire à la paix. Les organisations sous régionales et même la création des Nations Unies au niveau mondial sont autant d'instruments par lesquels la communauté humaine entend promouvoir durablement la recherche collective de la paix. Ces instruments étaient en même temps des espaces d'alliances pacifiques et juridiques entre les Etats membres, de collaborations stratégiques capables de neutraliser l'ennemi commun. Malgré leur mise en place, le conflit demeure une activité en pleine expansion dans l'espace du monde. De plus en plus les groupes humains se heurtent, fragilisant ainsi l'autorité de l'Etat. De même, les Etats se heurtent à la violence des grands entrepreneurs du terrorisme international dont les actes compromettent la paix mondiale. Cela est visible à travers la logique du bellicisme général théâtralisé par les Nouvelles Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication. Elles mettent quotidiennement en évidence le caractère global ou omniprésent de la violence dans la mesure où celle-ci affecte toutes les régions du monde. La globalisation perpétuelle de la violence est donc de ce fait l'expression évidente de la crise de la paix. Il est légitime de penser que la récurrence des conflits intra ou inter étatiques, en plus de l'inefficacité des instruments chargés de promouvoir la paix sociale, peut aussi être à l'origine des causes qui demeurent jusqu'ici inconnues, voire négligées et sur lesquelles il nous fallait insister. C'est la raison pour laquelle il nous a semblé opportun de marcher sur les traces de Machiavel afin de chercher à comprendre les raisons qui engendrent les conflits qui compromettent la paix qui fait l'objet d'une aspiration par la communauté humaine. Le choix de Machiavel nous semble pertinent dans la mesure où il est l'un des auteurs dont la réflexion est effectivement centrée sur les causes qui peuvent déstabiliser un Etat et compromettre sa liberté et sa souveraineté, c'est-à-dire un vivre-ensemble harmonieux de ses citoyens.

Mots clés : Diplomatie Coercitive, Guerre, Logique de la Prédation, Machiavelisme, Paix, Violence.

FOREWORD

Except the three main books of Machiavelli which we consulted and exploited in English, namely, *The Prince* (1513), *The Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius*(1531)and *The History of Florence* (1532) most of resources used to write this work are originally in French. We have made the effort to translate the texts into English to maintain the fluidity of the reading but in the footnotes, we are giving the original references from the French sources.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is an attempt to deepen our Bachelor Degree Mini Dissertation entitled "How Relevant is Machiavelli's Political Realism to the Contemporary African Politics?" In order to achieve that Mini Dissertation, we had to read Machiavelli's *The Prince* in order to be familiar with his political realism which is somehow applied by many African governments. We tried to prove that Machiavelli's political realism is still relevant today because it reveals the subject-ruler relationship in our contemporary politics. We reached the conclusion that our people are the ones to learn more from Machiavelli whose advice is directed at the prince, can serve as an eye opener to the people. Henceforth, since politics is a game of interest, the people must learn to play the game rather than be played like a toy.

From this work on Machiavelli's *The Prince* which presents him as a promoter of Absolute power and political violence, it could be concluded that the thoughts of Machiavelli gives no room for the promotion of peace. This is what even justifies the adjective "Machiavellian" which is most often than not related to deceitfulness, trickery or wickedness in politics, behaviours that jeopardize peace in our day-to-day life. In the present work, we therefore wish to look for peace in a thought that is presupposed war-oriented.

Indeed, the question of peace is present throughout the history of philosophy. It has been a concern for many thinkers either in an Idealistic perspective or in a Realistic perspective. In the Ancient Period, as if he was giving an answer to Heraclitus who considered war as the mother of all things, thus declaring that instability – perpetual change and perpetual conflict - is the law of being, Plato analysed stability in the state in terms of harmony in the soul. That is why he gives the Magistrate (guardian or soldier) the duty to maintain peace and security in the state through the implementation of archetypal values contemplated in the world of Forms. In order to achieve such a mission, Plato stated: "until philosophers rule as kings or those who are now called kings and leading men genuinely and adequately philosophize, that is, until political power and philosophy entirely coincide, [...] cities will have no rest from evils"[1]. Unfortunately, while waiting for the advent of philosopher-kings, Athenians had to witness and suffer the terrors of wars, which is a proof that politics is first and foremost concrete and deals with concrete people who can decide to rule according to moral principles or not. The Middle Ages will see the subordination of state

[1] Plato, *TheRepublic (420BC)*, in *Classics of Moral and Political Theory*, ed. by Michael L. Morgan, Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2001, Bk. V, p. 110.

rule under Church rule. That is why Augustine would consider Church's rule as the rule of God on earth[2].

During the Renaissance Period, it is with Machiavelli that the question of peace and security will really be given great attention and outmost reflection. Indeed, it is possible to relate the political instability in the world today to the logic of political predation that prevails in the Machiavellian universe and which subjects it to a process of permanent corruption or decomposition. For Machiavelli, corruption first affects the national political universe. It is perceived as a phenomenon of degradation of the whole social body and the rupture of what links men together in a state. This is why it is a breeding ground for instability and terror.[3] On several occasions, Machiavelli insists on the unstable character of the national political universe, precisely in the *History of Florence,* where he establishes that all states are always in motion in their existence and are never stable. In his words, Machiavelli asserts that:

> *[...] It MAY BE OBSERVED, that provinces amid the vicissitudes to which they are subject, pass from order into confusion, and afterward recur to a state of order again; for the nature of mundane affairs not allowing them to continue in an even course, when they have arrived at their greatest perfection, they soon begin to decline. In the same manner, having been reduced by disorder, and sunk to their utmost state of depression, unable to descend lower, they, of necessity, reascend; and thus from good they gradually decline to evil, and from evil again return to good. The reason is, that valor produces peace; peace, repose; repose, disorder; disorder, ruin;[4] [...]*

The life of states, as Machiavelli represents it, is indeed unstable. It is subject to a process of variation that compromises political stability and the living together of individuals. At the national level, instability corresponds to the disorders that arise in the government of a state due to the occasions linked to phenomena such as famine, the discontent of the people, the dissatisfaction of the nobles, the plots of the ambitious, the corruption of the ministers, the revolt of the army or the weakness of the princes. The internal instability of the states is also linked to the fickle nature of the people who are subject to the power of the prince. Machiavelli insists on this undeniable fact when he states that the nature of peoples varies and

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[2] Augustine, *The City of God*, in *Classics of Moral and Political Theory*, ed. by Michael L. Morgan, Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2001. Page 17

[3]Osanga Benjamin, *The Idea of Perpetual Peace in International Relations: A Contextual Reading of Raymond Aron's Peace and War*, University of Yaounde 1,A dissertation for a postgraduate degree in philosophy, 2022, p. 5.

[4]NiccolòMachiavelli, *History of Florence and of the Affairs of Italy from the Earliest Times to the Death of Lorenzo the Magnificent,* (with a new introduction by Hugo Albert Rennert, Ph.D); *Electronic Classics Series*, Pennsylvania State University, 2007, Bk. 5; Ch. 1,p.218.

it is easy to persuade them of one thing, but it is difficult to make them remain in this persuasion.[5]

At the international level, the same instability prevails in inter-state relations. Indeed, Machiavelli's idea of the world is also that of an unstable environment, where each nation is a wolf to the others, an environment in which the logic of political predation makes its bed and conditions the relations between nations. In such a perspective, each nation is constantly in struggle with the others to take control of all or part of the world in order to make its political vision prevail and impose it on others, near or far. The Machiavellian representation of the world thus shows that it is the place where violence dominates and where the search for power is the ordinary approach of every nation. It is for this reason that Machiavelli insists on the fact that every nation in the world is driven by the natural desire to conquer territory and extend its dominion over the entire surface of the earth, thus constantly jeopardizing peace.

Yet, even today, the world is still in the conquest of peace. Conflicts and wars fill our daily news, all over the world. Apart from the War in Ukraine, in Europe, in America, in Asia, in Africa, in Cameroon, peoples are victims of terrorism and of other asymmetric wars with armed rebels. As a student in philosophy, we would like to reflect on the conditions of possibility in International Relations from our reading of Machiavelli's political writings. How could humanity achieve lasting peace in International Relations?

It is in view of preserving the sustainability of peace and security that the League of Nations was created, leading to the establishment of the United Nations. This seemed to be a decisive step in the search for world peace. Through the U.N, it was thought that humanity, through states, was on the way to preventing conflict and war through the principle of collective security. The principle of collective security advocated the pursuit of world peace through peaceful and legal alliances between states, where each state would commit itself to the others not to attack their sovereignty. These alliances, as Kant conceived them in the *Perpetual Peace Project*, should eventually encompass all the countries of the world, rendering useless the idea of defensive warfare implied by the international disorder that prevailed at the time when the promoters of collective security were still only a club of the minorities and the privileged, still reduced to the circle of the winners of the Second World War. The Cold War, as history shows, was a conflict based on the antagonism of values

[5]Osanga Benjamin, op. cit., pp. 5-6

underpinned by the desire to achieve the greatest nuclear power, to which the United States and the Soviet Union had exclusive claims. It thus imposed on humanity a political order based on the principle of the risk of collective (global) death. To put it in another way, the horrors of nuclear weapons have rendered any large-scale war impossible unless the human race as a whole is prepared to commit suicide.[6]

The situation has hardly improved since the end of the Cold War and the division of the world according to the East-West equilibrium of power, which was materialised by the break-up of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall. Although these two events heralded the advent of a world at last pacified according to the principle of collective security that the United Nations embodied and still embodies, the number of armed conflicts has not stopped evolving. More and more people and states are fighting each other. More and more large-scale conflicts are taking place in the world in the form of defensive or offensive wars and asymmetric wars (terrorism). These include conflicts resulting from the political gangsterism of states that unilaterally use hyper-zoological force on the pretext of putting the world in order according to their axiological preferences, whenever their vital interests are at stake. These are high-risk conflicts insofar as the logic of terror in which they take place spares no one. From this observation, we are obliged to try to understand what has not worked since the end of the Cold War. Why has peace not yet become an effective reality when it is universally desired? What else can explain the fact that conflict is a growing activity in the world today?

Based on the above questioning, we propose to reflect on the issue of world peace in the light of Niccolò Machiavelli. Our Master's Thesis is entitled: **The Concept of Peace in Machiavelli's Political Thought**. Machiavelli is generally perceived as promoter of political violence. Our study aims at demonstrating that Machiavelli is a promoter of peace in politics. Reading through some of his major works, we would like to show that in Machiavelli's writings, there is a great reflection on the conditions of peace realisation in politics, that which could be considered as Machiavelli's philosophy of peace. Machiavelli's political thought is initially presented as an apology for absolute monarchy or conservative power in *The Prince* as well as in the *Discourses on theFirst Ten Books of Titus-Livius*, *The Art of War* and *The History of Florence*. In all these works, Machiavelli seems to answer a single question: How is one supposed to conquer and retain power? The republican intuition in the light of which

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

posterity would be indebted to Machiavelli is immediately obscured when it is this question that sums up the general intention of his thought.

Machiavelli's world is indeed one in which there is a crisis of peace. This is due to both internal and external causes. Internally, the Prince is confronted with the ambitions of the enemies within, namely, those who were offended by him in taking power, including all those who helped him in this endeavour. The latter are as much his enemies as the former in the sense that they are very quickly disappointed after having hoped in vain for an improvement in their usual situation. These two types of enemies that the government faces are active in destabilising the state and consequently alienating peace by subjecting living together to turbulence. The same turbulence also characterises relations between neighbouring states in such a way that peace is constantly compromised and becomes the bedrock of permanent war. Driven by the desire for greater power, each state appears to the other as a real or potential enemy from which it must guard against the risk of being repeatedly attacked.

It was in a context marked by both internal and external tensions that Machiavelli applied himself to a reflection on peace. In order to do so, he sometimes made use of the meteorological references on the basis of which his conception of peace took shape. For the first time he defines peace in contrast to his idea of the storm, that inexorable and devastating force. Here Machiavelli equates peace with the calm of nature, which coincides with the moment when the storm is at rest. It excludes any form of variation or disturbance. But meteorological references alone do not determine Machiavelli's conception of peace. It is also and above all based on data relating to the living together of individuals and states. Based on an analysis of the facts of well-governed societies, Machiavelli equates peace with public tranquillity. Public tranquillity is nothing other than social calm and tranquillity, that is the harmonious cohabitation of heterogeneous human groups in a community or the harmonious cohabitation between close, neighbouring or distant states. The Machiavellian concept of peace is thus accompanied by the charges of stability, unity of the state and its security.

But the internal and external security of the state can only be guaranteed on the basis of safe and effective means. In Machiavelli's view, these means fall within the realm of diplomacy as well as warfare, and include cunning. In all cases, the problem to be solved always lends itself to the same formulation, namely, how to ensure the stability of internal affairs while preserving the state from real or potential external aggression? To this end, Machiavelli proposes a wide range of instruments necessary for the promotion of peace,

depending on whether the perspective is internal or external. In short, nothing should be neglected, it is enough to adapt the chosen means to the circumstances, that is to the prevailing situation, and to apply them with favour and determination.

Machiavelli's major works are dominated by the thought of war. Hence, they can also be seen as instruments for the promotion of war or places for the elaboration of war strategies. But the fact that Machiavelli's political philosophy is dominated by the thought of war did not prevent him from addressing the theme of peace. Strictly speaking, Machiavelli's political philosophy addresses the issue of peace not only to reveal its content, but also to expose the reasons why it is constantly in crisis. It poses the problem of peace in terms of perpetual crises both within and outside a state. The crisis of peace is justified first of all by the Florentine's idea of man in general as an essentially evil being subject to the mechanics of passion. This is an anthropology of man's warlike nature and proves that human relations are only possible in the mode of war. In this case, peace is far from being an immediate reality.

The same applies to the behaviour of states. Their bellicose attitude is also an obstacle to peace. This means that peace is not only jeopardised by the clash of individuals within a particular state, for Machiavelli also envisages the reasons for the crisis of peace at the level of inter-state relations, where each state endeavours to be the tyrant and enemy of the other. The Machiavellian political leader must therefore not only identify his internal enemies. He must also do so by looking outwards. From this it follows that the threat of war is permanent and one must be cautious in preparing to face real or potential enemies.

Mastering the art of war is therefore the supreme means of promoting peace both internally and externally. In the context of general warmongering, where every state is likely to harm another, Machiavelli believes that it is better to anticipate the attacks of potential adversaries in order to promote peace and security. It is better to anticipate the people by offence, just as to be safe from external attack, one must anticipate by attack. This is known as armed or tense peace. In other words, peace is reduced to the tranquillity of the strongest or most skilful at destroying the potential enemy. Is this conception of peace still relevant? In order to give answer to this questioning, we will use the analytical and critical method. Our work is divided into three parts containing three chapters each. In part one entitled "Violence in Machiavelli's Political Thought", we read through Machiavelli's major works in order to analyse his philosophy of violence, his philosophy of war. Part Two is an analysis of the

question of peace promotion in the thought of Machiavelli. Part three is an attempt to go beyond Machiavelli's conception of peace in a global world. [7]

[7] NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince*,2nd ed., trans. Harvey C. Mansfield, Chicago & London: the University of Chicago Press, 1998,

PART 1

VIOLENCE IN MACHIAVELLI'S POLITICAL THOUGHT

PARTIAL INTRODUCTION

To speak of peace in Machiavelli's political thought may seem utopian, since his major works, notably *The Prince, the Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius*, *the History of Florence* and *The Art of War*, are dominated by the thought of war, so much so that Machiavelli himself is almost always considered as an enemy of peace. Even in his own time, most of his contemporaries, like Dante Alighieri and Latini, considered him as an enemy of peace for having supported in his writings the unrest in Rome between the plebs and the nobles instead of blaming them. How then can we understand the omnipresence of the theme of violence, especially war, in Machiavelli's political thought? In other words, what explains the place of violence in his political works?

CHAPTER I
THE LOGIC OF POLITICAL PREDATION AS CONCEIVED BY MACHIAVELLI

It is possible to relate the political instability that prevails in the world today to the logic of political predation that prevails in the Machiavellian universe and which subjects it to a process of permanent corruption or decomposition. For Machiavelli, corruption first affects the national political universe, where it is perceived as a phenomenon of degradation of the whole social body and the rupture of what connects men to each other in a state. For this reason, it is a breeding ground for instability and terror. Machiavelli repeatedly stresses the unstable character of the national political universe, precisely in the *History of Florence*, where he establishes that all states are always in motion in their existence and are never stable. It is in this sense that he states that

> *[...] It MAY BE OBSERVED, that provinces amid the vicissitudes to which they are subject, pass from order into confusion, and afterward recur to a state of order again; for the nature of mundane affairs not allowing them to continue in an even course, when they have arrived at their greatest perfection, they soon begin to decline. In the same manner, having been reduced by disorder, and sunk to their utmost state of depression, unable to descend lower, they, of necessity, reascend; and thus from good they gradually decline to evil, and from evil again return to good. The reason is, that valor produces peace; peace, repose; repose, disorder; disorder, ruin*[8]*[...]*

1.1. Political Instability in Italy

The place of violence in Machiavelli's political thought can first be justified by the historical context in which it was developed. This context, as the last chapter of the Prince indicates, is characterised by the invasion of Italy by the barbarians. In Machiavelli's eyes, this revealed the non-existence of the Italian nation, while at the same time awakening in him an acute nationalistic impulse. Machiavelli's political thought, like that of any other thinker, is a reflection of the events of his time. It is the daughter of tumult and war because it originates, as Bernard-Henry Lévy says, referring to a personal philosophical experience, in the desolation of battlefields and their slaughter. Hegel is also among those who justify Machiavelli's philosophy of war by the chaotic situation of his native country and the project of Italian liberation that accompanies his entire philosophy. In a striking text, Hegel presents

[8]NiccolòMachiavelli, *History of Florence, op. cit.*

the reasons why the objective of Machiavelli's thought precisely encompasses the use of violence and its necessary use in politics. Thus he writes:

> *Machiavelli's proposed goal of raising Italy to statehood is already misunderstood by blind people who see in the author's work only a justification for tyranny and a golden mirror for an ambitious despot. [...] Italy was at the height of misfortune; she was running straight to her doom; war was setting up its battlefields, foreign princes were laying down the law on her territory; she offered the pretext for wars and, at the same time, was the price of them; she entrusted her defence to assassination, poison, treason or to the passions of foreign scum [. ...] It was then that, deeply moved by this state of general distress, in the face of hatred, disorder and blindness, an Italian politician conceived, in a calm and reflective manner, the idea that the salvation of Italy necessarily lay in its unification into a single state. With extreme rigour, he indicated the path that this salvation required and that the corruption and blind passions of his time made necessary; and he urged his prince to assume the sublime role of saviour of Italy and the honour of putting an end to the misfortunes of his country*[9].

This path, the only path that Hegel reading Machiavelli is talking about, is precisely the path of war, the daughter of Machiavellian thinking.

1.2. Violence in the life of states

The life of states, as Machiavelli represents it, is indeed unstable. It is subject to a process of variation that compromises political stability and the living together of individuals. At the national level, instability corresponds to the disorders that arise in the government of a state due to the occasions linked to phenomena such as famine, the discontent of the people, the dissatisfaction of the nobles, the plots of the ambitious, the corruption of ministers, the revolt of the army or the weakness of the princes. The internal instability of states is also linked to the fickle nature of the people who are subject to the power of the prince. Machiavelli insists on this undeniable fact when he states that *"people are by nature*

[9] G. W. F. Hegel, *La constitution d'Allemagne,* traduction de Michel Jacob, Editions Champ Libre, p. 33, Translation from French by us : *Le but que Machiavel propose à savoir d'élever l'Italie au rang d'Etat se trouve déjà méconnu par les gens aveugles qui ne voient dans l'œuvre de cet auteur qu'une justification de la tyrannie et un miroir doré pour un despote ambitieux. [...] L'Italie était au comble de l'infortune ; elle courait tout droit à sa perte ; la guerre y installait ses champs de bataille, les princes étrangers faisaient la loi sur son territoire ; elle offrait le prétexte des guerres et, en même temps, elle en était le prix ; elle confiait sa défense à l'assassinat, au poison, à la trahison ou aux passions d'une racaille étrangère [...] C'est alors que profondément ému par cet état de détresse générale, face à la haine, au désordre, à l'aveuglement, un homme politique italien conçut, dans le calme et la réflexion, l'idée que le salut de l'Italie passait nécessairement par son unification en un seul Etat. Avec une extrême rigueur, il indiqua la voie que ce salut imposait et que la corruption et les passions aveugles de son temps rendaient nécessaire ; et il exhorta son prince à assumer le rôle sublime de sauveur de l'Italie ainsi que l'honneur de mettre fin aux malheurs de son pays.*

inconstant. It is easy to persuade them of something, but it is difficult to stop them from changing their minds.[10]"

At the international level, the same instability prevails in inter-state relations. Indeed, Machiavelli's idea of the world is also that of an unstable environment, where each nation is a wolf to the others, an environment in which the logic of political predation makes its bed and conditions the relations between nations. In such a logic, each nation is constantly in struggle with the others to take control of all or part of the world in order to make its political vision prevail and impose it on others, near or far.

The Machiavellian representation of the world thus shows that it is the place where violence and the jungle dominate and where the search for power is the ordinary approach of every nation. It is for this reason that Machiavelli insists that every nation in the world is driven by the natural desire to conquer territory and extend its dominion over the entire surface of the earth. According to Machiavelli, it is a truly natural and ordinary thing to desire to acquire, and always, when men who can do so, they will be praised and not blamed. The desire to conquer that drives every state turns the world into a place where the logic of political predation effectively dominates. In this case, Machiavelli makes each state a potential or real enemy of all the others because, he tells us, if it does not attack the others, it will be attacked. Relations between states are essentially conflictual in such an environment, since each state necessarily faces the threat from outside, from its neighbours, its friends or its enemies, from those who are both, depending on the alliances that are made and unmade according to opportunities.

From this point of view, there is no longer any difference between the internal and external frameworks of states insofar as, as Machiavelli tells us, if a prince has no external enemy, he will find one at home, as necessarily happens to all cities. In any case, the logic of political predation knows no limits or frontiers in Machiavelli. It extends instability over the whole surface of the world. This is because internal discord can stimulate the appetites of an external power, whose intervention will always be praised by those who are dissatisfied with the exercise of power by a prince. In the same vein, the hegemonic expansion of a state can undermine the internal stability of conquered countries by aiming to deprive the former

[10]Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, from ―The portable Machiavelli‖, in Classics of Moral and Political Theory, edited by Michael L. Morgan, Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2001. chapter 6, p. 431

authority of power or to eliminate all those who have exercised power on its behalf or who are loyal to it.

Moreover, the logic of political predation that prevails in the Machiavellian universe does not spare any state or prince, whether powerful or weak. Indeed, a weak prince or state will in turn organise itself to satisfy its desire for power. In the Machiavellian representation of power relationships in the world, it is clear that the strongest is never strong enough to maintain its dominance over others in the long term. The reasons that allow him to establish this are multiple and scattered throughout his major political works. In *The Prince*, for example, Machiavelli justifies it on the basis of this simple truth:

> *As soon as a foreigner powerenters a region, all the local states that are weak rally to it, for they are driven by the envy they have felt for the state that has exercised predominance over them. As a result, the invader does not have to make any effort at all to win over these lesser states, because they all immediately ally themselves to the territory he has acquired there*[11].

1.3. The Strategies of Political Predation

The logic of political predation that prevails in the Machiavellian universe is also nourished by strategic practices based on betrayal or concealed cunning, depending on the balance of power in a state. In a world where political actors behave like real predators in the animal jungle, Machiavelli discovers that cunning is one of the strategies that result from the inferiority of the person who wants to defeat his opponent. The ruse of the political predator thus consists in calculating the balance of power between him and his opponent in order to overthrow him to his advantage and seize power. In this context, the political predator rationally works on the real or potential weaknesses of his opponent in order to seize the opportunity for political predation. This, then, is one of the lessons that Machiavelli discovers and which allows him to account for the political predation orchestrated by all the less powerful in the world:

> *No one was ever so wise, nor was he deemed so wise in an excellent action, as was Lucius Junius Brutus (...). Those who are dissatisfied with a prince must be inspired by the example of this man. They must first measure and weigh their forces and, if they are powerful enough to*

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 425

uncover themselves and openly wage war against him, opt for this path as the least perilous and most honourable[12].

The logic of political predation thus provides a breeding ground for instability, violence and terror. It resembles the one that characterises the problematic relations that peoples and states have with each other today and that compromises their living together. In this context, the logic of political predation is the obvious expression of the crisis of peace. The horrific consequences of political predation as they manifest themselves in the world lead Machiavelli to expressly pose the problem of peace and the modalities for its promotion in the human community. His political thought is a conceptual offering on peace, insofar as it is seen as the result of a long-term work, mediated by a set of operational procedures and devices.

Hence, Machiavelli is distinguished by a particular way of doing philosophy. What makes his philosophy special is its essentially offensive character. It is a real offensive battle that Machiavelli waged against all those responsible for the chaotic situation in his native country, and their inner and ideological accomplices. The art of philosophising thus corresponds in Machiavelli to an art of war. It therefore seems legitimate to examine the forms of expression of Machiavelli's offensive philosophy in order to grasp all its contours.

[12]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius* (1531) from ―The portable Machiavelli‖, in Classics of Moral and Political Theory, edited by Michael L. Morgan, Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2001, Bk. III, Ch. 2, p. 486

CHAPTER 2
MACHIAVELLI'S PHILOSOPHY OF WAR

Machiavelli is often referred to as a philosopher of war. The fact is that Machiavelli's political thought gives a central place to the theme of violence in the form of war, based on his interpretation of foreign policy and the tasks of a statesman in the international political world. Indeed, politics is perceived by Machiavelli as an activity by which a statesman seeks to safeguard the territorial integrity of his country by all means. This Machiavellian definition of politics implies, in other words, that the task of the ruler is to keep his state free, independent of any external power, without skimping on the means. This means that the political leader is the servant of the state and is judged by his or her ability to use opportunities to serve the purpose of the state.

2.1. Violence as Political Means

In the mode of war, violence occupies a central place in Machiavelli's political philosophy. It is presented by Machiavelli as the only means by which a prince can conquer power and retain it in the long run, in contrast to what he calls ordinary means which easily cause a prince to lose a state. This is why he states in The Prince that,

> *A ruler, then, should have no other concern, no other thought, should pay attention to nothing aside from war, military institutions, and the training of his soldiers. For this is the only field in which a ruler has to excel. It is of such importance[virtu] that military prowess not only keeps those who have been born rulers in power, but also often enables men who have been born private citizens to come to power*[13].

Violence can indeed be used for political ends. Whether a prince is born a prince or becomes one through circumstances, his mastery of the craft of war is indispensable to the conquest and retention of power. According to Machiavelli, the proof of this is that, in his experience, princes who have preferred to use other means than war have all lost power and fallen into ruin. He bases his argument on the fact that a person who governs a state and does not know the craft of arms is always despised and disobeyed by the soldiers. He compares him to a man who is unarmed, but who must nevertheless face an armed man,

> *It is not to be expected that someone who is armed should cheerfully obey someone who is defenceless, or that someone who has no weapon should be safe when his employees are armed. For the armed man has contempt for the man without weapons; the defenceless man does not trust someone who*

[13]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince…, op. cit,* Ch. 14, p. 446

> *can overpower him. The two cannot get on together. So, too, a ruler who does not know how to organize a militia, beyond the other dangers he faces, which I have already described, must recognize that he will not be respected by his troops, and that he cannot be trust them*[14].

The art of war must therefore be the prince's sole concern, especially in times of peace. The only thing he must do to better preserve his power is to practice the art of war by preparing his body and mind. Physically, the prince must harden himself by military manoeuvres and by hunting. This gives him the opportunity to get to know his country so that he can use this knowledge to better defend it in the event of an attack, and to get to know the terrain in general and strategic locations. It is in this sense that Machiavelli argues in the context of the Italy of his time that knowledge of Tuscany allows one to know the other Italian regions. This knowledge, he deduced, allows one to organise an army in the field. If there is one prince who aroused Machiavelli's admiration for having made war his sole profession, it was Philopoemen, an Achaean general, who always thought about war. The peculiarity of this Achaean general was that he put a lot of care into the profession of war in times of peace, so that during the war he led his troops efficiently in such a way that no accident for which he had no remedy could test them. This general was distinguished by another merit, namely that during a campaign he was always listening to the opinions of his friends with whom he discussed the way to proceed either to follow the enemies or to retreat when necessary.

Intellectually, the prince must read historians to study the accounts of the victories of great warlords and politicians. In this regard, Machiavelli praises a series of famous generals who imitated each other, including in human virtues, and increased their talent in the profession of arms. For this reason, he concludes by stating that this study constitutes the wisdom of the prince who must prepare himself to face fortune or chance.

From what has been discussed above, it is clear that a prince's mastery of the art of war is a categorical imperative or a significant alternative. A new prince must particularly imitate the example of the great warriors if he wants to make a career in politics and be on the list of excellent men. But such imitation is not self-evident and Machiavelli is fully aware of this. For this reason, in The Prince he addresses the theme of imitation to indicate the modalities. In the first paragraph of chapter 6 of *The Prince* he places particular emphasis on the theme of imitation. Machiavelli states peremptorily that men always follow the paths of

[14] *Idem.*

others and act by imitation. As a result, he realises that one cannot entirely follow the path of others or even perfectly attain the virtue of those one imitates. For Machiavelli, the imitation in question is not an identical reproduction of the actions of the excellent men to whom he constantly refers, because this is really impossible[15]. Prudence or wisdom therefore demands that men of great valour be imitated in the conduct of military affairs, not in terms of an identical reproduction of their actions, but by using them only as sources of inspiration in matters of policy or arms. It is thus a creative imitation, one that draws on the excellence of the statesman's model's gesture by adapting it to its own circumstances. In this perspective, Machiavelli formulates practical advice as follows:

> *But you cannot walk exactly in the footsteps of those who have gone before, nor is it easy to match the skill [vitu] of those you have chosen to imitate. Consequently, a prudent man will always try to follow the footsteps of great men and imitate those who have been truly outstanding, (...) one should be like an experienced archer, who, trying to hit someone at a distance and knowing the range [vitu] of his bow, aims at a point above his target, not so his arrow will strike the point he is aiming at, but so, by aiming high, he can reach his objective*[16].

In the light of this advice, it appears that Machiavelli attributes a paradigmatic status to the excellent captain. He is a model to be imitated but never equalled, by virtue of his superior talent and rank. The very idea of a focal point that Machiavelli uses to characterise him sufficiently illustrates the superiority of his prestige and designates him as an absolute.

2.2. The Role of the National Army in Politics

In order to put his thoughts on war into action, Machiavelli committed himself to building an army capable of responding to the imperatives of state sovereignty. It should be noted that the question of the nature of armies is intimately linked to the question of the foundation of the state, its defence or its maintenance over time. As he likes to say in The Prince, the main foundations of a state are good laws and good arms. But, he adds, there are only good laws where there are good weapons. The primacy of good arms is both the condition for good laws and the condition for the maintenance of the state. Machiavelli's overemphasis on the role of arms also explains the place that violence occupies in his political thought. But what should we understand by good weapons? What do they correspond to?

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 430
[16] *Idem.*

The desire to distinguish between good and bad weapons in the process of founding the state or maintaining it over time led Machiavelli to establish a typology of armies while insisting on the value of each of them. In doing so, the good weapons are hardly the mercenary armies he saw at work in Italy. What leads him to disqualify these armies is that in his experience they have always been disunited, ambitious and undisciplined. On top of that, they were unfaithful and cowardly in the face of the enemy. They are unfaithful because they plunder and rob their employers during peacetime.

On the other hand, they are cowardly before the enemy because they flee and desert during the war, leaving the prince defenceless. These two defects make mercenary armies unfit for the category of good weapons. This is why Machiavelli believes that if one keeps his state founded on mercenary arms, one will never be firm or secure[17]. This is an army without faith or law. It has no fear of God[18] and respects neither the oath nor the laws of the republic. With it, one easily falls into ruin. In addition to these arguments, which underline the relevance of Machiavellian analyses, the author of the Prince reminds us that the political ruin of Italy in his time was caused by nothing other than having relied for many years on mercenary armies[19].

Also excluded from the category of good arms are the auxiliaries or the mixed. The latter are more dangerous than mercenary armies, although they share the same faults. These arms can be useful and good in themselves, but for whoever calls them in, they are almost always harmful, because when they lose you are undone; when they win, you are left their prisoner.[20]. To establish the infidelity of auxiliary armies and their capacity to cause harm, Machiavelli relies on historical facts. He refers to the fall of Greece, stating that "The emperor of Constantinople, so as to oppose his neighbors, sent ten thousand Turks into Greece; when the war was finished, they refused to leave. This was the beginning of the servitude of Greece under the in fidels.[21]" Thus, no true victory that is acquired with alien arms,[22] one of whose major faults is also that it is ready to foster plots to take power from a prince.

Having disqualified mercenary and auxiliary armies because of their notorious infidelity, Machiavelli opts for the promotion of a national army. According to him, the only

[17]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince*,2nd ed., trans. Harvey C. Mansfield, Chicago & London: the University of Chicago Press, 1998, Ch.12, p. 48
[18]*Idem*
[19]*Ibid.*, p. 49
[20]*Ibid.*,Ch. 13, p. 54
[21]*Idem.*, pp. 54-55
[22]*Ibid.*, p. 55

good weapons are national weapons, those made up of nationals and led by their compatriots. There are several reasons for Machiavelli's choice of the national army. Firstly, the national army is characterised by its dignified behaviour. The dignity of the national army lies in the fact that it is loyal to its leader. This loyalty is justified by the fact that the men who are part of this army are creatures of its leader. For this reason alone, it owes him unfailing obedience, so that the men in it are ready to die for him and for the honour of the country. Among the founders of States who understood the need to equip themselves with their own weapons, there is no more noteworthy example than Caesar Borgia who, having realised the fragility of the auxiliary armies on which he relied to conquer Romagna, suddenly decided to tear them apart to form his own and to travel with them[23]. Although Caesar Borgia is considered the best example of this, Machiavelli points to another that he discovered while reading the Holy Scriptures, namely the Old Testament[24].

Speaking of the Old Testament, Machiavelli is interested in the conflict between David and Goliath, and, above all, in David's resolution to renounce the weapons of others in order to confront Goliath. David's refusal to use other people's weapons and to rely only on his own, namely his slingshot and knife, supports Machiavelli's thesis. The fact that he uses this myth from the 'Old Testament' allows him to give a divine stamp to the primacy of his own weapons over those of others. At the same time, he proves that his thesis is not only a worldly or empirical truth, but also has a transcendent or divine foundation.

Aware, therefore, of the need for an army that was loyal to its leader, Machiavelli set about building a national army in Italy. He thus moved from theory to practice. This endeavour marks a particular taste for the profession of arms in him. This may imply that he would have liked to make a career as a prince or a man of war. However, he often thought he was made for these great roles. This is why he was active enough in recruiting the militia on the strength of which he hoped to liberate Italy from the barbaric peoples who had occupied it. As a man of war, Machiavelli's actions were distinguished by the many raids he made on the training camp in Pisa or Pistoia and his efforts to remain there in order to control the military activities taking place there down to the smallest detail.

Our aim is not to dwell once more on the effectiveness of an army or on the moral guarantees it could boast in Machiavelli's vision. The most important thing for us is to

[23] *Ibid.*, Ch. 13, p. 55.
[24] *Ibid.*, Ch. 13, p. 56.

underline Machiavelli's own realisation of one of his cherished ideas, namely that before any undertaking it is necessary to provide oneself with one's own weapons, composed of one's own citizens whose loyalty knows no bounds. He is often rightly compared to Julius II, even if he does not show his insatiable appetite for territorial conquests and the ambition that Julius II had to make the Church the first Italian state, if not the only one, by encompassing all the others. Apart from this difference, it must be said that the two men shared a passion for war and a love of the profession of arms.

But it can also be said that this passion for the profession of arms did not manifest itself in the same way in the two men. The first, Julius II, loved the fiery rides, the movement, the action, the ambushes that you set up against your opponent and those that you avoid yourself. For him, war was the gallop in the early morning, with the tumult of iron-clad knights behind you. It was the battalions of infantrymen running over the hillsides, slipping through the forests, the squadrons displaying their cruel carousel on the plain. Julius II loved splendidly dressed soldiers, fluttering plumes, high-pitched fifes and long drums, gleaming steel and beautiful horses. For the other, Machiavelli, war was a refined game, which the sedentary could play just as well. Moreover, Machiavelli considered a regiment to be like a pawn on a chessboard, and the soldier an almost abstract element, a cipher in the unfolding of the game.

2.3. Machiavelli's Legitimisation of Violence in Politics

If the Machiavellian definition of politics allows us to think that Machiavelli is a thinker who legitimises the use of violence, it should nevertheless be admitted that this legitimisation of violence is characterised by a certain amount of moderation. He does not advocate the use of gratuitous violence because for him war is a political means to serve the higher interests of the state and not the whims of an ambitious man. Moreover, violence is not for him the ordinary means of governing a people. This is why Machiavelli condemned the tyranny of the Eastern princes and that of Jerome Savonarola, who constantly resorted to violence and terror to rule their people, whereas the aim was to win them over by subtle means. In order to achieve this, Machiavelli recommends not to frustrate the people and to keep them faithful in the war against an external enemy. Internally, violence and frustration cause the opposite of what they are intended to do, namely the multiplication of rebellion. Too much repression of the people leads to revolt, whereas the obedience of the people is achieved

by subtle means. It is not enough to enlist the army against the people to ensure internal security, but one must also arouse the love of the people by using wisdom, that is, cunning.

When Machiavelli recommends that the politician should attach himself to the people to ensure internal security, he is referring to the people in all their components: the nobles, the soldiers and the masses. The people have within them factions with contradictory and even opposing interests. Attaching them is not a matter of violence or force, but of rational calculation based on an analysis of the circumstances, the interests of each faction of the people and the conditions of their possible submission to the interests of the state. This is because Machiavelli sees the people as an indispensable force that the prince needs to carry out his policy of expansion. He therefore recommends that the politician attach himself to the people because he must mobilise them and prepare them for the fight against the external enemy.

Machiavelli thus constantly legitimises the political use of violence, and remains consistent with himself, since the mentality of his prince-type is essentially warlike, even if he is not a fanatical warrior. From this point of view, the prince conditions his people to war. The conditioning of the people to the profession of war is achieved through the instrumentalisation of cunning, and the prince himself has the duty to be personally involved in all war operations in which he engages his people. For the prince, war is both a duty and a profession. We know how much Machiavelli sees war as the only art that belongs to those who govern a state. From then on, war no longer appeared to be just one political means among many, but the supreme means of politics, the expression of the sovereign force par excellence in the person of the prince. By conditioning the prince to the art of war and to the prestige of such an activity, Machiavelli makes him an essentially warlike man. To arouse his excellence, he must provoke opportunities for war.

Machiavelli is a thinker who legitimises violence in politics. With him, war becomes a supreme political act, to the detriment of the prudence that made it one of many political means for the preservation of the state. It can even be said that Machiavelli's political thought gradually evolves towards the promotion of general bellicosity, because it ends up confusing politics with war. It is no longer the good use of war, but war itself, real and always effective. Understood in this way, Machiavellianism can be considered as warmongering, a theory of necessary war. This is justified from the point of view of the reason of State as Machiavelli conceives it through his works. The reason of State is the necessity of defending the

sovereignty of the State, maintaining its independence from external powers. Now we know that, in Machiavelli's view, the independence of the state is always provisional, because it is constantly threatened by the very fact of the existence of other states alongside it. This threat therefore does not need to be real to motivate an aggressive policy of the threatened state. It does not need to be effective to lead to war when we know that in the Machiavellian system, there are preventive or pre-justified aggressions by their chance of success, and post-justified aggressions by their very success.

With a few exceptions, there is nothing to prevent Machiavelli's thinking on foreign policy from being warlike and, ultimately, from being contradictory to the philosophy of peace. As a result, Machiavelli establishes an inextricable link between war and politics. This inextricable link between war and politics will be clearly reflected in his major works, which are seen as true instruments for the promotion of war.

2.4. The Essence of Machiavelli's Offensive Philosophy

One of the expressions of Machiavelli's offensive philosophy or warfare is to identify his opponents or to establish who is responsible for the horrors that characterise the chaotic situation in his native land. In this context, it is worth asking the question: against whom is Machiavelli fighting? Who are his opponents? On reading his basic works, it becomes clear that Machiavelli's first adversary was the religion of his time, namely Christianity, on which the authorities of his time relied to organise the living together of individuals and communities. But why did Machiavelli have a grudge against Christianity? What was the responsibility of Christianity for the chaotic situation in Italy? The answer to these questions is recorded in *the Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius,* where Machiavelli states bluntly that

> *The Church has kept and keeps our country divided. In fact, a country can only be truly united and happy if it obeys a single republic or prince, as happened to France or Spain. The cause of the fact that Italy is not in this situation, and that it has neither a single republic nor a single prince to govern it, is solely the Church*[25].

Thus, Italy owes its political ruin to the action of the Church, which has kept it under the influence of several lords by preventing it from uniting under a single leader. As a result, Italy became weakened and fell under the yoke of foreign powers who simply robbed it. Such a political blunder was unforgivable, so Machiavelli seized the opportunity to take on the

[25]NiccolòMachiavelli*, The Discourses…*, **op. cit, Bk. I, Ch. 12, p.**

Church, against which he launched an unreserved conceptual offensive by highlighting its political errors and blunders. The aim here is to shed light on the world and particularly on the situation in Italy at the time, while emphasising the cynical role played by the Christian religion.

The first political error of the Christian religion in Machiavelli's time was to have revolutionised the mentality and behaviour of individuals through teachings that were not politically credible. Unlike the religion of the Romans, whose virtues Machiavelli celebrates, Christianity teaches that the happiness of mankind is to be sought in the city of God and no longer here below. This teaching is fraught with consequences, namely that by seeking salvation in the hereafter, humanity renounces itself, its worldly dimension, its vigour and spontaneously submits to the wicked without the slightest intention of fighting them. Instead of attacking the invaders who robbed them, the Italians' devotion to an abstract life robbed them of the taste for freedom in favour of servitude. It should also be remembered that unlike the religion of the Romans, in which people and individuals armed themselves against tyrants, the religion of Machiavelli's time made every man inherently guilty. Rather than hunting down tyrants and despots, it blamed men and condemned their intransigence towards tyrants. For Machiavelli, "*This way of life seems, therefore, to have weakened the world and to have given it over to villains. They can surely dominate it, for they see that, in order to get to heaven, the whole of mankind thinks more of bearing their blows than of avenging them*[26]*."*

Because Machiavelli's philosophy sets out to tell the absolute truth, to shed light on what is happening, it necessarily enters into war with the authority of the Church, whose cowardice is now the target of the conceptual attacks of the author of *The Prince*. It is not just a question of shedding light, because Machiavelli's philosophy is not like that of Descartes or Hegel, that is to say, an art of the aftermath intended to examine what has already happened without intervening in the heat of the action and the battle. Nor is his philosophy similar to that which emerges in the Socratic dialogues, at the end of which the sophist is won over to Socrates' thesis. As we have already pointed out, Machiavelli's philosophy is affirmed as an art of waging war on all his ideological opponents, so that Machiavelli's image of the ideal philosopher is similar to that of Paul Nizan's watchdogs, which are capable of biting when necessary, including the one who gives them the most to eat. Machiavelli's philosophy of war is therefore characterised by the offensive he launches against all those who, after destroying

[26]*Ibid.,* Bk. II, Ch. 2, p.

the ancient virtue of the pagans, have made the bed of imaginary, i.e. abstract, republics and principalities in their ideas.

The ideological target of the attacks on Machiavelli's philosophy is thus well identified. It is named in *the Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius*. It is Saint Gregory who, instead of imposing the revolution of mentalities by its own necessity and its intrinsic evidence, stubbornly gave himself over to the destruction of statues, paintings, works of poets or ancient historians; to the alteration or abolition of everything that could still preserve some memory of the ancient *virtù*. The attack is therefore harsh. It consists in saying that Christianity is accompanied by a form of incivility that alienates the peace and unity of the human race. Instead of uniting men, the Christian religion classifies and opposes them into believers and gentiles, and divides and rules in a dictatorial and ineffective manner, because it maintains *"a weak and sick state*[27]*"*.

In addition to St Gregory, other Church leaders are also targeted by the virulent attacks of Machiavelli's philosophy. One can think of St. Gregory's inspiration in the person of St. Thomas Aquinas and, even more so, of St. Augustine, whom Bertrand Déjardin refers to as their common precursor[28]. Whether it is St Gregory or St Thomas Aquinas, both submit political life to divine transcendence and final judgement on the basis of the ethics of conviction. This ethic of conviction is itself hung on the values of the heavenly life in the same way as that promoted by their common precursor, whom Machiavelli does not explicitly name among the leaders of the Christian religion who proceeded to destroy the ancient *virtù* that allowed pagans to fight tyrants. However, one may wonder, as Déjardin does, why Machiavelli does not mention St Augustine by name among the destroyers of pagan wisdom. For Déjardin, Machiavelli's silence is a form of recognition of the author of *The City of God*, who enjoyed a remarkable influence and authority at the time[29]. Moreover, St Augustine may not have been in Machiavelli's eyes a mere executor assigned the task of destroying the ancient *virtù* that animated the kings, captains, citizens and legislators who sacrificed themselves for their homeland, but it is nevertheless against him that he is fighting in a masked way as the radical thinker of a civility hostile to the principles of Roman religion. Machiavelli's entire philosophy seems to be a virulent riposte to the thought of St Augustine,

[27]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince…,* Ch. 11, p.
[28] Bertrand Déjardin, *Terreur et corruption. Essai sur l'incivilité chez Machiavel*, L'Harmattan, 2004, p. 29.
[29]*Ibid.*, p.36.

which essentially refutes the ancient thinkers, their ontology, their ethics[30]. This riposte is manifested in Machiavelli's contempt for the political ethics of the Christian states under whose tutelage Rome was plundered by the Visigoths of Alaric[31]. Thus, the Christian form of the state does not give the latter any guarantee of solidity.

Such a riposte sufficiently shows that at no time does Machiavelli pledge allegiance to a clerical authority. On the contrary, he develops an offensive philosophy against it. The intellectual duel that he opposes to Saint Augustine and his recognised authority places his thought in the register of what should be called, with Bernard-Henry Lévy, the great philosophies, i.e. those that are distinguished by their offensive vocation[32]. Machiavelli's political philosophy is essentially an offensive philosophy because it knows neither concession nor consensus. It has only opponents, because it aims to open up new roads to the philosophy of peace, by opposing utopias that reserve themselves for following the truth of the facts and feeding off the reality of battlefields. This ambition inevitably comes up against the fierce resistance of all those who rely on habituation and received ideas. This is understandable in the sense that Machiavelli understands his innovative approach as a destruction of the previously existing system of legitimisation and the theory behind it. By choosing to follow the path of innovation in his philosophy of peace, Machiavelli already asserts himself as a true fighter, ready to confront any enemy.

Another moment in Machiavelli's philosophy of war can be seen in the type of interpretation he makes of both the religion of the Romans and that of the modern Christians of his time. Machiavelli's argument on this subject is presented in the form of a contrast between two types of religion: the religion of the Romans and that of the moderns. These two models of religion also promote two diametrically opposed ways of life. On the one hand, the religion of the Romans inculcates in the minds of the people a life of gaudiness, ferocity and vitality. It exalts men of earthly glory as captains of armies and leaders of republics. In contrast, Christianity celebrates humble men, dedicated to contemplation rather than valiant action. The proof that Machiavelli's philosophy gives violence an important place is that it celebrates and sublimates the way of life of the pagans at the expense of the humble life of the Christians, whose lack of vigour and ferocity the author of the *Discourses on the First Decade of Titus-Livius* laments:

[30]*Ibid.*, p.30.
[31]*Idem.*
[32]Bernard-Henry Levy, *Réflexion sur la guerre*, précédé des *Damnés de la guerre*, Paris, Editions Grasset, 2001, p.55.

> *Having shown us the truth and the right way, our religion has made us esteem less the honour of the world. The pagans, having esteemed it highly and having placed in it the supreme good, were more relentless in their actions. This can be seen in many of their institutions, beginning with the magnificence of their sacrifices, in comparison with the humility of ours, where the pomp is more delicate and magnificent, but where nothing is fierce or violent. They lacked neither pomp nor magnificence in their ceremonies, but added to this the bloody and horrible sacrifice, in which many animals were killed. This terrible spectacle made men like him*[33].

While Christianity weakened man, the religion of the Romans, on the contrary, made him capable of fighting and combating his enemies. The struggle thus appears in Machiavelli as a fundamental fact in politics. It is even part of the essence of politics since the art of politics corresponds in his thinking to the art of war. The politician himself is neither more nor less a warrior. Similarly, a politically committed people is a warlike people, because violence, especially war, is the only means by which it can free itself from despotism, i.e. the prince who abuses power and is content to despoil his subjects. On the other hand, a people without ardour is doomed to political death. They are content with a cheerless life, subject to divine transcendence and busy anointing tyrants rather than fighting them fiercely. By making violence a primary feature of politics, Machiavellianism is necessarily part of a combat philosophy.

Apart from the political situation in Italy in his time, from which Machiavelli forged a philosophy of war, it should also be noted that Machiavelli's anthropological presupposition also plays a remarkable role. Machiavelli's judgement on both human nature and the desire that drives every human being is sufficient explanation for the offensive style of his writing. The Machiavellian judgement establishes the relationship of desire to war by showing that war is inscribed in the impulse of desire and therefore in all human nature. For Machiavelli, the history of political humanity unfolds and is understood against this background of hostility, always latent and sometimes actualised. This is an undeniable fact and requires particularly hostile political methods. Since there is no altruism in human desire, the art of governing in this context amounts to putting its subjects out of harm's way by making intelligent use of cruelty. Thus, the promotion of violence in Machiavelli's political thought is justified by the legitimisation of the use of extraordinary means, notably war, sometimes in the name of the desire for power. Such legitimisation is not to be attributed to Machiavelli's detractors, those who, according to Michel Sellenart, invented the concept of

[33]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourses…,* Bk. II, Ch. 2, p.

Machiavellianism in order to accuse him or to fight him unfairly. Rather, it is immanent to Machiavellian writing as can be seen in the *Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius* where we read that *"A wise mind will never reproach anyone for having done something extraordinary to organise a kingdom or create a republic. If the facts accuse him, the effects must excuse him. When they are good, as in the case of Romulus, they always excuse him*[34]*".*

Machiavelli makes the same point in *The Prince*, where he legitimises Caesar Borgia's repression in Romagna and presents him as a political example because, despite his exactions, the result he achieved, namely the pacification of the province, excuses him. Caesar Borgia, like Romulus, is thus one of the great men whom Machiavelli constantly admires in his works. His ability to cope with difficult trials certainly inspired Machiavelli to produce thinking that is particularly conducive to manly political conduct. The place of Caesar Borgia in the formation of Machiavelli's political thought is not insignificant in this respect. We know that on several occasions and on the occasion of his diplomatic missions abroad, Machiavelli had the opportunity to see Caesar Borgia at work and to discuss with him questions of strategy in politics. Machiavelli paints a portrait of him that highlights the great figures of the character. It is not superfluous, in our opinion, to return to the main features of the portrait of this political figure in order to show how they were decisive in defining Machiavelli's philosophical style.

It was in Urbino, on 24 June 1502, as an article by Jean-Jacques Marchand[35] indicates, that Machiavelli first came face to face with Caesar Borgia, at a time when the latter had just recorded an uninterrupted series of victories by occupying Romagna, a large part of the Marches, Piombino and indirectly Arezzo and the Val di Chiana[36]. His mission to Caesar Borgia, in which he was associated with Francesco Soderini, was purely informative: to find out what Borgia's intentions were after his dazzling conquest of the Duchy of Urbino. Before this first meeting, Jean-Jacques Marchand shows that Machiavelli's image of Caesar Borgia was still vague. It is revealed in his letter of 22 June 1502 and is first presented as a sketch of his portrait. The sketch of this portrait insists on the reason for Caesar Borgia's victories. The same letter of 22 June states that Caesar Borgia owes his victories to his impressive wisdom. It is clear that for Machiavelli, Caesar Borgia showed his wisdom by feigning to attack his adversary in order to better surprise him and occupy the Duchy of Urbino. But already in this

[34]*Ibid.*, Bk. I, Ch. 9, p.
[35] Jean-Jacques Marchand, « L'évolution de la figure de César Borgia dans la pensée de Machiavel », in *Revue Suisse d'histoire*, 1969, pp. 327-355.
[36]*Ibid.*, p.327.

descriptive approach to the image of the Duke, one can perceive the fascination that this character exerts and which is reflected in Machiavelli's style, which takes on a more elaborate aspect in absolute contrast to the rest of the letter. It is also significant to note that this elevation of the stylistic level is found almost every time Machiavelli speaks of the Duke in his legations in Urbino and then in Imola.

But in his letter of June 26th of the same year, Machiavelli highlights one of the strong features of the personality of Caesar Borgia, with whom he has just had a face-to-face conversation. Apart from recounting the facts, which we do not think it is necessary to go into in detail, we will limit ourselves here to highlighting the following most important fact: during the face-to-face meeting with Caesar Borgia, Machiavelli underwent a stormy conversation, marked by extremely cold and violent words. The violence of Caesar Borgia's words during his diplomatic meeting with his Florentine host carries with it charges of contempt, cruelty and the threat of armed attacks against Florence should the authorities there behave in a way that is redundant to the Duke or opposed to his imperialist ambitions. Here again the Duke was to exert a remarkable influence on Machiavelli, as this extract from the letter of June 26th shows:

> *This Lord, writes Machiavelli, is very splendid and magnificent, and in arms he is so courageous that there is nothing, however great, that does not seem small to him; and for glory and to acquire states he never rests, nor knows fatigue or danger: he arrives in a place before his departure from the place he leaves can be known; he makes himself loved by his soldiers; he has raised the best infantrymen in Italy: all things which make him virtuous and formidable; he is moreover endowed with perpetual fortune*[37].

This part of the letter shows that the figure of Caesar Borgia does indeed change from one letter to the next. It highlights the main and constant features of his personality. These include: energy, coolness in difficult circumstances, courage, speed, and the fortune that has always accompanied him, offering him the opportunity to take advantage of the slowness, irresolution and discord of his enemies.

In addition to the fascination that the Duke's image exerts on Machiavelli, it is also clear that it plays an important role in determining the Florentine diplomat's style of thinking. This style of thinking, as we have said, is the warrior's style, the one that makes Machiavelli a warlike and conquering thinker. The warrior's style that characterises Machiavelli's political writings is reflected in the vocabulary he constantly uses to translate his ideas. When

[37]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Letter of June 26th* cited by Jean-Jacques Marchand, *Op.cit*, p. 330.

discussing the political operations to which the prince is necessarily bound throughout his work, Machiavelli makes abundant use of the lexicon of war and expresses his ideas with a coolness similar to that of Caesar Borgia, without hesitating about the extreme violence of his words. Most of the prince's operations are essentially military and require exceptional qualities to be carried out well. Added to this is Machiavelli's idea of the art of politics as an art of war. There is no doubt that this idea was inspired by the character of Caesar Borgia whose splendid actions fascinated him on several occasions. We can therefore understand the massive presence of the lexicon of war in Machiavelli's texts, which allows us to think that politics is essentially the domain of expression of violence for him.

The lexicon of war by which Machiavelli defines himself as a promoter of violence is dense and diversified. It forms a rich, complex whole and reflects the political operations of the prince in their diversity. From him onwards, the political activity of the prince is described as an operation to conquer territories and rise to power. To express this phase of the prince's rise to power, Machiavelli uses, in the manner of Caesar Borgia, the language of aggression or confrontation, because politics conceived as conquest is essentially a test of strength in which the conqueror seeks to satisfy the desire for power. An examination of Machiavelli's language reveals a vocabulary specific to the politics of expansion and its corollaries. On several occasions in The Prince, the Florentine diplomat uses the verbs 'to remove', 'to acquire', 'to take away', 'to extend', 'to occupy' or expressions such as 'to take possession of', to underline the offensive inclination of the desire for the greatest power, or if one prefers, the will to power when it invests a territory. In the same vein, Machiavelli uses the register of war to characterise the operations of the prince in his expansionist process. Whether it is *The Prince* or the *Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius*, we note the recurrent use of words designating attack and defence. They sufficiently illustrate that Machiavelli's philosophy is one of combat, where attacks, sieges, assaults and incursions are part of the prince's normal modes of operation. Other concepts in use in Machiavelli's language indicate the designation of war movements and categories of weapons necessary or not for the prince's operations. We notice that in relation to war movements is the extensive use of verbs denoting the movement of troops in the battlefields.

The above analysis illustrates the proximity of the Machiavellian understanding to the perspective of war. Such proximity is justified in the context of his philosophy of rupture. We have also established that Machiavelli's political thought breaks with that of his ancient and medieval predecessors, not only because it is an original work, but above all because it makes

room for new political models or archetypes, in the analysis of which Machiavelli appears to be a proponent of violence, and even of war in politics. In The Prince in particular, Jesus, the prince of love and peace of the Christian philosophers, is replaced by Moses, the armed prince. Machiavelli's argumentation in this context follows the pattern of contrast. On the one hand, he distinguishes between unarmed, soft, effeminate princes who are ineffective in their actions. In Machiavelli's eyes, these are anti-models that must necessarily be excluded from the benchmarks of politics, following the example of Fra Girolamo Savonarola[38]. On the other hand, he evokes the cases of Moses, Cyrus, Theseus and Romulus who, thanks to their weapons, triumphed over their enemies. The fact that he substitutes princes of love and peace for those who are skilled in the use of arms shows that Machiavelli gives violence an important place in his thinking. The very way in which he recommends the profession of arms to the politician further fuels this conviction, and it is therefore not superfluous to consider his major works as true instruments for the promotion of war.

Machiavelli thus developed a real philosophy of war, for in the drawings illustrating his *Art of War*, men and battalions are represented by typographical signs[39]. The Greek theta represents a cannon, the capital 'T' the commander of the battle, the capital 'D' the battalion commander, the 'z' a flag and the 's' music. He arranges them on his sheet of paper, like a child playing with his toy soldiers. In this configuration, he reduces the living being to a letter, the pikeman to an 'o', the light horseman to an 'e', the man-at-arms to an 'r', and so on. In spite of this, the military combinations he organises with these characters are extremely lively because for him the art of war is a living art and strategy a living science.

From the above, it is clear that Machiavelli can, in many ways, be seen as a theorist of war, and one of the merits he is often credited with is that he applied in the field all that he wrote on paper and learned from the books of the ancients. Machiavelli was therefore not only an office strategist, but also a man of the field. He was a Florentine emissary who took part with the Vitellis in the siege of Pisa, who for several months rode boot to boot with Caesar Borgia and discussed manpower, output and equipment with Caterina Sforza, that captain, who listened to the fiery speeches of Julius II, and following his slim, withered finger, pointed towards the plain, watched the Swiss, the Gascons and the Albanians move through the dawn mist. Fortune served him well when, after 15 years of hard work, immense reading and meditation on war, he came into contact with the best generals of his time, and was able to

[38]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince…, Op.cit*, Ch. 6, p. 43.
[39]NiccolòMachiavelli, *L'Art de la guerre*, livre sixième, p.601.

hear their lessons, and better still, to see them at work, to distinguish their particular techniques, their methods, their procedures, in short, their style.

Each of these great artists of war, be it Caesar Borgia or Giovanni delle Bande Nere - John of the Black Bands - Niccolò da Tolentino, or Boldrino da Panicale, whose body was embalmed by his lieutenants and whose orders they pretended to come and take every morning, so strong is the prestige of the great soldier, even after his death - or Carmagnola, or that Alberico di Barbiano, who is as powerful and original an innovator in his art as Bramante, Paolo Uccello, Masaccio, Piero della Francesca are in theirs, for each of these artists of war has indeed his own way of expressing his genius, and of creating his work. It was Machiavelli's great advantage to have added the practical experience gained on the battlefield to the theoretical knowledge drawn from libraries, in the construction of his multiple instruments of warfare, namely *The Art of War, The Prince* and *The Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius.*

CHAPTER 3
THE PROMOTION OF WAR IN MACHIAVELLI'S WORKS

Machiavelli's great political works can be seen as instruments for the promotion of war. Several arguments are often evoked to justify this. Among them, informed readers of Machiavelli mention the argument that he likens domestic politics to a battlefield where actors are constantly struggling for power. In this case, the war-politics relationship is established even more radically in Machiavelli, because he discovers that there is no difference between the military art and that of effectively governing a state. It is well known that in Machiavelli's view, the techniques of government only work successfully if military cover is provided and that information gained from experience on the political use of arms improves the effectiveness of a government. It is also on this conviction that Machiavelli bases, through all his works, the articulation between military tactics and political technique. A careful reading of these works leads André-Marie Yinda Yinda to the conclusion that:

> *The way of elaborating battle plans, conducting operations, leading troops on the battlefield and organising the handling of weapons and the use of all sorts of techniques and tactics when it comes to waging war against the enemy or preparing for it is, in Machiavelli's mind, the process par excellence of the act of government*[40].

The consubstantial nature of military strategy and political techniques shows that the statesman is neither more nor less a warrior and, therefore, a strategist. The very fact that the statesman is perceived as a strategist reinforces the link between war and politics insofar as the image of the strategist through which Machiavelli grasps the political allows him to imagine the organisation and conduct of military affairs as an art of politics capable of inspiring and guiding governmental practices. This is why the political theatre is to be considered, from this point of view, as a battlefield.

3.1. Machiavelli's Promotion of War in *The Art of War*

In the context of political struggle, Machiavelli makes extensive use of the lexical field of war in these works to refer to the various protagonists engaged in the conquest of power. The concept of the enemy is used here as the one that best designates the political status of the one who aspires to power in relation to those who share the same goal, those on whom one relies to achieve this high dignity, or those at whose expense one acquires power. In all cases,

[40] André-Marie Yinda Yinda, *L'art d'ordonner le monde. Usages de Machiavel*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2007, p.98.

politics necessarily or structurally means making enemies. According to Thierry Ménissier, the enemy is the natural product of politics understood as conquest[41]. This is a Machiavellian truth, because the person who conquers power always has as an enemy those who have enabled him to obtain it, insofar as they are immediately disappointed after having hoped for an improvement in their condition. In general, the term enemy is omnipresent in Machiavelli's work, where it refers both to an individual adversary, the rival faction, foreign barbarians, and the opponents of a regime. In short, it is always about the camps that compete for power.

If Machiavelli often speaks in terms of defeat or victory, it is not so much to use a simple metaphor. It is because politics implies a struggle in which there is a winner and a loser. Thus, Machiavelli practically equates political combat with a military battle. This is why, as we have established, he advises the political leader to take nothing else for his art but war and the discipline of it. It is in this sense that his treatise on war is considered a weapon of political combat, expressly designed to be at the service of any pretender to power. It is in this treatise that he introduces the politician to the craft of war and the political use of weapons.

As a whole,

> *The first book deals with the recruitment of soldiers, especially infantrymen; the second with their armament and training; the third with Machiavelli's ideas on the order of battle; the fourth with the tricks of war, and the fifth with the rules of troop movements; the sixth deals with the question of cantonments, while the seventh, devoted as a whole to fortifications, concludes with the virtues of a good captain*[42].

The treatise effectively addresses all aspects of the profession of arms. It is a whole programme whose contents reveal the lessons of strategy in the formation of armies and military combat. At each stage, Machiavelli tells what a good captain must do or avoid in order to succeed in all his endeavours to conquer power or territory, and he celebrates the valour and skill of soldiers engaged in orderly and disciplined combat. Machiavelli writes in *The Art of War* and illustrates our point:

> *The ordinary pikes of the first battalions once withdrawn through the ranks of shields, these seize the battle, and see with what boldness, what ease, with*

[41] Thierry Ménissier, *Le vocabulaire de Machiavel*, Ellipses, Paris cedex, 2002, p. 7.
[42] George Mounin, *Machiavel*,Editions du Seuil, Paris,chapitre 3, p. 126. Original text: *Le premier livre étudie le recrutement des soldats, surtout les fantassins ; le second leur armement, puis leur entraînement ; le troisième expose les idées de Machiavel sur l'ordre des batailles ; le quatrième, les ruses de guerre, et le cinquième les règles des mouvements des troupes ; le sixième aborde la question des cantonnements, tandis que le septième, consacré dans l'ensemble aux fortifications, conclut sur les vertus d'un bon capitaine.*

> *what safety they strike the enemy (...). See with what fury the enemies fall; it is that, armed only with a pike or a sword, one of which is too long, the other of which meets an enemy who is too well armed, some fall killed or wounded, others flee*[43].

In the same text of *The Art of War*, Machiavelli develops the idea that military strategy is the condition of reality of the political enterprise. Without mastery of the military art, it is obvious to him that no political constitution can last. In his view, this is true both in the context of foreign policy and in the domestic policy of states. In both cases, political intelligence calls upon the practical intelligence of the military arts to guarantee not only its temporal existence but also its greatness and dignity. In the Preface to *The Art of War*, Machiavelli emphasises the political necessity of using the practical intelligence of the military arts to perpetuate the existence of the state and its institutions in these terms:

> *All the establishments created for the common advantage of society, all the institutions formed to inspire the fear of God and of the laws, would be vain if a public force were not destined to enforce them; and when this is well organised, it makes up for the very defects of the constitution. Without this help, the best constituted State ends up dissolving: like those magnificent palaces which, shining from within with gold and jewels, lack a roof to defend them from the insults of time*[44].

The obligation to guarantee the survival of the state and its institutions is more than ever an undertaking that depends largely on the military potential of the state and above all on the quality of the men who have the duty to accomplish this task. As a result, Machiavelli places the political art under the tutelage of the military art insofar as it is the only one that allows the politician to maintain the integrity of his territory, the independence of his state vis-à-vis the real or potential invader. It is essential to face the jungle of the world if a community wants to exist as a state. It is also necessary to protect state institutions from the malignancy of human nature. To achieve this, the politician must rely on military tutelage, which alone can help him to achieve this goal, provided that this tutelage is carried out by men of a certain quality.

In *The Art of War*, military offices are not open to just any citizen. The art of war is not for everyone by virtue of the requirements of the profession of arms. By examining the question in depth, Machiavelli realises that the profession of arms does not correspond to simple minds or honest men, but to men of heart. We can see here that Machiavelli's approach is similar to Plato's. In his time, Plato believed that the status of soldier is proper to

[43]NiccolòMachiavelli, *L'Art de la guerrre, Op.cit*, Livre III, p. 147.
[44]*Ibid.*, p.56.

a few citizens, i.e. those who are distinguished by certain qualities of heart and body, of which will, courage, endurance, determination and strength are the essential qualities. Similarly, Machiavelli entrusts the military function to a few citizens, especially those who have the appropriate profile for the requirements of the professions of war. Unlike Plato, Machiavelli believes that the professions of war are of a higher order than that of an ordinary, honest man. For this reason, he states in *The Art of War that*

> *War as a profession cannot be honestly carried on by individuals at any time; war must be the profession of governments, republics or kingdoms only. Never did a well-constituted state allow its citizens or subjects to exercise it for themselves, and never did a good man embrace it as his own profession*[45].

It is therefore up to the politician to make himself a master of the professions of war. There are two reasons for this choice. Firstly, when the initiative and the conduct of war are ensured by the politician, they commit the whole community insofar as the security of all is at stake. Secondly, by entrusting the business of war to a constituted political authority, it is likely to be conducted properly. In this respect, the politician is best placed to know how to go about recruiting soldiers, the disciplinary rules to be scrupulously observed, and the tactics and other stratagems to be used on the battlefield or before the battle. On this last point, Machiavelli gives important indications that illustrate the superiority of the politician over a particular citizen with regard to the professions of war. These indications also allow him to construct the profile of the political strategist, one who reconciles political techniques and military strategies in his way of proceeding. In the first instance, he refers to the art of persuasion, combined with the art of oratory in order to galvanise the troops in battle. The fourth book of *The Art of War* suggests that

> *Accidents happen all the time that can destroy an army if its general does not have the talent or the habit of speaking to it. By words, he drives out fear, inflames courage, increases relentlessness, discovers the enemy's wiles, offers rewards, shows the dangers and the means of escaping them, reprimands, prays, threatens, sows hope, praise or blame, and finally employs all the means that drive or hold back men's passions*[46].

Only those who have the oratorical talent which alone enables them to persuade and galvanise the soldiers are then fit for the professions of war. In addition to oratory, the warlord must also distinguish himself by the ability to inspire the courage of his soldiers by

[45] *Ibid.*, Livre I, p. p. 66.
[46] *Ibid.*, Livre IV, p. 179.

means of staging and other stratagems that serve the same purpose. Machiavelli cites the procedure used by Agesilaus, the king of Sparta, as an example:

> *It is also useful to inspire your soldiers with contempt for the enemy: Agesilaus thus exposed some naked Persians to the eyes of his soldiers, so that the spectacle of these delicate limbs would make them understand that such men were not meant to frighten Spartans*[47].

Machiavelli's work in war is thus characterised by a certain number of behaviours, habits and practices that combine various qualities and tools such as charisma, intelligence, rhetoric and stagecraft. From this point of view, it appears that Machiavelli's The Art of War identifies the techniques of government with military tactics. At the same time, the status of the military leader and that of the political leader also become identical. These are two figures of the same that Machiavelli expressly enshrines in all his political works.

3.2. Machiavelli's Promotion of War in *The Prince*

The Prince can also be seen as an instrument to promote war. In this work, Machiavelli links political power to the armed forces. He equates the art of governing with the art of war. True to his logic, the text of the Prince also presents the political and the military as two figures of the same kind, and it enshrines this coincidence to the fullest extent when it establishes that in the field of military operations, the prince must go in person and fulfil the office of captain himself. But the Machiavellian link between power and armed force is made clear from the very first lines of the Prince when he sets out to explain how principalities and monarchies are acquired, governed and maintained. It is verified in these three orders of question insofar as Machiavelli establishes that all those who succeeded in holding out are those who used good weapons and that all the disarmed were defeated. He uses two categories of examples to support his point: the first category of examples is composed of armed men who managed to rise to power and hold on to it. The second category refers to unarmed princes, such as Friar Jerome Savonarola. From this, Machiavelli concludes that

> *All armed prophets have conquered, and the unarmed ones have been destroyed. Besides the reasons mentioned, the nature of the people is variable, and whilst it is easy to persuade them, it is difficult to fix them in that persuasion. (...).If Moses, Cyrus, Theseus, and Romulus had been unarmed they could not have enforced their constitutions for long—as happened in our time to Fra Girolamo Savonarola, who was ruined with his new order of things*

[47] *Ibid.*, p.180.

immediately the multitude believed in him no longer, and he had no means of keeping steadfast those who believed or of making the unbelievers to believe.[48].

From the above, one observation is obvious, namely that Machiavelli makes the prince, i.e. the political leader, a man of war, and the monarchy a battlefield where the beasts of the political fauna clash, since his model prince is supposed to be sometimes a very ferocious lion, sometimes a very cunning fox. Cunning and ferocity are two qualities that the Machiavellian prince must embody. This is why most of his political role models are trained men-at-arms and constantly celebrate their courage and composure in the face of events. In this case, *The Prince* can be regarded as a manual of war strategy in the same way as *The Art of War*, because it shows how power can be won and retained through the use of weapons. Machiavelli describes the strategic conduct of men-at-arms in their attempts to seize power, conquer or control territories, and the most famous of these are both men of quality and private men. The most famous in his eyes are both the men of quality and the private men. As far as the men of quality are concerned, they are those who, by birth, enjoy the destiny of Prince.

Whenever Machiavelli refers to the actions of such men, he admires their courage, their determination, their persistence in going the extra mile, their ability to cope with the most daunting events. Caesar Borgia, Francesco Sforza or Septimius Severus are all part of this kind of man, both fierce and cunning. The same is true of a man of private property, such as Agathocles of Sicily, who, because of his good heart and the fact that he was not frightened by adversity, stormed the Senate of Syracuse and had his soldiers kill all the senators in order to seize power.

In Machiavelli's mind, Caesar Borgia, Francesco Sforza, Septimius Severus and even Agathocles of Sicily are 'great men' of history, or in other words, 'excellent men' whom every political leader must imitate in order to assume his political destiny. This is why he chose to propose them as an example to Lorenzo the Magnificent the Younger, to whom he entrusted the redemptive mission of Italy:

Those who strive to obtain the good graces of a prince are accustomed to come before him with such things as they hold most precious, [...].Desiring therefore to present myself to your Magnificence with some testimony of my devotion towards you, I have not found among my possessions anything which I hold more dear than, or value so much as, the knowledge of the actions of great

[48]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince…, Op.cit,* Ch. 6, p. 43.

men, acquired by long experience in contemporary affairs, and a continual study of antiquity[49].

The very fact that the actions of these men are held up as examples by Machiavelli in favour of the Prince, whose mission is to liberate Italy from the occupation of the barbarians, shows that *The Prince* is indeed an instrument for promoting war. It is necessary to know the actions of great men, what they did in their time, and to use this knowledge to free Italy from the yoke of occupation. In offering *The Prince* to the Medici, Machiavelli hoped that they would take his project to heart. His ambition was to win over Lorenzo the Magnificent with encouragement and galvanisation by bringing him into contact with what he called the 'great men' of history, so that all of Italy hoped for him:

> *Nor is there to be seen at present one in whom she can place more hope than in your illustrious house, with its valour and fortune, favoured by God and by the Church of which it is now the chief, and which could be made the head of this redemption. This will not be difficult if you will recall to yourself the actions and lives of the men I have named. And although they were great and wonderful men, yet they were men, and each one of them had no more opportunity than the present offers, for their enterprises were neither more just nor easier than this, nor was God more their friend than He is yours.[...].Here there is the greatest willingness, and where the willingness is great the difficulties cannot be great if you will only follow those men to whom I have directed your attention.*[50].

In short, all the conditions were met for Lorenzo the Magnificent to finally take the decision to unleash the war of liberation against the foreign occupiers.

Chapter 10 of *The Prince* lays emphasis on the necessary relationship between politics and armed forces. The particularity of this chapter, compared to those that precede it, is that Machiavelli poses a specific problem, that of national defence. Once the politician occupies a state, the defence of the state becomes not only a duty for him, but also a political imperative: he is bound by the need to defend the integrity of his state against possible attacks from internal or external enemies. In this new context, the question that preoccupies the author of The Prince is whether the politician should rely on himself or on the strength of others:

> [...]*in examining the character of these principalities: that is, whether a prince has such power that, in case of need, he can support himself with his own resources, or whether he has always need of the assistance of others.*[51].

[49]*Ibid*,Dedication, p. 17.
[50]*Ibid.*, Ch. 26, pp. 146-147.
[51]*Ibid.*, Ch. 10, p. 66.

The problem is thus posed here in terms of the autonomy of politics in matters of defence. Machiavelli's ambition, which has already shown itself to be hostile to the use of mercenary or auxiliary armies, is to promote autonomous defence strategies at the level of states in order to escape the pitfalls of infidelity or the bad faith of others' weapons. If we follow his logic, we realise that he is stimulating the creation of autonomous military forces capable of the security task. This is confirmed when he writes: *"*And to make this quite clear I say that I consider those who are able to support themselves by their own resources who can, either by abundance of men or money, raise a sufficient army to join battle against anyone who comes to attack them*"*.[52]

3.3. Machiavelli's Promotion of War in *the Discourses*

The ideas developed in the *Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius* do not escape this logic of war and confrontation between the different protagonists in the political field. While the spirit of this work is often contrasted with that of *the Prince*, where individuals fight against each other for exclusive possession of the power-object, such an opposition is no more than an illusion when we know that Machiavelli himself establishes that all cities, whether republics or principalities, are torn by two contradictory moods. He even goes so far as to say that in republics there is more life and spirit of vengeance, so that men are quicker to rebel against arduous authority than to suffer it passively. It can even be said that people are less hostile in principalities than in republics. As Machiavelli tells us, this is proven,

> *When cities or countries are accustomed to live under a prince, and his family is exterminated, they, being on the one hand accustomed to obey and on the other hand not having the old prince, cannot agree in making one from amongst themselves, and they do not know how to govern themselves. For this reason they are very slow to take up arms, and a prince can gain them to himself and secure them much more easily. But in republics there is more vitality, greater hatred, and more desire for vengeance, which will never permit them to allow the memory of their former liberty to rest*[53].

The *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius* abound in the same sense and enrich Machiavelli's reflection on the vitality of the people in republics, compared to what happens in principalities. Chapter 2 of the second book of the *Discourses* refers to the obstinacy of the peoples in defending their freedom against Roman colonisation and

[52] *Idem*
[53] *Ibid,*Ch. 5, p. 38.

revenge[54]. Other passages in the same *Discourses* emphasise the virulence of the people in the republics and the fact that Machiavelli takes a stand in favour of violent movements by them. On several occasions he refers to the cries of the people against the senate in Rome[55], the street demonstrations of the Roman plebs, leading to the closing of shops[56].

In this case, the *Discourses* can be seen as an instrument for the promotion of war, because, in the first instance, they are seen as an instrument with which Machiavelli supports popular demonstrations or the ambitions of the people against the established power and its institutions. It is precisely in this work that Machiavelli shows "*that those who condemn the disturbances that occurred between the nobles and the plebs blame what was the primary cause of the freedom of Rome"*[57]. In addition to this, he gives strong support to the ambitions of peoples when he states that "*the aspirations of free peoples are seldom pernicious to their freedom. They are inspired by the oppression they suffer or by the fear they feel of it*[58]*".*

From this point on, all of Machiavelli's work in the *Discourses* is to indicate to the people the strategies of war against the oppressor power or the one they consider as such, provided that they have a leader who takes the initiative of the attack. As a result, it appears that the *Discourses* produce the model of the political situation of the Prince where the duel refers to a face to face between two individuals. In this work, Machiavelli prescribes two indispensable strategic methods.

The very first strategic method he advocates in this context is articulated in two decisive moments, both comparative and active. It makes the *Discourses* a document of war strategy. The first moment of this method, which is comparative, leads to the second, which is active. In an enlightening text, Machiavelli amply explains the structure of the strategic method that he recommends to those who want to attack the established power by showing that

> *Those who are dissatisfied with a prince (...) must first measure and weigh their forces and, if they are powerful enough to uncover themselves and wage war against him, opt for this course as the least perilous and most honourable. But if their forces are not sufficient to make war on him openly, they must, indeed, follow all the necessary paths by yielding to his desires and taking pleasure in all things in which they see his pleasures taken. Such familiarity*

[54]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Discourses…,*op. cit,Bk. II, Ch. 2, pp.
[55]*Ibid.,* Bk. I, Ch. 4, p.
[56]*Idem.*
[57]*Ibid.,* p.
[58]*Ibid.,* p.

> *first assures you of safety and, without any peril, makes you enjoy with him the good fortune of the prince and gives you opportunities to please him*[59].

This illustration sets out the details of a strategy that emphasises how to carry out an attack on the established power. It shows the two moments of the strategic method that Machiavelli recommends to all those who want to overthrow oppressive power. The first moment of this method consists in assessing the strength of the adversary in order to determine its weight before declaring war on it openly. The declaration of war is therefore the second moment of the strategic method. It is the moment when, more than ever, one must act against the opponent. But another alternative can be advocated when the means of openly waging war on an opponent in power are unlikely. It is enough to be close to power rather than at a distance, and to give in to its pleasures or fantasies. Such proximity offers several kinds of advantages. It allows one to hide one's intentions, to ensure one's security and to take advantage of one's good fortune. It is therefore not a question of radicalising one's strategic conduct in terms of open warfare. The most important thing is to achieve the objective, i.e. to defeat an adversary, no matter how you do it. This is also where the active character of Machiavellian strategy lies. In order to triumph over one's opponent, Machiavellian strategy foresees that one varies one's conduct according to the circumstances:

> *I have often found that the cause of good or bad fortune consists in adapting one's behaviour to circumstances. For we see that men proceed in their actions, some with impetuosity, others with circumspection and prudence. Since in both ways one oversteps the proper limits and does not follow the right path, one errs in both cases. The one who errs least and has the most favourable fortune is, as I have said, the one who adapts his behaviour to the circumstances*[60].

The second strategic approach, which makes the *Discourses* an instrument for the promotion of war in the same way as *The Art of War* and *The Prince*, is defined by Machiavelli at the beginning of chapter 18 of the third book, and is certainly drawn from the field of war, but is not radically opposed to that of politics, which is of most interest here. The reason for this is that, in Machiavelli, the behaviour of the political subject is basically the same, whether in the field of pure political art or that of war. In order to advocate a happy ending to a political enterprise that consists in reversing the balance of power between a subject and his opponent, it is always a question of working on the latter's intentions and

[59] *Ibid.*, Bk. III, Ch. 2, p.
[60] *Ibid.*, Ch. 9, p.

projects, as well as on the face he shows in the present of his action. In this field, the wisdom of the Theban is a reliable reference:

> *The Theban Epaminondas said that nothing is more necessary and useful for a captain than to know the intentions and decisions of the enemy. As this knowledge is difficult, he who guesses such intentions deserves all the more praise. It is not as difficult to understand the enemy's intentions as it sometimes is to understand his actions; and it is easier to understand his actions at a distance than his present and near actions*[61].

Thus, to penetrate the enemy's intentions and identify his plans is to calculate the balance of power in order to better plan his own actions against him. Whether in *The Art of War*, *The Prince* or *The Discourses*, Machiavelli's preoccupation remains the same: to develop the lessons of strategy necessary either for the conquest of power or for its preservation by an ambitious man or people.

[61] *Ibid.*, Bk. III, Ch. 18, p.

PARTIAL CONCLUSION

This first part of our work aimed at showing that Machiavelli's works are dominated by the thought of violence and war. They can also be seen as instruments for the promotion of war or as places for the elaboration of war strategies, either for the conquest of power, or for its preservation over time, or for the securing of conquered territories. It is clear that Machiavelli's thought is dominated by the culture of war, because politics is for him the place of permanent confrontation. This is partly due to the fact that his political thought is set in a historical perspective characterised by contingency and power relations, where statesmanship is a matter of calculation, rivalry and efficiency.

Serving only the purpose of the state is more than ever the supreme duty of the Machiavellian prince. However, the preservation of the independence of the state seems to require two sometimes alternative conditions: to be obeyed internally and feared externally, since it is difficult to define the priority alternative, as this is dictated by the course of events. The need to safeguard the independence of his state invites the politician to master the art of war, because he has to learn to be strong enough to be feared outside. To do this, he must increase his power and thus enlarge his state through new conquests. But Machiavelli is cautious in this respect because, he tells us, external power does not necessarily ensure the duration of the state. It sometimes happens that quickly conquered territories are lost immediately, especially when it comes to distant conquests. These give the prince a lot of trouble, exhaust his forces and end up jeopardising the internal stability of his state. This is why it is better to avoid a conflict whose outcome seems doubtful and to prefer one whose victory is easy.

However, the omnipresence of the thought of war in Machiavelli's political works does not hide his preoccupation with the question of peace. This is the reason why we propose in the rest of this research work to present the problematic of peace in Machiavelli's philosophy. .

PART 2
THE PROMOTION OF PEACE IN MACHIAVELLI'S POLITICAL THOUGHT

PARTIAL INTRODUCTION

To speak of the promotion of peace in Machiavelli's political philosophy is to identify its conditions of possibility. In other words, under what conditions is peace possible and achievable according to Machiavelli? In other words, how can peace be promoted when it is constantly in crisis? Machiavelli's political thought is full of suggestions in this area. The crisis of peace is justified first and foremost by the Florentine's idea of man in general as an essentially evil being subject to the mechanics of passion. This is an anthropology of man's warlike nature, and it proves that human relations are only possible in the mode of war. In this case, peace is far from being an immediate reality. The same applies to the behaviour of states. Their bellicose attitude is also an obstacle to peace. In other words, peace is not only compromised by the clash of individuals within a particular state, for Machiavelli also envisages the reasons for the crisis of peace at the level of inter-state relations, where each state endeavours to be the tyrant and enemy of the other. The Machiavellian political leader must therefore do more than simply identify his internal enemies. He must also do so by looking outwards. We shall confine ourselves to actions to be taken within the State to preserve peace, security and social cohesion among its citizens.

CHAPTER 4
MACHIAVELLI'S PHILOSOPHY OF PEACE

Although Machiavelli's political philosophy is dominated by the theme of violence, and war in particular, the question of peace also occupies an important place. It conveys an idea of peace that needs to be explained and analysed.

4.1 The Metaphoric Conception of Peace in Machiavelli's Philosophy

For Machiavelli, the question of peace can be understood in relation either to the meteorological metaphor of "the storm" or to the time of adversity to which the notion of peace seems to be opposed. The notion of storm, which Machiavelli uses in his political writings, evokes the image of the ebb and flow of the tides or an inexorable force like Fortuna, which ravages everything in its path. Machiavelli's meteorological metaphor "the storm" is a concept that refers to the troubles or disturbances that characterise the existence of a state at a given moment. The storm is the manifestation of the turbulence that destabilises the city.

In contrast, Machiavelli equates peace with an aspect of time characterised by the calm, tranquillity and even stability of human affairs in which a state finds itself at a given moment in its existence. In this way, peace excludes the torments of storms. Machiavelli's argument is not rich enough from this perspective. We can content ourselves with a few references in The Prince, on the basis of which Machiavelli establishes the difference between the time when the storm reigns and the time when it is at rest. If we patiently follow the line of his argument, we realise that the time when the storm is at rest symbolises what he calls "the bonace[62]", i.e. the "quiet times"[63] that politicians must take advantage of to carry out their regal missions. Machiavelli sees peace as a favourable time for efficient political activity. Politicians must take advantage of peace to strengthen their State by building shelters and dykes[64] to protect it from the onslaught of a potential or actual storm. In his eyes, the surest of these dykes are good laws and good weapons[65]. This is why, defining the specific duties of the politician, Machiavelli writes:

> *He must therefore never take his mind off this exercise in war, and in peace he must exercise it more than in war, which he can do in two ways - one by works, the other by the mind. And as for works, apart from keeping his*

[62] *Ibid.*, chapter 24, p.
[63] *Ibid.*, chapter 25, p.
[64] *Idem*
[65] *Ibid.*, chapter 24, p.

> *people well-ordered and exercised, he must always go hunting and by means of this accustom the body to the discomforts and at the same time learn the nature of the sites and know how the mountains rise, how the valleys open up, how the plains spread out, and understand the nature of the rivers and marshes, and take great care of this. This knowledge is useful to him in two ways: firstly, he learns to know his country, so he can better understand its defences; secondly, by means of this knowledge and practice of these sites, he can understand with ease every other site that it will be necessary for him to recognise for the first time*[66].

It should be noted that the duties of the politician in peacetime are complex and concern above all the profession of arms, where he must preventively acquire skills in peace-promotion strategy. These are learning activities through which the politician trains his army to prepare it to stand up to the storm. Machiavelli gives details of these preparations at two levels. Firstly, at the level of works, the politician must act on the bodies of the men who make up his troops by subjecting them to many discomforts through permanent war simulations such as hunting and physical exercises. Secondly, at the level of the mind, the politician must make his men acquire knowledge of the physical geography of their country, in particular knowledge of places that are difficult to deploy to, the aim being to adapt his troops to difficult conditions and make them better able to organise the country's defence. So while during peace the storm is at rest, politics remains permanently active.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Machiavelli's conception of peace is still strongly marked by meteorological considerations, since the metaphor of "the storm" to which it resorts is based on a lexical field that makes us think of weather conditions, especially when these are bad or constitute an obstacle to political action. This is why peace itself refers to weather conditions that are favourable to political action. Peace and war thus appear to be antinomic concepts, because they represent two diametrically opposed and exclusive extremes in terms of their respective characteristics and the main advantages they offer to politics.

4.2. The Political Conception of Peace in Machiavelli's *Discourses*

The need to elaborate a political conception of peace obliges Machiavelli to go beyond the meteorological register and the metaphors associated with it in order to draw on the political facts that characterise the existence of historical societies. The intellectual journey that took Machiavelli to the courts of antiquity through the assiduous reading of ancient historians was not in vain. It provided him with remarkable examples on which to base his analyses. In addition, it enabled him to discover a significant political episode that serves as

[66] *Ibid.*, Ch.14, pp.

the pivot for his conception of peace. Machiavelli carefully describes this political episode in his *The Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius*. It is a fragment of a text, probably the most important and significant of all those in which Machiavelli develops his concept of peace. It contains almost everything. It should therefore be quoted in full to grasp its relevance and full depth:

> *Let a prince consider the period from Nerva to Marcus Aurelius, and see what it was like before and after. Then let him choose the time when he would have liked to be born and the time when he would have liked to reign. In the time when the good governed, he will see an emperor living in safety among his fellow citizens who are equally secure, and the world full of justice and at peace. He will see a senate with authority, honoured magistrates, wealthy citizens enjoying their riches, nobility and virtue exalted, and peace and happiness everywhere. On the other hand, all rancour, licentiousness, corruption and ambition were extinguished. It was a golden age, when everyone could express and defend the opinion they wanted. He would finally see the world rejoice, an emperor respected and glorious, a people happy and full of love for their prince*[67].

At first glance, this description of political life may seem idyllic, insofar as it paints an ideal of political life. But Machiavelli was far from being a speculative thinker, still less a utopian in the manner of Plato or Thomas More, who were among those who described imaginary rather than real cities[68]. His intention, in evoking this slice of human history, is simply to follow the actual truth of politics[69] and to base his theory of peace on the reality of the facts.

A careful analysis of the political episode under consideration here shows that, for Machiavelli, peace is defined as social cohesion, the concord or perfect understanding that reigns between the members of a community. Social cohesion is thus the expression of peaceful cohabitation or, better still, the harmonious coexistence that characterises the living together of the members of the same community. The harmony we are talking about here can be understood first and foremost in terms of the relationship between the politician and his subjects. Politics and its subjects are two social partners whose relations are sometimes strained and detrimental to peace. But Machiavelli establishes in this text the important fact that the politician, i.e. the Emperor, lives securely among his fellow citizens who are equally secure. Both coexist in calm and tranquillity. In other words, in this first alternative, there is mutual trust between these two social partners, which forms the basis of their living together

[67]Ibid,Bk. I, Ch. 10, p.
[68]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince…,op.cit,* Ch.15, p. 91.
[69]*Idem*

and also conditions their various relationships within the community. In the second alternative, the subjects subject to political authority also live in peace, i.e. in calm, harmony and tranquillity. Machiavelli distinguishes between two types of subjects in any city: the people and the nobles, who also constitute the political forces of society, whose peaceful coexistence is also based on mutual trust. This double alternative brings Machiavelli's notion of peace down to the tranquillity, calm, cohesion and social harmony that characterise the cohabitation of heterogeneous social groups.

In short, Machiavelli defines a state of peace and its characteristics. According to him, a state of peace is the situation of calm and harmony that prevails within a state at a given moment in its existence. The specific case on the basis of which Machiavelli develops his conception of peace relates to a period in the political health of ancient Rome. This episode relates to the time when Rome was governed by good princes[70]. In the light of this example, what characterises a state of peace is first and foremost the cohesion and tranquillity by which the mode of existence of each social pole is identified, either in relation to the other, or in relation to the power of the State[71]. A state of peace therefore automatically excludes the existence of tensions, since where tranquillity, calm and harmony prevail between individuals, "rancour, licence, corruption and ambition[72]" are banished. The elimination of the evils that stand in the way of peace goes hand in hand with the need to foster the values that contribute to its consolidation in society. This is why political thought leads to the praise of values such as justice, respect for authority, the people's love for their prince and the freedom of expression that is recognised for all members of the community[73]. It is not without reason that Machiavelli conceives of the state of peace as a "golden age", except that he places it behind us.

Machiavelli does indeed place the "golden age" behind us, i.e. in Rome's past, because it provides examples of peaceful political life, as opposed to the Italian modernity of his time. His political writings highlight a confrontation between Roman antiquity and Italian modernity, in which the ancient world in which Rome shone in peace triumphs over the modern world in which Italian cities rot in widespread corruption.

[70]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Discourses…,* op.cit,Bk. I, Ch. 10, p.
[71]*Idem*
[72]*Idem*
[73]*Idem*

Machiavelli thus creates an abyss between the past and the present. His argumentative approach is characterised by both condemnation of the present and adulation of the Roman past, which he likens to a "golden age". We also know that Machiavelli's political thought was nourished by the dialectic between the lessons of the past and the experience of the modern world. But his contempt for the divisions that characterised the Florentine world of his time led him to condemn the present. Machiavelli's condemnation of the present through the prism of the history of Florentine modernity is the subject of a declaration before the letter in the dedication of the *History of Florence* addressed to Clement VII, a dedication in which Machiavelli breaks with his predecessors who chose the path of adulation when describing the events that characterised the history of Florentine modernity in his time[74]. As several passages in his texts illustrate, Machiavelli confirms the condemnation of Florentine modernity by showing that the particular situation of Florence was only a borderline case of the expression of the decadence of peace:

> *If ever the divisions of all states were worthy of attention, those of Florence are particularly so (...). In the case of Florence, first the nobles divided amongst themselves, then the nobles and the people, and finally the people and the rabble. It often happened that, once victorious, one of these parties split into two. These divisions gave rise to as many murders, exiles and the destruction of families as ever occurred in any city in history*[75].

In view of the decadence of the way people lived together in Florence, as we can see from this text, Machiavelli was obliged to draw on Rome's past because it provided him with the splendid examples on the basis of which he formalised his concept of peace. For Machiavelli, peace always presupposes the harmonious coexistence of heterogeneous human groups and is the particular mark of the unity of living together.

4.3. The Political Implications of Machiavelli's Conception of Peace

Machiavelli's conception of peace therefore has remarkable political implications. Insofar as the cohesion and tranquillity that characterise the living together of individuals are obvious signs of peace, in Machiavelli's system of thought they constitute sure guarantees of the political stability of the State. Social cohesion and tranquillity guarantee political stability insofar as they ensure the long-term existence of the State and its institutions. A State that enjoys political stability has a chance of persevering in existence. This is why a Prince who

[74]NiccolòMachiavelli, *History of Florence*, *in The Essential Writings of* Machiavelli, ed. & trans. by Peter Constantine (with introduction by Albert Russell Ascoli); *New York*, The Modern Library, 2007, dedication, p. 305.
[75]*Ibid*, foreword, p. 306.

lives in harmony with his subjects holds on to power for a long time without facing a storm likely to cause his early ouster and the ruin of state institutions. It is therefore clear that there is a close link between peace and political stability. A peaceful state is inevitably a stable one, i.e. one in which the institutions function over the long term. Peace and stability, insofar as they allow state institutions to function for as long as possible, also have appreciable social benefits. Thanks to them, a state can considerably improve the quality of life of its members. The image of the "golden age" with which Machiavelli characterises the splendid period of Rome's political history is a fitting justification for this.

Through this image, Machiavelli presents us with a prosperous Roman society, one in which "rich citizens enjoy their wealth" and "the people are happy". In other words, this image allows him to characterise the society in which people live in real "peace and happiness" and not in the hope of an illusory peace or happiness. In addition to these advantages, the political stability of a state also offers the Prince the opportunity to implement his political projects as set out in his roadmap. Machiavelli reveals the structure of this roadmap, placing particular emphasis on two fundamental aspects of state life. The first of these two fundamental aspects concerns the economic activities that make states prosper and qualitatively improve the living conditions of their populations. The role of politics in this context boils down to the massive promotion of income-generating activities, those that encourage the production and accumulation of wealth by individuals. Machiavelli writes:

> *The prince ought (...)encourage his citizens to practise their callings peaceably, both in commerce and agriculture, and in every other following, so that the one should not be deterred from improving his possessions for fear lest they be taken away from him or another from opening up trade for fear of taxes;*[76].

We note here that the role of politics is to promote free enterprise, whether in trade, agriculture or any other profession in which an individual can excel. Free enterprise fosters the economic prosperity of individuals and, consequently, of states. Politicians, in the interests of both individuals and the State, have a duty to encourage entrepreneurship. They must stimulate it by offering incentives and prizes to all those who wish to invest in trade or agriculture[77]. The second fundamental aspect of the politician's roadmap is that, if he is to fulfil his role properly, he himself must be close to his people, meeting them sometimes[78] in

[76]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince…,* Ch.21, p. 130.
[77]*Idem*
[78]*Ibid*

all their diversity[79]. The fact that politicians are close to their populations enables them to cultivate their relationship and, above all, to listen to their deepest and most legitimate aspirations. This proximity gives politicians the opportunity to maximise the effectiveness of their actions. Peace and stability are therefore essential conditions for achieving the political roadmap as Machiavelli sees it. And as long as peace implies political stability, it goes without saying that where it is absent, there will be instability and chaos, terror and misery.

In the Machiavellian system of thought, peace can only be equated with political stability in contrast to, or in contradiction to, the state of political instability, which is characterised by the omnipresence of violence in human relations. Unlike stability, which results from harmony between members of the same community, political instability expresses disharmony and predisposes society to chaos. This is revealed by a comparative analysis of two opposing eras of Roman politics, one during which good princes ruled as opposed to one during which mediocre ones were in power. By uncovering the disparities between them, Machiavelli effectively shows that the second era, governed by mediocre princes, is literally shot through with an inflation of violence and terror, so much so that anyone who examines it will, in Machiavelli's words

> *He will see it mourned by wars, torn apart by seditions, unhappy in peace as in war: princes assassinated, civil and foreign wars, Italy afflicted and filled with new misfortunes, cities sacked and ruined. He saw Rome burnt, the Capitol destroyed by its citizens, temples desolate, ceremonies falling into disrepair, cities full of adulterers, the sea covered with ships of exiles*[80].

This bleak picture shows that the inflation of violence is a breeding ground for political instability, and that this instability is antithetical to peace. The fact that peace and political instability are two opposing dynamics proves that, for Machiavelli, instability decisively compromises the implementation of the political roadmap. It widens the gap between the politician and the people to whom he must guarantee the best possible living conditions. In a situation of instability such as the one described here, everything is in total disorder and confusion. Instability gives way to desolation, ruin and the development of all forms of vice, in short, insecurity. In reality, the Italy that Machiavelli saw reflected this political situation. Georges Mounin sums it up in a few words by emphasising the instability and disunity that characterised the life of the Florentine's native country. According to his analysis, Italy in Machiavelli's time was "an indescribable swarming of small states always in

[79] *Idem*
[80] NiccolòMachiavelli*, The Discourses…,* Bk.I, Ch. 10, p 467.

the process of being dismantled and remade[81]". In the History of Florence, In his History of Florence, Machiavelli himself highlights the long period of political instability that kept Italy divided as a result of the internal dissensions fostered by the barons of his regime. Addressing Clement VII on the experiences of his native country, he said:

> *Reading my pages, then, Your Beatitude will first see through how many ruins and princes Italy has changed governments over the centuries since the decline of the empire's power in the West. She will see how the Pope, the Venetians, the Kingdom of Naples and the Duchy of Milan took the first places in this country; how His homeland, having withdrawn from the authority of the Empire because of these divisions, remained divided until it began to govern itself under the protection of His family*[82].

The political chaos of Italy at this time also attracted the attention of Jean-Jacques Chevalier. His analysis focuses particularly on the political health of the four pivotal cities of Italy during this dark period: Rome, Venice, Milan and Florence, each ravaged by dissension and crime, sometimes with the help of foreigners who had invaded Italy[83]. Machiavelli, who was only nine years old at the time, according to Jean-Jacques Chevalier, experienced the crimes that took place in his native country and the horrific spectacle that followed these dramatic events just as his compatriots did. The public could therefore see, as Jean-Jacques Chevalier puts it,

> *The bodies of the Archbishop of Pisa, Salviati, and of Francesco Pazzi, dangling from the windows of the Palazzo della Signoria, while the Arno carried away the corpse of Jacopo Pazzi, whom the children had previously dragged through the streets of the city on the end of a rope*[84].

Florence's situation was pitiful compared to that of other Italian cities. The rivalries that developed in the city were always factional, so that it was subject to constant instability. For many years, Florence navigated between freedom and servitude, licence and tyranny.

Licentiousness was the result of the actions of the multitude, i.e. the people, while tyranny was asserted by the Great Ones. For Machiavelli, the entire history of Florence is the expression of the violence fostered by these two categories of highly extremist social groups, which rendered the city powerless and constantly in a state of flux, moving back and forth between tyranny and licentiousness, in such a way that neither of the two parties was able to

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[81] George Mounin, *Machiavel*, op.cit, chapitre 1, p. 16 : « *un indescriptible grouillement de petits Etats toujours en train de se défaire et de se refaire.*»
[82]NiccolòMachiavelli, *History of Florenc, op.cit,*dedication, p. 305.
[83] Jean-Jacques Chevalier, *Les grandes œuvres politiques : de Machiavel à nos jours*, Armand Colin, Paris, chapitre 1, p. 14.
[84]*Ibid*, p. 15.

ensure the stability of the city and its institutions over the long term. Not only was Florence divided by the quarrels of rival factions that destabilised it, but its destabilisation was above all profound by one of the most atrocious dictatorships in its history, instituted by the Dominican monk, Jerome Savonarola was an ascetic and particularly excessive man[85]. After the dramatic events that punctuated the short duration of his political adventure, which was dominated by mystical incantations, he was finally killed, hanged and burnt in the public square along with two of his followers[86]. This example shows that peace and instability are part of two completely opposite dynamics.

Contrary to this appalling picture, it should be said that peace, in addition to the charges relating to stability that it conveys when it is well maintained, is also accompanied in the Machiavellian viewpoint by charges relating to the security of the State. In other words, a peaceful state enjoys the security that protects it from the risks of instability. The fact that an Emperor lives in safety among his fellow citizens who are equally secure, as Machiavelli says of Rome[87], is proof positive that each party feels fully secure vis-à-vis the other, at least as far as internal affairs are concerned. This is what justifies the climate of trust that reigns between them and which conditions their living together. The feeling of security that animates social groups sharing the same living space strengthens public tranquillity. But the situation is very different when it comes to external affairs, and Machiavelli is keen to underline this with specific examples:

> *The cities of Germany are absolutely free, they own but little country around them, and they yield obedience to the emperor when it suits them, nor do they fear this or any other power they may have near them, because they are fortified in such a way that everyone thinks the taking of them by assault would be tedious and difficult, seeing they have proper ditches and walls* […][88].

From this, we can see that security is a by-product of peace, or that security is a characteristic element of the state of peace. Machiavelli establishes an indissoluble link between peace and security insofar as the tranquillity of states depends on the fortresses that protect them from the risks of destabilisation that can come from outside. The pits and proper walls referred to by Machiavelli in this excerpt are fortresses through which states ensure their security, dispelling the fears and anxieties that their populations might feel about foreign

[85]*Idem.*
[86]*Idem.*
[87]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Discourses, op.cit,* Bk. I, Ch.10, p 94.
[88]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Princ, op.cit,* Ch.10, p. 67.

threats. Machiavelli also equated fortresses with artillery and other military infantry. They also have the reputation of reinforcing and guaranteeing internal peace. They effectively influence the regulation of internal affairs and are the condition of their stability. Thanks to artillery and military infantry, says Machiavelli,"affairs will always remain quiet within when they are quiet without[89]". But what does Machiavelli's link between fortresses and the political stability of states actually mean?

From the emphasis placed on the need for fortresses to ensure peace, i.e. internal stability, Machiavelli develops an original aspect of his conception of peace. In so doing, he went against the grain of the medieval tradition stemming from the thought of Saint Augustine, which equated peace with the absence of war, in relation to which it had an antinomic relationship. For Machiavelli, peace is certainly a state of tranquillity and stability, but we must never lose sight of the fact that war is always lurking. This is why Machiavelli's thinking allows for the necessary cohabitation of peace and war. His political thought goes hand in hand with the idea that we must live peacefully within the context of war to avoid political errors such as those committed by the Italian princes who, trusting in public tranquillity, never worried about the onslaught of "the storm". Living peace within the thought of war explains why, for Machiavelli, peace resembles an interval of time needed to prepare for a new war, a reservoir of fresh aggression. As such, peace is not an eternal moment. Rather, it is the time during which weapons fall silent to allow blood to dry, wounds to heal, human lives to reproduce to face new wars, and humanity to develop new techniques and strategies of war. Machiavelli's idea of peace oscillates between, on the one hand, the meteorological approach, which takes account of natural conditions. From this point of view, peace is defined as opposed to "storm" and refers to calm times, favourable to political action, which consists of promoting preparatory exercises in the art of war. On the other hand, practical concerns led Machiavelli to develop a genuine theory of peace based on a system of relationships in which the prince, his subjects and other states are involved. It is in this context that Machiavelli effectively links the issue of peace to that of individuals living together. Peace is seen as public quietude, tranquillity or social cohesion, and conveys charges relating to the stability, unity and security of states. However, the spectacle that characterises the Machiavellian universe often suggests that social peace is almost always contradicted. It is in this context that Machiavelli's political thought also addresses the question of peace in terms of perpetual crisis.

[89] *Ibid.*, Ch.19, p. 108.

CHAPTER 5
FACTORS OF PEACE JEOPARDY IN MACHIAVELLI'S PHILOSOPHY

In Machiavelli's political thought, the crisis of peace is first understood internally in terms of the "natural necessity" that governs human societies. The "natural necessity" on the basis of which Machiavelli justifies the crisis of peace raging in human societies refers to the logic immanent in these societies, which are heterogeneous entities within which peace is constantly compromised by the agitation of the actors who make them up. In the same way as the human societies that are the subject of Machiavellian analysis, the behaviour of the individuals or peoples that emerge from them is also subject to the action of necessity, which subjects individuals and peoples to the logic of general bellicosity.

5.1. Internal Factors of Peace Jeopardy

The general bellicosity that characterises the behaviour of individuals in society and jeopardises peace manifests itself in permanent rebellions that destabilise the power of the State. In The Prince, Machiavelli highlights the power of necessity over individuals. He shows how the power of necessity takes possession of people by pitting them against the authority of the state, which is supposed to preserve social peace. The variations that society undergoes as a result of the action of necessity on men are symptomatic of the crisis of peace insofar as this necessity pushes them into rebellion against the established authority. Under the influence of necessity, it now happens that "for men change their rulers willingly, hoping to better themselves, and this hope induces them to take up arms against him who rules: wherein they are deceived, because they afterwards find by experience they have gone from bad to worse.[90]".

From this extract, it is clear that the internal environment of states is the scene of recurring tensions that jeopardise peace. The nerve centre of the many tensions that make peace an empty dream is none other than the question of power, which, from this point of view, is coveted by all members of the city. Power sets people in motion, and they organise themselves into rebellions to thwart the political authority that is supposed to guarantee peace in a state. Political power is therefore the bone of contention between the members of a community, because it is always the source of social tension. This is understandable insofar as the conquest and possession of power, Machiavelli tells us, necessarily lead to offences which

[90] *Ibid.*,Ch. 3, p. 22.

in turn give rise to tensions that affect the way people live together in the city and compromise peace. The tensions that compromise peace in the city are illustrated more in terms of variations and depend on another aspect of Machiavellian necessity. In this new approach, Machiavellian necessity no longer appears as a logic of permanent war, but as a constraint to which politics must bow in order to carry out its actions. It goes without saying that necessity understood in this way refers to the violence inherent in the political institution or in a Prince's conquest of power. It is an implacable rule that the prince must necessarily obey. This rule stipulates that,

> *You have enemies in all those whom you have injured in seizing that principality, and you are not able to keep those friends who put you there because of your not being able to satisfy them in the way they expected, and you cannot take strong measures against them, feeling bound to them. For, although one may be very strong in armed forces, yet in entering a province one has always need of the goodwill of the natives.*[91].

Apart from the fact that this text illustrates the explosive situation in which politics evolves, it also highlights two sources of civil conflict that bear witness to the crisis of peace: on the one hand, the crisis of peace is caused by the desire for revenge of the victims of the harm caused by the act of political acquisition of power. Irritated by the acts of violence perpetrated against them, which are part of the logic of the denial of their dignity, the victims set themselves up as enemies in order to use violence to oppose the political plan of the conquering prince. The text under consideration here thus sets up the first alternative of Machiavellian dualism, characterised by the prince-enemy binomial. The elements of this binomial and the conflict that structures their relationship make the human environment the site of the alienation of peace and the development of permanent rebellions.

At this point, it is important to say what the concept of enemy implies in Machiavelli's understanding, as it seems to us to be quite complex in Machiavelli's writing, since it is not easy to distinguish the concept of enemy from that of friend or ally in Machiavelli. In the light of the above extract, such a distinction is in fact impossible, because the enemy, in the Machiavellian sense of the term, is no less an ally than a declared political adversary. The preceding text shows that the prince's enemies are initially all those who are not his friends, or his allies in the campaign to gain power. They are all those whom the prince offends by

[91] *Idem*

NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince*,2nd ed., trans. Harvey C. Mansfield, Chicago & London: the University of Chicago Press, 1998,

occupying a territory or a city. Similarly, the prince's allies can also be considered his enemies, because they are very often driven by an inordinate ambition that makes them fierce towards the prince, who can hardly meet their initial expectations. By making society an inherently anarchic environment, hostile in itself, where turbulence arises on a daily basis and alienates peace, Machiavelli enriches his thesis with new references. Of course, these are references that refer to the conflicts that express the political ambitions of the players in society, with the only difference being that their enemy, in phase opposition, is no longer the prince, but themselves, i.e. each social group in relation to the other. Machiavelli's approach consists in identifying these social groups and determining the object of their respective desires in order to better characterise their modes of action. He undertook this task in his major works, and the result is a configuration of variable geometry. In *The Prince*, Machiavelli refers to the case of the "Great Ones", or former nobles, on the one hand, and that of the people on the other[92], as distinct social groups whose action against each other alienates the peace. The same is true of both *The Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius*[93]and *the History of Florence*, where the "Greats Ones" and the people are constantly referred to as two social groups that oppose each other on the issue of power. Machiavelli establishes the fact that,

> *The serious and natural enmities between the people and the nobles, due to the fact that the former want to command and the latter refuse to obey, are the cause of all the evils that arise in cities. For the troubles that trouble states are fuelled by this diversity of moods*[94].

The opposition that characterises relations between the "Great Ones" and the people alienates peace insofar as it is violent. This opposition is also described in terms of moods. The mood of the "Great Ones" is opposed to that of the people, providing a breeding ground for violence and anarchy. Machiavelli's analysis of Florentine history extends the use of the notion of mood beyond the binary schema used both in *The Prince* and in *The Discourses*. It also alludes to other social categories that were no less active in the struggle for administrative office.

Machiavelli's analysis also associates the notion of appetite or desire with the notion of mood. Through this notion of appetite or desire, the author of *The Prince* shows that peace is not the most sought-after thing in the world by all social partners. Machiavelli's use of the

[92]*Ibid.*,Ch. 9, p. 61.
[93] NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Discourse, op.cit,* Bk. I, Ch. 4, p21.
[94]*Ibid.*, Bk. III, Ch. 1, p3.

notion of mood enables him to characterise the categories of citizens who act not in favour of peace, but with a view to achieving their respective interests, and emphasises the disorders that characterise their behaviour. Machiavelli draws on a dark period in the political history of his native city to justify the crisis of peace. This is why he refers to the events surrounding the Ciompi revolt, the wool carders' strike and the strike by unincorporated workers in Florence in the year one thousand three hundred and seventy-eight. Machiavelli reported that

> *The city being full of different moods, everyone had different goals and wanted to achieve them before laying down their arms. The former nobles, known as the grandees, could not bear to be excluded from the magistracy, so they did everything in their power to regain it and were in favour of giving their power back to the captains of the Guelph party. The most powerful of the commoners did not agree to share power with the minor arts and the common people. For their part, the minor arts wanted to increase their authority rather than see it diminished. The common people, for their part, feared being deprived of their guilds. For a year, these disagreements created frequent disorder in Florence. Sometimes it was the nobles who took up arms, sometimes the minor arts with the common people. On several occasions, they were all in different parts of the city. The result was numerous battles between them and the people of the palace*[95].

Machiavelli thus uses the notion of mood to describe a state in the grip of political instability, in short, a state in a permanent crisis of peace due to the political battles constantly being waged by the various social partners. The confrontation of their moods refers to the relationship between the desire of each partner to dominate over the others, to acquire more power or to protect themselves from the dominating power. The notion of mood is therefore analysed here on the basis of their respective political demands, following a ternary pattern that emerges from the description of this bleak picture of Florentine history. The former nobles could not bear to be excluded from administrative positions. The most powerful of the commoners did not want to share power with the minor arts and the common people. The minor arts wanted to increase their authority and the common people feared being deprived of their guilds. In addition to this diversity of political demands, the History of Florence reveals other reasons for conflicts that alienated the peace, such as taxes[96] or the determination of the voting system[97].

But in the logic of the binary schema of moods that Machiavelli favoured, it always appears that the "Great Ones" want power in order to command and oppress the people, while

[95]*Ibid.*, Bk. III, Ch. 21, p356.
[96]NiccolòMachiavelli, *History of Florence*, *op.cit*, Bk. IV, Ch. 14, p. 217.
[97]*Ibid.*, Bk. VII, Ch.2, p. 340.

the people want it in order not to be commanded or oppressed by the "Great Ones". It is in this confrontation that the politician emerges. He is the man of one camp or the other and his role is to satisfy the desire of those who have elevated him to power. This is why the Florentine Secretary writes in *The Prince* that

> *A principality is created either by the people or by the nobles, accordingly as one or other of them has the opportunity; for the nobles, seeing they cannot withstand the people, begin to cry up the reputation of one of themselves, and they make him a prince, so that under his shadow they can give vent to their ambitions. The people, finding they cannot resist the nobles, also cry up the reputation of one of themselves, and make him a prince so as to be defended by his authority.*[98].

This binary pattern reveals the origins of social turbulence. In other words, it is the dialectic of oppressor and oppressed on which Machiavelli's account of the crisis of peace is based. The oppressor, i.e. the "Great Ones", acts violently to subordinate the people, to whom he does not intend to concede a particle of power. The oppressed, i.e. the people, suffer the assaults of the oppressor who reduces them to the category of the dominated. However, the opposite situation cannot be ruled out, as the people can also be ambitious in the same way as the "Great Ones", and they in turn mobilise to conquer power by violence. It is true that Machiavelli believes that the desire of the people is more honest than that of the "Great Ones" because the people are anti-oppressive or that their desire is reduced to the desire for security, however legitimate it may be, since the people only want to live in peace. This suggests that the desire of the "Great Ones" is aimed at the opposite end of the spectrum to that of the people[99]. Its effects are essentially negative because they correspond to abusive domination, oppression and tyranny.

But the two desires are equalised and are sometimes the cause of serious disturbances that produce effects contrary to peace. The equalisation of the desires of the "Great Ones" and the people is justified by the excesses that accompany each of them. Machiavelli uses the Roman Empire as a case in point to illustrate this phenomenon insofar as he discovers that "the people's too strong desire to be free[100]" and the nobles' too strong desire to command[101]" led to violence and successive tyrannies to the detriment of civil peace. In other words, the desire of the "Great Ones" and that of the people are, to use an expression favoured by

[98]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince, op.cit,* Ch. 9, p. 61.
[99]*Ibid.*, p. 62.
[100]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourse, op.cit,*Bk. I, Ch. 40, p79.
[101]*Idem.*

Georges Faraklas, incommensurable[102], at least when they are expressed to excess. They are irrational and run counter to the ethical order.

The equalisation of the desires of the people with those of the "Great Ones", and the accompanying effects on peace, are better understood when we realise that both forms of desire are intimately linked to the fear that haunts the minds and hearts of every component of society. Clearly, the desire of the people is linked to the fear of the oppression they fear or suffer from the "Great Ones", while the desire of the "Great Ones" to perpetuate their domination over the people is justified by the fear of losing their power. In practice, the problem is posed here in Hegelian terms of struggle, because for Machiavelli the relationship between the "Great Ones" and the people is essentially conflictual and leads to the alienation of peace. To support this thesis, Machiavelli emphasises the action of the desire for security on both the people and the "Great Ones". It is the same desire for security that drives both protagonists and controls their mutual relations.

Throughout his works, the Florentine relates the desire for security to a natural tendency. This Machiavellian conception of the desire for security also brings to mind the conatus in Spinoza's Ethics, where this concept refers to the effort made by every individual to preserve himself in existence as a dominating subject. This is why Machiavelli ultimately depicts the people and the "Great Ones" as two protagonists driven by the same instinct for security. They both perform the same vital act of preserving their political gains, except that the efforts of these two political actors are in phase opposition, which necessarily generates a state of conflict where, on the one hand, the instinct for security dictates that the "Great Ones" dominate and oppress the people; and on the other, the desire for security prescribes that the people free themselves from the domination of the "Great Ones". Machiavelli describes this conflict as the effect of both the political and economic inequalities that prevail in society, although he settles the debate by showing that the fear of loss that haunts the "Great Ones" leads inexorably to excesses and compromises civil peace far more than that of the people. With this in mind, he writes:

> *There will be a long debate on this question as to who is more ambitious: the one who wants to maintain or the one who wants to acquire, both of which can be the cause of serious disturbances. Most often, however, these are caused by those who possess, because the fear of losing generates in them the same desire as in those who wish to acquire (...) Moreover, possessing much, they can more powerfully and more violently provoke*

[102] Georges Faraklas, *Machiavel : le pouvoir du Prince*, Paris, PUF, 1997, p.49.

> *trouble. What is more, their improper and ambitious behaviour kindles in the hearts of those who have nothing, the desire to possess, either to take revenge by robbing them, or to attain riches and offices which they see being misused*[103].

Thus, between the people who desire wealth and political office and the "Great Ones" who already possess it, Machiavelli attributes most of the responsibility for the revolts that damage peace to the "Great Ones" and, secondarily, to the actions of the people, because the nature of the desire of the "Great Ones" is devoid of rationality and measure. The frustrating enjoyment of economic wealth and political office reveals social inequalities that are unbearable for those who are less well-endowed than others, so that the desire for security prescribes for them, in order to survive in the political arena, the logic of relentless struggle, a struggle that is ultimately part of the order of human nature. It is therefore necessary here to clarify the content of the concept of human nature in relation to the crisis of peace.

From a Machiavellian perspective, the idea of human nature often has a negative connotation. Most of the time it reflects the fact that, by essence, man is evil. He is inherently evil, inclined towards evil rather than good, so that the possibility of a world without violence, where men would live in peace, is inconceivable from the Machiavellian point of view. Hence, human nature appears as the manifestation of the appetites inherent in human beings in their daily lives. It is the expression of instinctive desires, concupiscence, deceit, passions and impulses embedded in the ordinary habits of individuals. Machiavelli's entire political theory would therefore be imbued with this idea, which ipso facto provides a breeding ground for pessimism or scepticism in human consciousness. Pessimism and scepticism come together here because most exegetes have popularised the idea that Machiavelli gives no credit a priori to human nature when he establishes that the desire for power, the propensity to concupiscence, greed and lust are the hallmarks of man. On further reflection, this idea suggests that Machiavelli is a homophobe. His thought was intended to inspire fear of the other.

For us, the tendency to reduce Machiavelli's anthropology to a kind of "anthropo-phobia" is part of a routine interpretation which, while not totally inadequate, nevertheless poses the problem of its coherence, alternating between optimism and pessimism. In *The Prince*, Machiavelli makes contradictory statements about what human nature primarily expresses. Sometimes he states that *"*men are never so shameless as to become a monument

[103]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourse*, *op.cit*,Bk. I, Ch. 5, pp704.

of ingratitude by oppressingyou[104]", while at other times he advises politicians to be wary of flatterers because, in his view, "men will always prove untrue to you unless they are kept honest by constraint[105]". So how can we account for the anthropological pessimism on the basis of which the Florentine Secretary justifies the crisis of peace?

The decisive step towards an answer to this question requires us to clear up the misunderstandings, misunderstandings and equivocations associated with the Machiavellian conception of man. For this reason, we need to examine the author's texts that raise this question in order to establish their coherence. Thus, the tendency to reduce Machiavelli's anthropology to an "anthropo-phobia" seems to us to be more radical than his texts sometimes allow. As far as we can see, his texts mitigate against the radical idea of an essentially negative anthropology commonly attributed to Machiavelli because they unanimously establish the fact that not all men are good[106]. From a logical point of view, this also implies that they are not all bad or evil. *The Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius* confirm this double alternative by explicitly stating that *"men know how to be neither honourably bad nor perfectly good[107]"*.

It is therefore the need to formulate a practical rule in politics that leads Machiavelli to lean towards the pessimistic alternative, which functions as an operative hypothesis. The politician must therefore assume in advance that men are wicked and be ready to demonstrate this at the slightest opportunity in order to avoid errors in his conduct[108]. To assume that people are evil is to formulate a plausible hypothesis. Is it a mental hypothesis? On what basis would such an assumption actually be plausible?

To get out of this impasse, we need to look at how people behave in their everyday lives. Only human experience can tell us that people are more inclined towards evil than towards good[109], since this attitude is so closely linked to the need to fight for possession and the preservation of economic and political interests. Machiavelli's anthropological pessimism is therefore not an abstract or mental hypothesis. It is a hypothesis derived from the experience of everyday human life. Such an assumption is necessary to the development of the argument through which the author of *The Prince* gives an account of the crisis of peace,

[104]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince,op.cit,* Ch. 21, pp. 128-129
[105]*Ibid.*, Ch. 23, p. 136.
[106]*Ibid.*, Ch. 18, p. 103.
[107]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourses, op.cit,* Bk. I, Ch.27, p112.
[108]*Ibid.*, Bk. I,Ch.3, p257.
[109]*Ibid.*, Bk. I, Ch. 9, p68.

for since men are constantly in search of power, he cannot conceive of them as anything other than the face they actually take on in their lives in order to acquire political office. It is a face of hostility, revealing what men are like in certain circumstances. The crisis of social peace is therefore rooted in the conflict of desires inscribed in man's being. It is in this sense that Machiavelli states:

> *Nature has created men in such a way that they can desire everything and cannot obtain everything. Since the desire to acquire is stronger than the ability to do so, the result is the discontent of those who possess and the little satisfaction they derive from it. Hence the variations in their destiny; for some desire to obtain more, others fear to lose what they have acquired, leading to enmities and conflicts, resulting in the ruin of one country and the triumph of another*[110].

The example to which Machiavelli refers to illustrate this situation is that of the Roman plebs, dissatisfied with having protected themselves from the oppression of the nobles by the creation of the tribunes. But driven by ambition, they wanted to share more with the nobles in the wealth and honours that were their due, so the Roman Republic was profoundly disrupted. In this way, it becomes clear that the struggle between opposing interests that structures relations between the "Great Ones" and the people stems from human nature. This is at the root of the discord that undermines social peace and provides a breeding ground for greed, perversity and irrational behaviour, as Machiavelli again illustrates:

> *Man's needs are insatiable, because by nature he can and will desire all things and can only obtain them in small quantities because of his condition. The result is continual dissatisfaction in their minds and a disgust for what they possess. This makes them blame the present, praise the past and desire the future, even though they are not driven to do so by any reasonable motive*[111].

In addition to the opposition between the "Great Ones" and the people, which Machiavelli constantly uses to explain the crisis of peace in a state, his texts also highlight another scenario that alienates peace and was the cause of the political insomnia of the Roman emperors. It is a scenario that pits two protagonists with opposing moods against each other, whose confrontation perpetually opens the floodgates of discord and conflict to the city, destabilising it. *The Prince* evokes this scenario, particularly in chapter 19, where the mood of the people clashes with that of the soldiers who wish to oppress them and commit numerous acts of violence against them for no legitimate reason. In such a context, it appears that peace

[110] *Ibid.*, Bk. I, Ch.37, p331.
[111] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, foreword, p234.

is constantly thwarted by the will to power of those who wish to establish their domination over others. Unlike the people, who like a peaceful life[112], the soldiers, driven by the military spirit which is characterised by cruelty, insolence and rapacity[113], want power in order to exercise their spirit over the people and satisfy their greed[114]. The permanent confrontation of these moods inevitably leads to the political instability of states and internal disorder, the main consequence of which is the complete deterioration of the authority of the state, which is supposed to guarantee social peace. This is borne out by Machiavelli's analysis of the tragic fate of several Roman princes:

> *From these causes it arose that Marcus, Pertinax, and Alexander, being all men of modest life, lovers of justice, enemies to cruelty, humane, and benignant, came to a sad end except Marcus; he alone lived and died honoured, because he had succeeded to the throne by hereditary title, and owed nothing either to the soldiers or the people*[115].

In the alternative, Machiavelli establishes this undeniable truth:

> *Turning now to the opposite characters of Commodus, Severus, Antoninus Caracalla, and Maximinus, you will find them all cruel and rapacious—men who, to satisfy their soldiers, did not hesitate to commit every kind of iniquity against the people; and all, except Severus, came to a bad end*[116].

In both cases, it seems very difficult to satisfy the people alone or the soldiers alone, just as it is difficult to satisfy both parties at the same time, the mood of the people and that of the soldiers being irreconcilable. Whether we are talking about the "Great-People" or the "Soldiers-People", social peace remains seriously compromised by the confrontation of their moods, which are always associated with the logic of discord, enmities and quarrels which in turn give rise to internecine or fratricidal wars.

5.2. External Factors of Peace Jeopardy

A peace crisis within a state can also be caused by external factors. The state which suffers such a crisis is one which is constantly the victim of destabilising actions on the part of a foreign power, whether near or far. In this case, it should be emphasised that the involvement of a foreign power in the process of undermining a state's ability to live together is itself motivated by the natural desire to conquer forever that drives all princes and all

[112]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince*, *op. cit*, Ch. 19, p. 112.
[113]*Id*em.p. 456
[114]*Idem. P.76*
[115]*Ibid.*, p. 113.
[116]*Ibid.*, p. 114.

nations. This desire drives every state to seek power. In the shadow of this quest for power or desire for power, the weaker states are at the mercy of the hegemonic ambitions of those with more strength. The latter are illustrated by the continuous pressure they put on weaker states through permanent incursions, depredations and other ill-treatment to which they subject them. With this in mind, Machiavelli established the important fact that "Rome grew by destroying neighbouring cities[117]", i.e. by destabilising its "neighbours through incursions and fighting[118]". The destabilisation of a neighbouring state gives way to licentiousness and an infinite number of disorders that are the ostensible signs of the crisis of peace. Just as a State's quest for or mastery of the greatest power gives rise to rivalries and atrocious adversities as a counterpoint, the deployment of this State's hegemonic will in time and space only stops when faced with another will fuelled by the same ambitions or wishing to protect itself from the assaults coming from its neighbourhood. In any case, Machiavelli's constant quest for power is an ordinary process for nations, each of which faces a threat from its neighbours, whether near or far. In other words, in the relations between nations, each is the potential or real enemy of the other, so that the strongest is never strong enough to establish its domination over the others or to ensure internal peace for as long as possible.

From this point of view, it seems that Machiavelli is developing the thesis of cosmo-pessimism. The thesis of cosmo-pessimism is that relations between the nations of the world are essentially strained and constantly call peace into question. Each nation is regarded here, in Hobbes' phrase, as a wolf to another and lives in fear or dread of attack from its neighbours. Machiavelli's cosmo-pessimism goes hand in hand with cosmo-phobia, if not fully justifies it, as can be seen from his statement that "*war is waged against a republic for two reasons: one is to seize it, the other for fear of being occupied by it*[119]*".* It is clear that in the Machiavellian universe, as it appears in this proposal, every nation lives in fear and dread of being attacked or occupied by another. It is practically in a climate of mistrust that the nations that make up the Machiavellian world evolve, and from this mistrust the nations eventually come to enmity, and from enmity wars arise that compromise peace. Peace is compromised in this way because the logic of political predation in which each nation is ensnared ensures that even the weakest princes and nations organise themselves in turn to ensure their survival or maintain their interests and power on their own scale.

[117]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourses, op.cit,* Bk. II, Ch. 3, p23.
[118]*Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. 32, p75.
[119]*Ibid.*, Bk. I, Ch. 6, p176.

The notion of the enemy, in the Machiavellian sense of the term, allows us to further illustrate the thesis of cosmo-phobia, which causes states to exist in a climate of mutual distrust. Many exegetes have endeavoured to understand what the concept of enemy implies in Machiavelli's texts, taking into account the logic of the cosmo-phobia that dominates the psychology of states. Among the exegetes of Machiavelli who have distinguished themselves in this perspective, the example of Michel Senellart deserves particular attention in the context of this work.

In a commentary that Michel Senellart makes on the Cartesian reading of Machiavelli's texts, it emerges that, according to Descartes, the Machiavellian approach does not necessarily equate the enemy with the aggressor state, i.e. the one that declares war on another, but that under the name of enemy, Machiavelli includes all states, friendly or allied, provided that he finds them sufficiently fearsome, suspicious and likely to attack a neighbouring state in order to destabilise it and take possession of its territory. This is why Michel Senellart writes:

> *The enemy is not the one who starts the war but, in an astonishing reversal of roles that has perhaps ceased to surprise us, the one to whom it is declared. This declaration undoubtedly updates a latent hostility, but it is important to see that this hostility is not the cause of the war. On the contrary, it is the fact that a state can wage war in its own interests at any time that makes other states virtual enemies*[120].

The prevailing climate in the life of states is one of mistrust due to the mutual fear that characterises their behaviour. Such a climate is hardly conducive to a state of peace. On the contrary, it is one that engenders its crisis through the armed conflicts that result. A climate of mistrust gives every state the opportunity to wage war against another and to treat as enemies those it wishes to declare war on. This is why, in the Machiavellian system of thought, the concept of enemy justifies offensive or pre-emptive wars and applies equally to friends, allies and the subjects of a prince, be they the "Great Ones" or the people. In fact, the "Great Ones" hold power and, driven by the extreme desire to acquire more power, they can plot against the prince. This is why the prince must consider them as potential or real enemies.

5.3. The Role of Mercenaries and of Auxiliary Armies

The internal disorders and quarrels that arise from the opposing interests or moods of the parties present in a State are also likely to arouse the political appetites of a foreign power

[120] Michel Senellart, *Machiavélisme et raison d'Etat*, chapitre 2, Paris, PUF, p. 53.

which, in addition to its hegemonic ambitions, is prepared to occupy the territory of the State in question with the help of its inhabitants, who are prepared to bribe it. Machiavelli examines a number of different scenarios, depending on the variable geometry of actual political situations. When, for example, internal discord in a state is the result of dissatisfaction with the way in which the prince of that state exercises power, the intervention of a foreign prince is often incited, encouraged and even facilitated by those who are dissatisfied with the way in which their prince exercises power. The discontented are generally predisposed to support a foreigner in the hope that he will deliver them from the injustices and insults inflicted on them by the power of their prince. For Machiavelli, it goes without saying that,

> *As soon as a powerful foreigner enters a country, all the subject states are drawn to him, moved by the hatred which they feel against the ruling power. So that in respect to those subject states he has not to take any trouble to gain them over to himself, for the whole of them quickly rally to the state which he has acquired there*[121].

The expansion of foreign power therefore finds its motivation within the place of its extension, precisely in the hearts of those to whom it appears as a saving, liberating event, the founder of a new political order to be supported and established, i.e. those dissatisfied with the established power. They all willingly put themselves at the mercy of a foreign prince to whom they open the gates of their city, driven by a two-faced desire that they want to satisfy. On the one hand, there is the desire for revenge[122] against their prince and, on the other, the desire for innovation[123]. It was in this sense that the Etolians opened the gates of Greece to the Romans[124]. Very often, people who choose this political option are victims of optical illusions and errors of judgement. Only time can open their eyes and make them see that they have made a mistake in their choice and are heading for the worst[125].

The worst that those who are dissatisfied with their prince can expect by opening the doors to a powerful foreigner with the sole aim of taking revenge for insults suffered or innovating is to see their country sink into tyranny and servitude. In this case, society returns to the cycle of violence that takes it further away from peace, because the people who facilitated the entry of a powerful person into their city once again take up arms to free it from

[121]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince*, *op. cit*, Ch. 3, p. 26.
[122]*Idem.*
[123]*Ibid.*, Ch. 4, p. 36.
[124]*Ibid.*, Ch. 3, p. 27.
[125]*Ibid.*, Ch. 3, p. 28.

servitude. Instead of declaring open war on him, they foment conspiracies against him, motivated by *"the desire to free their homeland from servitude*[126]*".*

On the other hand, when internal discord is the result of opposing moods or the interests of the parties present in a community, a prince's recourse to foreigners to appease his state can also be the source of new opportunities for disorder, which tend to prolong the crisis of peace rather than resolve it. The Florentine Secretary began his argument in favour of this political option by recalling an episode in the history of his native country, which occurred at a time when Italy was divided by factional quarrels. At the root of these factional quarrels was the question of power, at a time when the Pope's temporal reputation was growing in Italy to the detriment of imperial power, which was underestimated by many Italians. Here is what Machiavelli wrote to illustrate our point:

> *You must understand that the empire has recently come to be repudiated in Italy, that the Pope has acquired more temporal power, and that Italy has been divided up into more states, for the reason that many of the great cities took up arms against their nobles, who, formerly favoured by the emperor, were oppressing them, whilst the Church was favouring them so as to gain authority in temporal power: in many others their citizens became princes. From this it came to pass that Italy fell partly into the hands of the Church and of republics, and, the Church consisting of priests and the republic of citizens unaccustomed to arms, both commenced to enlist foreigners.*[127].

In addition to the fact that this episode in Italy's political history tells us about the manoeuvres by which the Church conquered political power, it also highlights the circumstances that led the Italian princes to seek foreign aid on the pretext of resolving the internal crises that were undermining peace in the country. The recourse to foreigners by a prince or by another party in conflict is made here through their armies, called in to control the tense and constantly overheated internal situations. According to Machiavelli's thinking, the armies under consideration here are of two types. These are mercenary or auxiliary arms or troops, depending on their internal configuration.

By referring to mercenary troops, for example, Machiavelli's objective is clear and unequivocal. It is to make it clear that those who rely on mercenary troops never succeed in appeasing their state. On the contrary, such troops help to undermine the hope of peace that is founded on their support, and to bog down in an insecurity that breeds fear and mutual distrust. In support of his argument to disqualify mercenary troops from the peace missions

[126]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourse, op. cit,* Bk. III, Ch. 6, p265.
[127]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince, op. cit,* Ch. 12, pp. 78-79

for which they are often called upon, Machiavelli relies on their behaviour, indicating that in the majority of casesthey are disunited, ambitious, and without discipline, unfaithful, [128] and without fear of God[129]. Worse still, the results of using these troops on Italian soil over a long period of time were essentially negative and, above all, damaging to Italy's internal peace. This is why Machiavelli says:

> *The first who gave renown to this soldiery was Alberigo da Conio,[*] the Romagnian. From the school of this man sprang, among others, Braccio and Sforza, who in their time were the arbiters of Italy. After these came all the other captains who till now have directed the arms of Italy; and the end of all their valour has been, that she has been overrun by Charles, robbed by Louis, ravaged by Ferdinand, and insulted by the Switzers.*[130].

The situation is hardly favourable when one relies on auxiliary arms to pacify one's State. These weapons are called auxiliaries because they belong to a powerful foreigner who is brought into the country to support the peace effort. They are dangerous and harmful to peace because of their overwhelming infid

elity. The infidelity of auxiliary arms is justified by the fact that, as Machiavelli says, they are *"they are all united, all yield obedience to others*[131]*"* in order to oppress the person who asks for them, since when they achieve any victory, they make him a prisoner[132] and take possession of his State, subjecting him to servitude. In other words, auxiliary weapons raise the spectre of insecurity wherever they are called upon to serve the cause of peace, and even when they are called upon by a prince to oppose the permanent incursions of his neighbours.

There is plenty of concrete evidence of the infidelity of this category of weapons. They can be found both in ancient history and in the history of Florence, which served as a source of inspiration for Machiavelli's thought. The most striking of these are set out below:

> *The Florentines, being entirely without arms, sent ten thousand Frenchmen to take Pisa, whereby they ran more danger than at any other time of their troubles.The Emperor of Constantinople, to oppose his neighbours, sent ten thousand Turks into Greece, who, on the war being finished, were not willing to quit; this was the beginning of the servitude of Greece to the infidels.*[133].

[128] *Ibid.*, p. 74.
[129] *Idem.p.67-87*
[130] *Ibid.*, p. 79.
[131] *Ibid.*, chapter 13, p. 82
[132] *Idem.p.67*
[133] *Idem.p 56*

At the end of this chapter, the problem examined through Machiavelli's texts comes down to the question of how Machiavelli's political thought relates to the theme of peace, its definition and its crisis in human societies. The aim was to uncover the meaning Machiavelli gives to peace and to understand the causes of its alienation or crisis.

The conceptual management of such an objective enabled us to establish that the crisis of peace is due to causes both internal and external to states. In the first alternative, the prince is faced with internal enemies who, through their behaviour, are more inclined to blur the State's reference points. The balance of power that they bring to bear on the state is bound to disrupt the way people live together. In this first alternative, the crisis of peace manifests itself in the disorder that arises in the government of a state as a result of human nature, the dissatisfaction of the "Great Ones", the discontent of the people, the plots of the ambitious or the revolt of the army. The second alternative highlights the action of external enemies who, through their constant incursions, impose on a state the same balance of power that it faces internally. As a result, a logic of permanent war is established that undermines peace. So how can peace be promoted in a particularly hostile environment such as that which characterises the Machiavellian universe?[134]

[134] NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince*,2nd ed., trans. Harvey C. Mansfield, Chicago & London: the University of Chicago Press, 1998,
Idem p344-387

CHAPTER 6
STRATEGIES OF BUILDING PEACE IN A STATEACCORDING TO MACHIAVELLI

The question of promoting peace leads us to set out and analyse the means, strategies and methods that Machiavelli recommends for appeasing a state in crisis. The methods and strategies that first attract our attention in this reflection are those that are suitable for use within the internal framework of states insofar as the act of promoting peace is always located by Machiavelli in a precise space within which politics unfolds. But the demarcation between the internal and external frameworks is not easy to establish in Machiavelli's political philosophy. For André-Marie Yinda Yinda, the difficulty in establishing this demarcation lies in the fact that the Machiavellian universe is often perceived as an aggregate of pieces of space whose territorial delimitation poses enormous problems for any understanding[135].

These pieces of space refer to the territories that Machiavelli assimilates to cities, provinces, colonies, countries, empires and kingdoms, which together form the two categories of territories that are republics and principalities and take the common name State. This is the precision that Machiavelli himself arrived at in his political writings, beyond the conflicts of translation, when he confirmed that *"all states, all powers, that have held and hold rule over men have been and are either republics or principalities."*[136]These two political entities form the internal frameworks within which political operations relating to the issue of peace promotion take place. They correspond, in fact, to the areas in which peace strategies and operations are deployed or crises eradicated. What, then, are the operations, strategies or approaches advocated by Machiavelli to promote peace within the internal framework of a republic or principality?

6.1. Preserving the Coercive Power of Institutional Laws

The question of the operations to be carried out or the strategies to be implemented to promote peace within the internal framework of states implies the choice of appropriate means. The choice of appropriate means depends very much on the causes that give rise to the peace crisis in a community. The appropriate approach, in this case, is first to undertake a process of reflection that takes account of the causes of the crisis while identifying the actors in the crisis and their motives. As we have already established, the internal peace crisis is

[135] André-Marie Yinda Yinda, *op cit*, p. 118.
[136]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince*, *op cit*, *Ch*. 1, p. 19.

caused by political conflicts. Several actors are involved in these conflicts, and Machiavelli takes care to identify them by highlighting the nature of their real ambitions. The main players who destabilise public tranquillity by their constant clashes are the "Great Ones" and the people, the ambition of both being to possess all power single-handedly in order to use it for the purposes of domination.

Since exclusive possession of power is at the root of the crisis of peace, Machiavelli believes that the best way to appease the two parties engaged in ongoing political struggles is to take steps to reorganise the power structures of the State. It was precisely a question of providing the state with a form of government that would ensure its equilibrium and protect it from instability. Machiavelli takes us to the heart of a controversial debate among Roman historians. The controversy concerned the intrinsic value of monarchical, aristocratic or democratic regimes. Machiavelli revisits this old debate and argues that these forms of government have as many virtues as vices, and can easily slide into their opposite. Thus, Machiavelli tells us,

> *Monarchy easily becomes tyrannical; aristocracy easily becomes the state of a few; the popular state easily falls into disorder. So a legislator who establishes one of these regimes in a city does so for a short time, for there is no remedy that can prevent it from sliding into its opposite*[137].

To avoid this pitfall, Machiavelli advises imitating the wisest of the Roman legislators who, having realised the intrinsic defects of these forms of government, always chose the one that seemed to them *"firmer and more stable*[138]*"* than the others. Machiavelli's argument always starts from the fact that in any city there are two competing parties, that of the "Great Ones" and that of the people. If a state is organised in such a way that one of the two parties has all the power, the chances are that it will descend into either tyranny or licence. In other words, if one of the members of the party of nobles, whoever he may be, becomes prince, the danger of tyranny becomes inevitable, because he will use power solely in his own interests. The opposite is also true from the point of view of the people, so that in either case the collective interest will be sacrificed for the benefit of the particular interest. Machiavelli's choice of mixed government is therefore the only alternative that can bring together or reconcile the opposing political forces in society. It is the mediation needed to appease the parties engaged in the struggle for power. But by what means will the politician gain acceptance for the mixed institution if, as Machiavelli puts it, "*the majority of men will never*

[137]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourses,op. cit*, Bk. I, Ch. 2, p98-147.
[138]*Idem.p 67*

agree to a reform of institutions if necessity does not indicate to them the obligation to do so[139]*"?*

Fuelled by abundant resources drawn from the study of the history of the Roman republic and examples of political acts carried out by the wisest of its legislators, Machiavelli's argument insists on the use of the coercive power of laws. The coercive power of laws forces people to consent to the reform of institutions introduced by legislators such as those in Rome. The great legislators to whom Machiavelli alludes are those who made the best use of laws to calm political strife in their states. A detailed study of their codes of law reveals the secret of their success. It shows that the laws enshrined in their various codes establish a balanced distribution of power between opposing social forces. The validity of the balance of political forces promoted by the Machiavellian ideal of mixed government is justified by the need to contain the political ardour that drives the parties seeking power, and which can be observed in all men. As Machiavelli says, *"the thirst to rule is so great that it enters not only the hearts of those who have power, but also the hearts of those who have no right to it*[140]*"*.

In a mixed government, the coercive power of the laws makes it possible to contain this thirst to rule by involving all the parties in the exercise of power, in the management of government by which they safeguard their interests and those of the State. The participation of all the opposing parties in the management of power creates automatic control mechanisms, because the co-management of power allows them to observe each other jealously, each on the lookout for signs that the other is attempting to appropriate supreme power for itself. All this confirms that, for Machiavelli, laws are probably the most effective means of reducing the tensions generated by party opposition in the interests of public tranquillity and political stability, while ensuring the long-term existence of the state. It is for this reason that Machiavelli celebrates the work of the great legislators of antiquity, those who distinguished themselves by drafting the laws by which their states were maintained over the long term. The particular case of Lycurgus is even cited as an example:

> *Lycurgus is one of the most praiseworthy of all those who drew up such a constitution. He organised the laws of Sparta so well that, giving kings,*

[139] *Idem p734.*
[140] *Ibid.*, Bk. III, Ch. 4, p55.

optimates and the people their share, he built a state that lasted more than eight hundred years, for his own glory and the peace of the city[141].

Beyond the exemplary nature of Lycurgus' actions, we feel it is legitimate to reflect on the willingness of politicians, whether they are founders of states or legislators, to deliberately promote social balance. The legitimacy of this concern is justified on the basis of one of the premises of Machiavelli's argument, namely that every city is divided into two camps from the outset, and that politicians come to power with the help of members of one camp or the other in order to satisfy the interests of those who put them there. How does Machiavelli justify the fact that the politician who is eventually the man of one camp or the other wants to promote mixed institutions by turning his back on the initial ambitions that elevated him to the supreme magistracy? What are his reasons for choosing this path? Is a politician necessarily the man of one of the two camps vying for power?

6.2. Serving the Common Good and the Common Interest

The first step towards an answer to these legitimate questions leads us to examine an unprecedented political situation, almost never mentioned in Machiavellian analyses. A significant extract from *The History of Florence* develops the case of poorly organised republics in which a legislator independent of the parties spontaneously emerges and promotes a new, rigorously balanced social organisation. We feel it is important to reproduce the entire extract here in order to examine its relevance:

REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENTS, more especially those imperfectly organized, frequently change their rulers and the form of their institutions; not by the influence of liberty or subjection, as many suppose, but by that of slavery and license; for with the nobility or the people, the ministers respectively of slavery or licentiousness, only the name of liberty is in any estimation, neither of them however, a good, wise, and powerful citizen appears (which is but seldom), who establishes ordinances capable of appeasing or restraining these contending dispositions, so as to prevent them from doing mischief, then the government may be called free, and its institutions firm and secure; for having good laws for its basis, and good regulations for carrying them into effect, it needs not, like others, the virtue of one man for its maintenance.[142]

The most important fact to emerge from this text, which is quite suggestive in several respects, is that the legislator may not be a man of either party in the city. He arises

[141] *Ibid.*, Bk. I, Ch. 2, p173.
[142] NiccolòMachiavelli, *History of Florence*, op. cit, Bk. IV, Ch. 1, pp. 171-172

spontaneously in the midst of the parties and takes the lead on the political scene, in the manner of Hobbes' Leviathan, enacting laws that calm the tempers of the parties and reduce them to calm. The very portrait of this legislator shows that he is suited to the task. He is a citizen "gifted with wisdom", "good and powerful". Motivated by a higher cause, which is the happiness of the city and not by that dictated by the ambitions of the parties, the Machiavellian legislator in question here uses his power to ensure that the laws are observed by all. In other words, the legislator who chooses the path of universality is first and foremost one who is not dependent on party ambitions, but acts in the name of the higher interests of the State.

The second step towards the answer leads us to examine a political case that is the complete opposite of the first, where the legislator comes from one of the two parties in conflict in society and which, inevitably, depends on him. In this context, how does he manage to follow the path of the universal when he is bound by party loyalty? We are faced here with a dilemma that is difficult to resolve, similar to the one faced by the Roman emperors, and which *The Prince* takes up in these terms:

> *There is first to note that, whereas in other principalities the ambition of the nobles and the insolence of the people only have to be contended with, the Roman emperors had a third difficulty in having to put up with the cruelty and avarice of their soldiers, a matter so beset with difficulties that it was the ruin of many; for it was a hard thing to give satisfaction both to soldiers and people*[143].

To get out of such a situation, Machiavelli's strategy calls on all legislators to serve the common interest rather than their own. In other words, they must serve the interests of the fatherland and not those of the parties or their heirs. To meet this requirement, legislators must learn to live in separation and adopt a universal position that places them above party interests. This point needs to be emphasised. For Machiavelli, the legislator must learn to live in separation means that he must distance himself from conflicting parties. This implies that, to use Sami Naïr's expression, he achieves *"an abstraction*[144]*"* that simply makes him rise above them. In this upward movement, he simultaneously realizes the loss of his concrete being as a member of a party and the gain of an abstract identity enabling him to assert his power, i.e. his power as arbitrator. In this way, the legislator-arbitrator makes the peaceful coexistence of parties possible. This explains further the fact that he must deny himself as an

[143]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince*, *op. cit*, Ch. 19, p. 112.
[144] Sami Naïr, *Machiavel et Marx*, Paris, PUF., 1984, II, p.36.

immediate moment of force and establish himself as an instrument of mediation and organisation of the political game, in the manner of the Roman tribunes who were the means between the plebs and the senate while opposing the insolence of the nobles[145]. His way of organising the political game consists of a balanced distribution of roles between the conflicting parties, which creates a kind of harmony of opposing interests where balance is achieved by the mutual vigilance of the poles of power from the parties present in society, each in a position to keep an eye on the other[146]. This is why a good legislator does not exclude either the people or the "Great Ones" from his political project. Instead, he seeks political outcomes that will satisfy their desire or thirst to rule. From this perspective, a careful analysis of the political history of human societies by Machiavelli shows that *"well-ordered states and wise princes have taken every care not to drive the nobles to desperation, and to keep the people satisfied and contented, for this is one of the most important objects a prince can have.*[147]*"*

Whether the legislator emerges by chance from the chaos of the city, in the manner of Hobbes' Leviathan, or comes from a party, the fact remains that he reserves for himself the role of referee on the political stage. The laws he draws up to appease the city are seen as a means of ensuring impartial political arbitration.

The legislator is therefore necessary in a situation of inequality, where he stands between the "Great Ones" and the people to protect both from the injustices for which they themselves are responsible. Its importance is undeniable even in a situation of equality, where its presence as arbiter is similar to that of public accusation, the absence of which inevitably leads to slander and unrest that destabilise society and alienate the peace. The function of public accusation assigned to the arbitration power enables it to guarantee the security of living together by pronouncing legal decisions in accordance with the law.

This is all the more significant for Machiavelli because the arbitration power arises in a heterogeneous field traversed by insecurity due to the struggle of opposing interests from which it distances itself. By distancing itself from opposing interests in this way, the aim of the legislator is not only to guarantee his autonomy, but also and above all to ensure that his arbitrations are accepted and that he himself is accepted, thanks to the force of the law that supports him, by emphasising the security of the universal, i.e. the people.

[145]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourses, op. cit*,Bk. I, Ch. 3, p54-78.
[146]*Ibid.*, Ch. 2, p269.
[147]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince, op. cit*, Ch. 19, p. 110.

6.3. Respect for Private Property

For Machiavelli, the security of the people boils down to respect for and defence of private property. In order to carry out the task of securing private property, Machiavelli is obliged to issue a code of conduct for politicians. The content of the code of conduct to which the politician must submit in order to be recognised by the opposing parties can be found both in *The Prince* and in *The Discourses*. These are the principles that regulate political behaviour. These principles emphasise what a politician should do or avoid in order to be recognised or even be accepted by the parties. In *The Prince*, Machiavelli advises politicians not to attract the hatred of the people. He should therefore refrain from plundering the people's property,

> *It makes him hated above all things,[...]to be rapacious, and to be a violator of the property and women of his subjects, from both of which he must abstain. And when neither their property nor their honor is touched, the majority of men live content, and he has only to contend with the ambition of a few, whom he can curb with ease in many ways.*[148].

We see here that respect for private property is a fundamental principle to which politicians must submit in order to preserve their State from instability. The same requirement is constantly repeated in the *Discourses*, where Machiavelli asserts *that "the way to avoid hatred is not to touch the property of one's subjects"*[149]. More explicitly, Machiavelli justifies the raison d'être of this imperative of respect in the following terms:

> *The things that make a ruler odious to the people are clearly seen: the main thing is to deprive him of a profit. This is important because, when it comes to profits, if a man is deprived of them, he never forgets them, and the smallest needs remind him of them. As needs arise every day, they are remembered every day*[150].

Hence it goes without saying that the acceptance or recognition of politics is conditional on respect for and protection of the property of its subjects. Ensuring the security of the people therefore necessarily means ensuring the security of their property by legitimising the game of possession. As Machiavelli put it, "good laws[151]" are needed to guarantee this state of affairs. It is therefore only at this point that the politician, in order to be accepted, must win the love of his people, insofar as the love of the people is the best fortress, if not the best support, for imposing his decisions. The quest for the affection of the people is

[148]*Ibid.*, p. 107.
[149]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourse, op. cit,*Bk. III, Ch. 19, p45.
[150]*Ibid.*, Bk. III, Ch.23, p86-98.
[151]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince, op. cit, Ch*. 12, p. 73.

carried out with full awareness of their desire for security. He therefore has to defend the interests of the people against the "Great Ones" or the nobles in order to win their affection[152], inasmuch as this, in the Machiavellian problematic of peace, is the condition for the recognition of politics[153]. Once the recognition of politics has been established on an emotional basis, it can easily dictate the law and make possible the unity of opposing interests. In other words, it is up to politics to step aside and allow the law the opportunity to manage intra-social tensions and ensure a balanced interplay of interests.

It is clear from the foregoing that Machiavelli does not subscribe to the politics of weak rulers. The policy of weak rulers is to divide and conquer, or to keep the people divided by amplifying the enmities that characterise the way they live together. To support his argument, Machiavelli uses the example of the Venetians, who thought it appropriate to foster divisions in their colonies in order to hold them better. So they were content to stir up opposition between the Guelph and Ghibelline sects in the hope that, occupied with their differences, they would keep their distance from power and not attack them. But this is always a perilous choice, and shows the weakness and bad faith of political leaders. That is why Machiavelli strongly condemned it. The result achieved by the Venetians attests to the fact that these manoeuvres did not benefit them.

It is therefore a useless choice to motivate or maintain the city you govern in division, and Machiavelli is keen to demonstrate this. The reason he puts forward is that "*it is impossible to keep the friendship of both factions, whether one is a prince or a republic*[154]*",* because once the principality or republic faces external adversity, *"the weakest party will always assist the outside forces and the other will not be able to resist*[155]*".* Machiavelli's point of view can therefore be called revolutionary, because it breaks with the prevailing wisdom, as can be seen from the following thought:

> *Our forefathers, and those who were reckoned wise, were accustomed to say that it was necessary to hold Pistoia by factions and Pisa by fortresses; and with this idea they fostered quarrels in some of their tributary towns so as to keep possession of them the more easily. This may have been well enough in those times when Italy was in a way balanced, but I do not believe that it*

[152]*Ibid.*, Ch. 9, p. 63.
[153]*Idem p 66-98*
[154]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourse, op. cit*, Bk. III, Ch. 27, p76-86.
[155]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince, op. cit,* Ch. 20, p. 122.

> *can be accepted as a precept for to-day, because I do not believe that factions can ever be of use*[156].

As a result, Machiavelli replaced the logic of divide and rule with that of mixed government, in which the law intervenes to unite opposing forces and balance the competing interests in a republic. Although it is up to the law to balance the interplay of opposing interests, the fact remains that the strongest citizens and powerful interest groups constantly tend to destroy the balance in order to assert their own interests or factional objectives. This is understandable insofar as men, as Machiavelli repeats in a passage from *The History of Florence,"have but one desire: neither of them choosing to be subject either to magistrates or laws*[157]*".* The law on its own is therefore not enough to deal with the threat of instability caused by the activism of a few citizens or opposing interest groups intent on reintegrating society into the dynamic of conflict and disorder, as the example of Rome shows.

The danger facing the institution of a new order is almost always the discontent of the supporters of the old regime, from whom they derived benefits. This danger is symbolised in Machiavelli's works by the activism of Brutus' sons. After Brutus freed Rome from the tyranny of Tarquin, his own sons happened to be among those who took advantage of that tyranny, so that the establishment of the freedom of the people in Rome did not seem favourable to them. So they resolved to conspire against their homeland with the help of a few supporters, because in their eyes they were being deprived of the advantages they had enjoyed under Tyranny. In order to spare society from this real threat, politicians are now obliged to comply with exceptional requirements, which prescribe the use of force to calm the situation. The use of force can even lead to radical purges, as shown by the example of Brutus, to whom Machiavelli refers in his *Discourses*. To deal with the threat of destabilisation of the state by rogue citizens, the safest and most effective solution advised by Machiavelli is to follow the example of Brutus, who not only had the courage to sentence his children to death, but also witnessed their execution.

However, this is only one of a handful of cases involving a handful of rogue citizens whom politicians must put out of action, including their accomplices. The situation can be more complex and difficult to manage, as was the case in Romagna, a city plagued by widespread violence. In a province where people are given over to robbery, ransom and crime, violence remains the only means of restoring peace and security. It is with this in mind

[156] *Ibid*,Ch. 20, pp. 121-122
[157] NiccolòMachiavelli, *History of Florence…*, Bk. IV, Ch. 1, p. 171

that Machiavelli celebrates the political genius of Caesar Borgia, as this passage from *The Prince* shows:

> *Once the Duke had taken Romagna, finding it under the command of impotent lords, who had been quicker to plunder their subjects than to correct them and had given them cause for disunity, so that this province was full of theft, and all other kinds of insolence, he deemed it necessary, if it was to be reduced to peace and obedience to the royal arm, to give it good government, and so he put at its head Sir Remirro d'Orca, a cruel and swift man, to whom he gave full power. In a short space of time, he brought peace and unity to the region, acquiring a very high reputation. Afterwards, the Duke judged that such excessive authority was unnecessary, because he feared it would become hateful, and he set up a civil court in the middle of the province, with a very excellent president, where every town had its own lawyer. And because he was aware that past rigours had engendered some hatred towards him, in order to purge the minds of his people and win them over completely, he wanted to show that if any cruelty had followed, it was not caused by him, but by the irascible nature of the minister. And taking the opportunity to do so, he had him cut in two in Caesene one morning, with a piece of wood and a bloody knife beside him; the ferocity of such a spectacle made the people both satisfied and stupid at the same time*[158].

This passage reveals to the reader a strategy skilfully conceived and intelligently implemented by a strategist of great genius and remarkable reputation, in the person of Caesar Borgia, who initially entrusted the mission of pacifying the Romagna to an exceptional lieutenant. Remirro d'Orca not only embodied the principle of unlimited violence, but also concentrated repressive discretionary power. He is rigorously bound by a single obligation, that of result. The cruelty that characterised Remirro d'Orca's conduct meant that he was chosen over others to crush the revolt and pacify Romagna. It was a wise political choice on the Duke's part, since in a short space of time he had restored peace and unity to the province.

Although Caesar Borgia could congratulate himself on the work accomplished by his lieutenant, the fact remained that the situation he inherited was as disastrous as it had been at the beginning. The end of the violence did not remove the climate of terror or temper the resentment of the population who, although satisfied, remained stunned by the horrific spectacle before them. In this climate of stupor, characterised by diffuse, muted violence lurking in the shadows of wounded minds, the atmosphere of a Romagna shaped by the atrocities and cruelties of ruthlessness and repression was expressed. It was in this atmosphere, which formed the basis of the new situation, that the politician worked from now on, in accordance with his main objectives, because the lieutenant's violence, instead of

[158]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince…,* Ch. 7, p76.

definitively guaranteeing peace and stability in the province, was more likely to perpetuate the province's situation of instability. As a good strategist, Caesar Borgia knew that the violence would not subside on its own, nor would it fade away in the minds of the people. He also knew that this violence, for which he had not thought to find effective substitutes, conflicted with his plan to appease and stabilise the province, and might even compromise it forever. The reason may be that Remirro d'Orca's unrestrained violence has brought the people's fear and resentment to a level of incandescence that jeopardises the success of his plan. As a result, the people who had suffered the violence felt that Remirro d'Orca had acted in accordance with the authority he had received, so that the lieutenant's excessive brutality was recognised by them as his own as much as that of his representative. How could the crimes committed by the Duke's handyman not be attributed to him, without erasing the benefits of the violence, i.e. a population held in respect, now living in peace and unity?

6.4. Preserving the State's Higher Interests by All Means

According to Machiavelli, it was not enough for Borgia to want to arbitrate in favour of the people; he also had to be able to explicitly appear as an arbitrator, to be able, in a few words, to provide proof of this dignity. This goal cannot be achieved without a ruse that overcomes and subverts the situation in which the Duke finds himself after the bloody repression of his lieutenant. Insofar as violence has been recognised as having a restorative virtue and the power to engender a pacifying fear, it was time for the Machiavellian strategist to understand that the personality of the lieutenant, a cruel, excessive and expeditious man, no longer met the requirements of the new situation, because each moment in history, each stage of the action under consideration here has its own specific anxiety and requires new demands. In other words, not only must the politician stop at nothing, but each situation brings with it its own set of constraints.

The fact that the lieutenant is no longer useful or the right man for the job, his importunity in terms of images turns him into an obstacle and condemns him to death. At that moment, the captain, as effective as he had been, was now, without his knowing it, the object of all repugnance, to the point where his actions were no longer covered by the higher interests of the State. Nothing protects him anymore. He must therefore suffer the punishments attached to his crimes as a scapegoat. This reversal of the original situation requires the politician to use cunning to win the esteem of the people and protect them, by making a show, as in this case, of the force of justice. By condemning Remirro d'Orca to

death, Caesar Borgia kills several birds with one stone: by this act, he redeems the evil committed by his lieutenant and revisits the past in order to redefine it; by this same act, the Duke shows that he is assuming the role of protector of the people by acting in their name and, consequently, that he is assuming both the will of the people and his own personality. In short, he is representing the people.

Furthermore, an analysis of this same passage shows that Caesar Borgia is faced with new evidence, namely that depriving Remirro d'Orca of his life cannot by itself fulfil all the expectations of his pacifist project. The killing of his captain had to produce emotional effects that would purge the desire for vengeance that haunted the astonished population. So the Duke used the spectacle of horror to subject the people of Romagna to a psychological cure. The horror of the spectacle of death, the suffering they could read on the lieutenant's corpse, was equal to the fear they felt for Remirro d'Orca. This is why the Duke could not be content simply to take the life of his minister without his torture provoking a therapeutic emotional shock.

This political episode by César Borgia therefore highlights the main aims and mechanisms of the ruse. Through this ruse, he identifies Remirro d'Orca as the person most responsible for the atrocities, and gets the people to blame him for the bloody repressions. This ruse can be said to involve first and foremost a form of manipulation that combines the use of violence and human beings. The manipulative ruse uses things and people as mere instruments. However, nothing is neglected in this field, where every artifice is taken into account and evaluated according to the results it achieves. It is in the wake of this consideration of all the possible assets of cunning that Jean-Marie Yinda Yinda apprehends the action of cunning and its political effectiveness in relation to force:

> *Ruse is the use of every advantage and tool to achieve the same political goals as those pursued by force. For the authorities, it means playing with the rules of law, morality and religion, thwarting them and exploiting them. To put it plainly, concealment, deception, wearing masks, using false pretences and affecting attitudes according to the circumstances, the stakes and the places, take on a certain meaning and validity as soon as they are used to serve political ends*[159].

In other words, there is no rationalisation of social space that does not involve a degree of manipulation, the play of masks, the instrumentalisation of things and people. This is why César Borgia integrates Remirro d'Orca into the complex world of instruments and means by

[159] André-Marie Yinda Yinda , *op. cit.*, p.87.

giving him the opportunity to explode his natural inclination. But how, then, are we to describe Caesar Borgia's invisible cruelty, which presides over events and deliberately subjects the province of Romagna to ferocious repression?

It is important to understand that, for Machiavelli, Caesar Borgia's cold and conscious cruelty hardly implies the expression of a form of insensitivity, as is the case with the lieutenant, but is the result of a choice forced by the situation in Romagna and subordinated to the public good. Machiavelli thus finds extenuating circumstances for his strategist and credits Caesar Borgia with cruelty subordinated to the good of the state. It is enough to remember that *"Caesar Borgia was considered cruel; nevertheless his cruelty had straightened out Romagna, had united it, had reduced it to peace and to faith.*[160]*"*

Caesar Borgia thus appears more than ever to Machiavelli as a strategist of great genius, a shrewd politician who, despite some of his errors, is by far incomparable. In Machiavelli's view, his political genius was marked by his keen sense of anticipation. He never let circumstances dictate the course of events. After using violence against the people through his captain, he did not let the rupture between the people and himself be consummated. He anticipated this by realising that the exercise of power must inspire in the people neither the hatred that breeds revolt, nor the contempt that suppresses fear. He pretends to follow the mood of the people. That's why its first trick is to pretend to act in the people's favour at a time when they expect nothing but mischief from it, with the aim of winning their trust. And it is by means of events that trust and legitimacy are gained, without which power cannot be sustained over time and regulate the field of opposing interests. The strategic effort through which Caesar Borgia distinguished himself in the eyes of Machiavelli, his admirer, was that through which he got the people to approve his actions. This is also the deeper meaning of the execution of his captain. This execution is reminiscent of symbolic violence because, in the minds of the people, it is a symbol of justice carried out in reparation for an injustice they have already suffered. Through this symbolic violence, César Borgia frees himself from the rigorous procedures of the law by convincing a stupid and satisfied population that justice has been done in their favour. The staging of the Captain's body next to a piece of wood and a bloody knife is part of a clever ruse designed to satisfy the emotional appetite for popular justice.

[160]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince…*, Ch. 17, pp86-130.

The political scenario that continues to hold our attention here suggests that the execution of Remirro d'Orca is an artifice that allows Caesar Borgia to enter into a kind of social contract with the people who were demanding or expecting justice. There can be no doubt that, after having suffered the violence of the captain in whom all repugnance is now focused, the demand for justice is well and truly present in the minds of the people. It is therefore up to the Machiavellian politician to demonstrate this publicly and objectively by showing the emotionally agitated people that his actions are in accordance with their innermost will. We understand that by putting his captain to death, cutting him in two pieces to make a spectacle of him in the public square, Caesar Borgia's aim is not only to show the people that he is acting in accordance with their will, but also and above all to absolve himself so that the people will have the image of him as a ruthless avenger of justice.

However, Machiavelli's praise of Caesar Borgia through the evocation of the scene at Caesarea may seem ethically sinful. The macabre scene from which Caesar Borgia emerges as an illustrious strategist and shrewd politician supports the thesis that Machiavelli celebrates a perverted political practice based on axiological nihilism. The procedures to which he attaches the exemplary political act are accompanied by ethical deficits that are often stigmatised and denounced by the guardians of orthodox morality, who see Machiavelli as a teacher of Machiavellianism. Machiavelli's Machiavellianism is therefore a form of thought that reduces the politician to a kind of "cold monster", to use Nietzsche's expression, completely dehumanised, who does not hesitate to resort to executions to achieve his ends, following the example of Caesar Borgia or Brutus. In the same vein, Machiavellianism evokes a dangerous form of power. It has to be said that the cynical coldness of Machiavelli's executions earned him the hatred of history. But can you make a career in politics and succeed without bloodshed?

This question is at the heart of the political debate between Hugo Barine and Hoederer in Jean-Paul Sartre's *Les mains sales*. Hugo Barine appears as the defender of the intellectualist point of view of political art, radically founded on the moral principle of purity. In contrast to Hugo Barine's intellectualism, Hoederer developed a realist approach that sometimes required politics to use extraordinary means to achieve its ends. The image of "dirty hands" is a good illustration of the fact that no one can make a career in politics without getting their hands dirty, i.e. without dipping them in blood and shit. The purity that Hugo

Barine insists on is what Hoederer calls "an idea of a Fakir and a monk[161]". Without projecting Sartre onto Machiavelli, it is possible to explain Pierre Soderini's political errors, which Machiavelli himself had served, from Hugo Barine's point of view. Like Barine, Peter Soderini believed that he could maintain the republican form of the state in Florence without getting his hands dirty, in other words, without immolating the sons of Brutus, who were demonstrating unparalleled hostility to republican institutions. Machiavelli criticised him for not having put into practice the fundamental precept that should guide a statesman. He was too scrupulous about doing evil when the good of the fatherland was at stake. The historical condemnation of Machiavelli by conservatives and revolutionaries alike on the pretext that he was an apologist for crime is now no more than a routine debate, since the need to get one's hands dirty is not lacking in valid reasons. We must understand that, as Machiavelli tells us, *"where the salvation of the fatherland is to be decided, there must be no consideration of justice or injustice, pity or cruelty, glory or ignominy. What is more, disregarding all other considerations, you must follow in everything the side that saves her and preserves her freedom[162]".*

The need to get one's hands dirty in politics is thus established. First, it is a matter of defending the higher interests of the State, when these are threatened by a few activists. It requires politicians to return to the origins of the state in order to take it back into their own hands. For Machiavelli, regaining control of the State meant renewing the terror[163] that founded the State by carrying out summary executions of offenders or instigators of disorder. To provide an irrefutable basis for his thinking, Machiavelli drew on Roman examples. By highlighting the ritualised violence of Numa and Romulus, Machiavelli lent weight to his argument. For him, the problem of corruption could not be dealt with by an ordinary set of measures, i.e. the exclusive use of laws. The latter needed to be *"invigorated"*[164] by a certain type of event which, by virtue of its emotional charge and cathartic virtues, restored to the laws their lost vitality and to the challenged institutions their flawless authority. Among these events, Machiavelli is thinking above all of violence and the feelings associated with it.

[161] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Les mains sales*, cinquième tableau, scène 3, Gallimard, Paris, p. 198.
[162] NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourses…,* Bk. III, Ch. 41, p655.
[163] *Ibid.*, chapter 1, p78-83.
[164] *Ibid.*, p376.

6.5. The Importance of Religion in Building Peace

Insofar as exemplary executions alone cannot ward off all the consequences of the struggle between interests or opposing factions in society, Machiavelli thought that the use of religion could help to make up for the inadequacies of force and violence. For him, religion could enable the authorities to ensure social cohesion through the fear of the hereafter that it inspires in the faithful. Religion's ability to stimulate social cohesion can be understood in the sense that it humanises inter-personal relations. The struggle for private interests may be accompanied by some excesses. Submitting this struggle to the supervision of the Supreme Being, whose punishment is not only supreme but also irreversible, enables power to keep it at an acceptable level, in line with ethical requirements. Machiavelli developed an instrumental conception of religion. In particular, religion is seen as an instrument for manipulating divided consciences. The use of religion as an instrument of manipulation creates a collective, universal consciousness through public worship.

The question has often been asked as to why Machiavelli found the use of religion so necessary in relation to the question of peace, even though he condemned it in the context of the Italian divisions. Machiavelli's insistence on recourse to religion in the process of establishing social peace gives us the impression that he is confronting us with an insurmountable paradox, since it seems obvious to him that religion was the only reason why the Italy of his time had never achieved either unity or stability[165]. So why does he attribute to religion an instrumental role in the question of peace?

An initial explanation can be found in *The Discourses*, where Machiavelli emphasises the difference between the good and bad use of religion by politicians. Religion is only included in Machiavelli's problematic of peace when it is well used, in other words when the politician makes use of it without necessarily believing in its intrinsic truth. For him, it was of little importance that what was said in public worship should be true. Rather, it is necessary that the content of these public cults arouse fear of the wrath of the Supreme Being who watches over the actions of every citizen and protects the State. This is why Machiavelli states that "*any state in which the fear of God does not exist must perish, unless it is maintained by the fear inspired by the prince, who makes up for the lack of religion*[166]*".* Religion is therefore an indispensable means. It precedes, in the order of priorities, the moment of deployment of

[165] *Ibid.*, Book I, chapter 12, p23.
[166] *Ibid.*, chapter 11, p79.

princely power, which Machiavelli reduces to second place, after the religious moment. In other words, the fear of the prince only prevails if the fear of God is lacking. In which case, the fear of God is sufficient insofar as it forces opposing parties to live in peace[167] and obliges soldiers to respect their oaths and their leaders[168]. In Machiavelli's philosophy of peace, anything that promotes the proper use of religion is encouraged.

A second explanation of the instrumental function of religion is certainly not out of place. Using the ancient examples to which Machiavelli constantly refers, it shows the necessity of religion in relation to the question of peace. Among the legislators who used religion and needed it most, Machiavelli mentions the example of Numa Pompilius, who relied on the influence of God to appease the Romans and make them accept his institutions. He needed the influence of divine authority because he was dealing with a fierce people who needed to be convinced and appeased, as Machiavelli explains below:

> *Although Rome had Romulus as its first legislator and was indebted to him, like a daughter, for his birth and education, the heavens nevertheless considered that Roman institutions were not sufficient for such an empire. They inspired the Senate to elect Numa Pompilius as successor to Romulus, so that what Romulus had forgotten would be realised by Numa. Numa found a people still untamed, and wishing to reduce them to obedience through peace, turned to religion as absolutely necessary for the maintenance of a civil society. He built it up in such a way that for several centuries there was nowhere as much fear of God as in this republic*[169].

Through this text, Machiavelli effectively shows that religion can serve social cohesion. Some statesmen, unlike others, have used the power of religion to restore peace to their cities. In contrast to the first case, in which religion is primarily involved in politics, this one shows that religion can also be used to complete the political work begun by other means.

But how can religion be used effectively in politics? By what mechanism does its use produce a reliable result? Machiavelli makes it clear that politics requires cunning. It is up to him to put in place stratagems that give him the opportunity to manipulate the people and make them submit to his authority. To persuade the Romans to accept his new institutions and tame their ferocity, Numa Pompilius led them to believe that he had a constant relationship with a nymph who inspired all his decisions[170]. To manipulate the people is to deceive them by pretending, by making them believe that you yourself adhere to the intrinsic truth of the

[167] *Ibid.*, chapter 13, p76.
[168] *Idem.*
[169] *Ibid.*, chapter 11, p675.
[170] *Idem.p78*

stratagem by which you come to deceive them. Machiavelli therefore recommends that politicians colour their lies with a view to achieving success, because, he tells us, "*it is necessary to deceive in order to succeed*[171]*"*, or rather, *"whoever wishes to do great things must learn to deceive others*[172]*".* The use of deception therefore requires a certain skill that politicians acquire through a long apprenticeship. The idea that the politician must know how to use the beast and the man[173], or that he must know how to colour his inobservance with faith, shows that Machiavelli invites him to make intelligent use of cunning for greater effectiveness. He sets out his reasons in no uncertain terms:

> *A prudent lord, therefore, cannot and must not observe faith when such observance turns against him and when the causes that made him promise it are no longer present. And if all men were good, this precept would not be good; but because they are bad and would not observe it towards you, you do not have to observe it towards them either; and never did a prince lack the legitimate causes to colour his non-observance*[174].

The excerpt under consideration here highlights the profound reasons why Machiavellian politicians are obliged to fail in their faith and to colour that nature well. Machiavelli establishes that good faith will always be detrimental to him because of the cunning of his subjects who, through experience, change their nature and lack faith in him. This is why the politician must be careful enough to avoid falling into the trap of his subjects' bad faith by making intelligent use of cunning. In Machiavelli's mind, the intelligent use of trickery consists in skilfully colouring his non-observance of the provisions relating to good faith in order to keep, in the manner of Numa Pompilius, the people giddy if not at a distance from their real nature. Colouring one's nature, disguising oneself or wearing a mask are all exercises in which the politician must show himself to be skilful. All of them, however, must remain instrumental as a response to the problem of internal security, which is constantly threatened by the bellicose behaviour of opposing factions in society. As a result, where ordinary means fail, cunning, force or even a combination of the two take over to restore peace and internal security.

[171]*Ibid.*, Book II, chapter 13, p456.
[172]*Idem.*
[173]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince…,* Ch. 18, p788.
[174]*Idemp98* .

PARTIAL CONCLUSION

The fact that Machiavelli's political philosophy was dominated by the thought of war did not prevent him from tackling the theme of peace. Strictly speaking, Machiavelli's political philosophy addresses the question of peace not only to reveal its content, but also to expose the reasons why it is constantly in crisis. It poses the problem of peace in terms of perpetual crises both inside and outside a state. From this it follows that the threat of war is permanent, and we must be cautious in preparing to confront real or potential enemies. Mastering the art of war is therefore the supreme means of promoting peace, both internally and externally. In the context of general bellicosity, where every state is likely to harm another, Machiavelli believed that it was better, in order to promote peace and security, to anticipate the attacks of potential adversaries. It is better to pre-empt the people by offence, just as to be safe from external attack, it is necessary to anticipate by attack. This is known as armed or tense peace. In other words, peace is reduced to the tranquillity of the strongest or most skilful at destroying the potential enemy.

Mastery of the art of war is therefore the supreme means of promoting peace at home and abroad. In the context of general bellicosity, where every state is likely to harm another, Machiavelli believed that it was better to anticipate the attacks of potential adversaries in order to promote peace and security. It is better to pre-empt the people by offence, just as to be safe from external attack, it is necessary to anticipate by attack. This is known as armed or tense peace. In other words, peace is reduced to the tranquillity of the strongest or most skilful at destroying the potential enemy. Is this concept of peace still relevant?

PART 3
BEYOND MACHIAVELLI'S CONCEPTION OF PEACE IN A GLOBAL WORLD

PARTIAL INTRODUCTION

The question of the relevance of Machiavelli's philosophy of peace has never ceased to be acute. It is a recurring question that always lends itself to the same formulation, namely, what is still relevant in Machiavelli's conceptual approach to peace and the strategies for promoting it where it is in crisis? This question casts doubt on the ability of Machiavelli's philosophy of peace to respond to the challenges of our time. There is often a tendency to dismiss Machiavelli as obsolete. There is no denying that Machiavelli's philosophy of peace is distinguished by its singular resistance to time, which it always manages to transcend. This is even true from the moment Machiavelli set out to open up a new path in political thought. So he began by breaking new ground by projecting himself beyond his own time, and even beyond his own era. The theme of peace and the ways of promoting it that lie at the heart of his thought still allow Machiavelli to figure on the chessboard of current political thought. In the final part of this work, we aim to assess the relevance of Machiavelli's philosophy of peace in the light of the challenges of our times.

CHAPTER 7
THE LIMITS OF MACHIAVELLI'S GEOSTRATEGY

The conception of peace that we have inherited from Machiavelli can be summed up, as we have established, by an expression that has become famous, namely "the armed peace[175]". "Armed peace" implies that military force is the main instrument used by a state to guarantee the peace and security of its territory, its members and their property. The implementation of this military force, in addition to the problems of effectiveness on which we will now focus our thoughts, is based on a geostrategic vision that no longer seems to correspond to the demands of our time. These two lines of thought are the subject of this chapter.

7.1. Machiavelli's Geostrategy

In the Machiavellian perspective, the use of military force in operations to promote peace and the security of people and property is based on a particular geostrategic vision. By definition, geostrategy refers to a set of operations and tactics of war designed according to the geographical data specific to an environment. It can therefore be likened to a science that studies the influence of the natural environment in developing plans for the defence and protection of a State's sovereignty interests. Machiavelli's work does indeed contain a geostrategic reflection. A rigorous analysis of this work reveals two major geostrategic orientations in relation to the specific tasks of politics. The first major orientation of Machiavelli's geostrategic thinking becomes apparent when we look at the question of the founding of cities and towns, where the choice of location is crucial not only to their economic prosperity, but also to their very survival[176]. For Machiavelli, the nature of the site preserves the city from any form of corruption or discord and forces its members to live united and at peace. His thinking on the nature of the appropriate site alternates between two types of place, without one being exclusively preferable to the other. It all depends on the problem that the founder wants to solve by creating a city. In the first case, an arid place should be chosen to make people industrious, less lazy and united by work that will protect them from famine. In this case, Machiavelli writes

> *Because men act by obligation or by free choice, and because we see that there is more virtue where choice is less free, we must consider that, for the*

[175]Anne Guibert-Lassalle et Denis Lemaître (sous la dir), *Peut-on éduquer à la paix ?*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 2009, p. 67.
[176]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourses…,* Bk. I, Ch.1, p34.

> *building of a city, it is better to choose a barren place, so that men, forced to be industrious and less lazy, will be more united. The poverty of the site is, in fact, less of an opportunity for discord, as in the case of Ragusa and several other cities built in similar locations*[177].

In the second case, on the other hand, a fertile site seems to be more useful for founding a city, provided that the founder takes a certain number of measures to compensate for the common desire of men and nations to conquer and dominate others. Insofar as men can only live in security when they attain a higher degree of power, Machiavelli gives the founders of cities the following advice,

> *We must flee barren lands and settle in very fertile places, where, being able to expand thanks to the richness of the site, we must ensure that the laws compel us to fulfil obligations that the site does not impose. We must imitate those who, living in very pleasant, fertile countries and able to provide idle men incapable of any energetic action, had the wisdom, to remedy the damage of idleness caused by the mildness of the country, to impose strict discipline on those who should be soldiers*[178].

However, Machiavellian geostrategy is not limited to the way in which cities and towns should be located in geopolitical space. As we have said, it has a second orientation which deals with questions relating to the defence and security of States. This second approach has two main aspects. These are both scientific and tactical. In its purely scientific aspect, Machiavellian geostrategy refers to a body of knowledge linked to the geographical environment in which peacekeeping or territorial security operations take place. According to Machiavelli, this first phase of the strategy must be the concern of the political leader during the truce. It is developed in *The Prince*, where he recommends that the political leader make an in-depth study of the natural environment in which his armies are deployed. In order to do this, the political leader must, as stated,

> *Learn the nature of the sites and to know how the mountains rise, how the valleys open up, how the plains spread out, and to understand the nature of the rivers and marshes, and to have a great cure for this. This knowledge is useful in two ways: firstly, by getting to know his country, he can better understand its defences; secondly, by knowing these sites, he can easily understand every other site he will need to know for the first time*[179].

In the light of this thought, we can see that the first aspect of Machiavellian geostrategy emphasises knowledge of the physical environment. At the same time, Machiavelli establishes a close link between theory and practice, i.e. knowledge of the natural

[177] *Ibid.*, p677.
[178] *Idemp567-598.*
[179] NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince…,* Ch. 14, p788.

environment and actions to maintain peace or secure the related territory. By making knowledge of a politician's preferred natural environment an indispensable asset in his mission to secure the State, Machiavelli shows that thought must precede action. In other words, knowledge is the light that illuminates political action. The point here is to make science the compass of action.

The second aspect of Machiavellian geostrategy emphasises the tactical dimension and how it relates to natural conditions. It emphasises the way in which a territory must be criss-crossed, or even taken over by armed troops, from the order of battles to their encampments in strategic locations, via their various movements. It goes without saying that this second phase of Machiavellian geostrategy remains intimately linked to the scientific aspect insofar as the latter serves as an indispensable asset. For Machiavelli, knowledge of the physical or geographical environment brought with it a number of tactical advantages. When Machiavelli spoke directly to the political leader he hoped would take his advice on board, he showed him the added value of such knowledge. *"This, he says, "teaches you how to find the enemy, how to place cantonments, how to lead armies, how to order the days, how to lay siege to cities to your advantage*[180]*".*

In this way, there is a real interaction between thought and action. This line of thought is also pursued in *The Art of War*, where Machiavelli establishes a link between the tactical organisation of an army and knowledge of the natural environment in which it is deployed. The sixth book of *The Art of War*, in which he tackles the issue of encampments, stresses the need to choose an encampment site whose geographical location offers an army more advantages in confronting an actual or potential enemy. In this respect, the Greek model is the first to be cited as an example:

> *The Greeks looked for positions that were naturally very strong; they would not have chosen a camp that was not backed by a rock, a river, a forest or some other similar rampart (...). Always adjusting to the lay of the land, which was constantly changing due to the diversity of sites, they were forced to vary the way they camped and the shape of their camps*[181].

As we can see here, geographical data influences the tactical deployment of an army in the field and is an important asset. In contrast, ignorance of the physical environment can also be an obstacle to the tactical deployment of an army in battle against an enemy. The link

[180] *Idemp 76.*
[181] NiccolòMachiavelli, *L'Art de la guerre…*,livre sixième, p. 202.

between the natural environment and military operations leads us to believe that Machiavelli did indeed develop a geostrategic approach in his work, or at least laid the foundations for it.

But, even if the example of the Greeks is interesting in his eyes in that it is the prototype of behaviour that adapts to the context of the natural environment, Machiavelli does not agree with it because he much prefers to follow the model of the Romans who, in contrast to the Greek model, subordinate the influence of the natural environment to the resources of art, i.e. their know-how or the skill of the general. The Roman generals' expertise in camping armies to ensure the security of their territories therefore took precedence over the realities of the field of operations:

> *The Romans (...) relied more on art than on nature in the choice of their camp: they never had a position where they could not deploy all the manoeuvres. This meant that their camp always retained the same shape, because they didn't want to be subject to the terrain, but rather that the terrain should be subject to their method*[182].

From this idea, we can see that Machiavelli poses the philosophical problem of the relationship between thought and experience through two diametrically opposed strategic attitudes. While the Greek model submits thought to experience, the Roman model gives primacy to thought. The problem of the relationship between theory and experience is practically posed here in Kantian terms. As Kant would later do, Machiavelli defended the primacy of theory over experience. In other words, he shows that the intelligence and conduct of captains are certainly inspired by knowledge of geographical data, but not blindly. According to the Roman system that he favours, it is not thought that is subject to the realities on the ground, but it is the realities on the ground that are subject to the Roman approach[183]. In other words, theory is superior to the conditions on the ground insofar as it makes up for the weakness of the geographical conditions of the natural environment in which the troops are positioned[184]. From this point of view, Machiavelli is more Roman than Greek. Although we have established the existence of geostrategic thinking in Machiavelli's work, it does not fail to give rise to some concerns and questions.

7.2. Questioning Machiavelli's Geostrategy

The main question raised by Machiavelli's geostrategic thinking relates much more to the phase of its tactical implementation. The question has often been asked as to whether the

[182] *Ibid.*,livre sixième, p. 202.
[183] *Ibid.*, p. 203.
[184] *Idem.p567*

methods of defence and securing territories advocated by Machiavelli as part of his geostrategy are global or restricted in scope. The problem is practically defined in dialectical terms between, on the one hand, the internal option and the external perspective of defence. On the other hand, it is interesting to know whether Machiavelli's defence strategy advocates an individual or collective approach. In this respect, Machiavelli's thought is characterised by a singular ambiguity, so that it is particularly difficult to say with any precision whether it is the question of internal security that takes precedence over external requirements and exclusively commands the strategic conduct of the political leader. In the Machiavellian perspective, this priority is often dictated by the origin of the danger that a state may face at a given moment in its history. This priority may vary depending on whether the threat a state faces comes from within or without.

To be in line with the option chosen by Machiavelli, it is important that we reconstruct the breadcrumb trail of his strategic thinking. It is through this exercise that the dangers on which Machiavelli focused his attention will become clear. Similarly, we will be able to determine precisely whether the defensive tactics he advocates are global or limited in scope, and whether they involve joint or individual action. To do this, a re-reading of *The Discourses* is essential, as it is in this work that we see Machiavelli focusing his attention more on the danger that comes from outside and determining the appropriate strategic option for dealing with it. From this perspective, the use of the army in the internal sphere is not envisaged.

On the contrary, Machiavelli advocated solutions that he felt were more appropriate to the difficulties that arose within the state. Internally, recourse to war is not a reliable option. For Machiavelli, as we have already said, it was a matter of establishing a mixed government to remedy the situation. Only a system of participation could dampen the ardour of the various parties in the city. The danger posed by an ambitious neighbour necessarily requires the use of arms. However, a state can also face subversive threats which require it to resort to the internal use of arms to restore peace and stability. Generally speaking, subversive threats are violent and revolutionary in nature, like rebellions. They almost always aim to overthrow the established power by injecting the seeds of large-scale destructive violence. In such a context, a state often calls on its army to carry out internal missions, in particular those involving the restoration of law and order. But Machiavelli overlooks the army's internal missions and takes no account of them in his works.

In other words, the army's internal commitment does not attract his attention, so that he proposes only to prescribe security missions for it in relation to the dangers that come from outside. Current political events contradict the Machiavellian tendency to limit the internal use of armies, showing that it is no longer relevant. We must now face the facts,

> *The missions of national armies cannot be reduced to inter-state confrontations alone. For the army is a public force which, in the event of civilian incapacity, religious upheaval or political powerlessness, can be given the task of maintaining order, if not re-establishing it, by using violence that can be described as legitimate, in the face of internal and external threats that are warlike rather than military in nature*[185].

Armies have always been called upon by governments. Despite this obvious fact, Machiavelli stubbornly maintained his point of view. His perception of armed peace only envisages the use of military force when a state is faced with external aggression, perpetrated by another political entity. Chapter 12 of Book II of the *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius* takes us to the heart of this issue. Machiavelli clearly envisages the question of national defence when a state is faced with a danger from an external source by undertaking to examine the question of whether it is better, when an assault is feared, to attack or to wait: it has often been thought that the best defence is an attack, and that you should anticipate the latter rather than wait for the enemy to come and find you. At first glance, Machiavelli seems to share this conviction and supports the arguments of those who defend the strategic option of attacking the enemy by exporting military operations to his soil[186]. But for the simple fact that this strategic option suits states that rely on the power of money rather than weapons and well-trained men to ensure their security[187], Machiavelli disqualifies this strategic approach. We know to what extent he maintains that money is not the sinews of war, but good weapons and well-trained men[188]. This is why he relayed more of the arguments developed in favour of the strategic option of waiting for the enemy to arrive:

> *It is said, on the other hand, that by waiting for the enemy, you wait for him with many advantages. You can easily cause damage to supplies and other things an army needs. You can better prevent your enemies, thanks to the better knowledge you have of the country. You can attack him with larger forces, because you can easily gather them together and he can't move all his forces away from home. Once defeated, you can easily recover, because part of your army will flee, as they have safe havens nearby, and because reinforcements do not have to come from far away. So you come to risk all*

[185]Anne Guibert-Lassalle et Denis Lemaître (sous la dir.), *op., cit.,* pp. 53-54.
[186]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourses…,* Bk. II, Ch. 12, p304-379.
[187]*Idem.*
[188]*Ibid.,* chapter 10, p788-817.

your strength and not all your fortune, whereas by moving away from home you risk all your fortune[189].

Machiavelli here takes issue with the thesis that the best defence is to export the attack, because so many arguments militate in favour of the idea that "the prince who has peoples armed and organised for war must always wait on his soil for a powerful and dangerous enemy and not march out to meet him[190].

This principle of defence proves that, for Machiavelli, the military capacity of a state that cares about its security does not have to be externalized at the risk of being dispersed. It must be limited to the internal framework, covering the entire territory and occupying strategic locations that are useful for its defence. In this case, the possibility of extending Machiavellian strategy to a global scale is totally excluded. In this way, Machiavelli remains consistent with himself: the aim is to safeguard the integrity and independence of a state or territory. It is up to each State to assume this mission for itself by providing itself with the necessary means. Even if Machiavelli demands that the political leader does not go it alone, the mission of peace and security is less a matter of collective action, because it is always up to each political leader to guarantee the integrity of his territory and the security of his subjects without referring to anyone other than himself and to the means that are his own.

Even if Machiavelli demands that the political leader does not go it alone, the mission of peace and security is less a matter of collective action, because it is always up to each political leader to guarantee the integrity of his territory and the security of his subjects without referring to anyone else but himself and to his own means. The way in which Machiavelli instructs the young Lorenzo de' Medici to take Italy's destiny into his own hands and free it from the barbarians confirms the idea that it is up to each State to ensure the integrity of its territory and guarantee its independence by freeing it from foreign occupation. To do this, it must not depend on the will of heaven or the force of others. It must only be guided by the wisdom and actions of the great men of history, the envoys of the Universal Spirit, to use Hegel's expression. This is more or less what appears in Machiavelli's thought below:

Your illustrious House, therefore, wishing to follow in the footsteps of those most excellent men who redeemed their province, must first of all, as the true foundation of every undertaking, provide itself with its own weapons, because there can be no more faithful, true or better soldiers when they see

[189] *Ibid.*, chapter 12, p788 .
[190] *Ibid.*, p13.

> *that they are commanded by their prince, honoured by him and that he cultivates their relationship. It is therefore necessary to prepare oneself for these weapons, so as to be able, with Italic virtue, to defend oneself against foreigners*[191].

From this framework, it appears that Machiavelli ushered in the era of the singular destinies of states. This is understandable insofar as the problem he poses and solves in most of his works is that of defending a particular nation, Italy, which, on its own, has to face up to the barbarians, i.e. the foreigners. In this respect, Machiavelli is much criticised. He is often criticised for overestimating the military potential of the Italians and their ability to hold their own against foreign powers. He believed that all the Italians needed to do was unite around a prodigious leader to rekindle the ancient *virtù* in their hearts and overturn the balance of power that pitted them against the great foreign powers without the help of others. In this respect, Paul Veyne denounces the feeling of superiority of the Italians of the Renaissance over other peoples, a feeling that is reflected in Machiavelli's thought through the bipolar dimension of political humanity that it thematises. The author of *The Prince* believed that only Italy was civilised and that all other peoples were barbarians[192]. He shows that such a sentiment is nothing more than the expression of Machiavelli's hatred of foreigners, which he wishes to serve through the leader of the Italian Redemption who, paradoxically, must go it alone to reconstitute the Kingdom of Italy.

Peace and security appeared to be the sole responsibility of the state, because Machiavelli approached them solely from the narrow angle of nationalism or patriotism that characterised his political commitment. His most radical detractors even went so far as to narrow the patriotic consciousness underlying his defence strategy to a much lower threshold than that of the nation, in order to show that his ambition was not to universalise this strategy, given that he was preoccupied with solving a specific problem. From this point of view, the defence strategy he advocated was much better suited to small states than to kingdoms or empires. This is why Georges Mounin believes that Machiavelli's patriotism is dominated by local self-esteem and could not have motivated a strategy of international scope. To justify this, Mounin refers to the fluctuating and municipal nature of Machiavelli's patriotism as expressed in his Discourse or Dialogue on our Language. On rereading this Dialogue Georges Mounin discovers that

[191]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince…*, Ch. 26, p788.
[192]Paul Veyne, Préface de *Le Prince*, suivi d'extrait des *Œuvres politiques* et d'un choix de *Lettres familières*, Editions Gallimard, 1980, p. 30.

> *His patriotism is still municipal, and will remain very fluid. Even if we want to date this Dialogue from before 1512, the Discourses remain, and in them Machiavelli sometimes advocates a principality that would encompass Lombardy, Tuscany and Naples; or these same provinces with Rome and the Romagna - sometimes a confederation of Tuscan cities, in imitation of the ancient confederation of the twelve Etruscan cities. He always excluded Piedmont, Genoa and Venice from his plans, as well as Sicily, which he considered absolutely Spanish, even in language*[193].

In addition to the fluctuating attitude that characterises Machiavelli's patriotism, Georges Mounin also draws on his political clout in Florence to emphasise the dominant character of his local self-esteem. He chose the political period during which Machiavelli served the Florentine Republic as Secretary to justify the fact that he had never projected his political action beyond the Florentine framework. All his political work shows that he was always at the service of the Florentine, not the Italian, cause. By carefully examining his political work, it is now clear to Georges Mounin that, *"Between 1498 and 1512, for fourteen years, Machiavelli always influenced the politics of Florence, as Secretary: and his politics were always Florentine and not Italian, anti-Venetian for example, and anti-Borgia especially*"[194]. The restricted nature of Machiavelli's patriotism also condemned his strategy to a limited approach, confined to the level of the state or municipality, where each political entity was responsible for ensuring its own security using its own forces within the confines of its own territory, without opening up to the international arena.

In establishing that it is up to each State and its leader to ensure its own defence without relying on the help of another, this is understandable in the sense that Machiavelli considers that only a similar State constitutes the sole source of danger and destabilisation. Insofar as each state is driven by the desire to dominate, it is naturally up to each of them to prepare to face up to it. From this point of view, Machiavelli remains trapped in the idea that each state is more or less the enemy of the other and seeks to destabilise it. Yet current political events show that there are more and more transnational acts of destabilisation, i.e. forms of violence that affect the political life of states without being the work of a territorially determined or spatially localisable political entity. We are increasingly witnessing the development of new forms of attack that are no longer perpetrated by one state, whether near or far, against another, to which it is formally declaring war. Their resurgence clearly poses the problem of the effectiveness of the Machiavellian strategy of national defence. This

[193]Georges Mounin, *op., cit.*,chapter 5, pp. 150-151.
[194]*Idem.*

explains why most Machiavellian principles of national defence are now in crisis, insofar as they are no longer adapted to the realities of our time.

7. 3. The Limits of Machiavellian Principles of National Defence

In the perspective of armed peace, Machiavelli defined a certain number of strategic principles whose application or respect would protect states from external attack. One of these principles is that states should strive for the greatest possible power. This is the approach to follow to be safe from insecurity. It confirms the major and vital interest of the race to protect national territories, which has since characterised the behaviour of States, correlated with the permanent dynamics of technological developments. The construction of the defensive shield, the anti-missile shield, over American territory, as envisaged by Ronald Reagan to protect his country from external attacks, is part of the application of the principle of the greatest power dear to the Machiavellian strategy of national defence.

Over time, we have seen that the principle of the greatest power does not always provide a state with flawless security. The great military powers of our time, despite the security measures they have put in place to protect themselves, appear to be just as vulnerable as militarily weak states. From the events of 11 September 2001 at least, it is easy to see that *"American territory is no longer beyond the reach of external aggression*[195]*"*, despite the fear that the military potential of the United States arouses in those who would venture to perpetrate attacks against its territory. The events of 11 September 2001 and all those that take place daily in the world's ultra-secure cities show that the heavy police presence in these ultra-frequented areas is no longer enough to keep the peace or keep foreign aggressors at bay. Their large military infrastructures and the fearsome reputation they enjoy can no longer on their own deter their adversaries. Despite the reputation of their weapons and all the security strategies put in place to monitor their territories, it is clear that they remain permissive and even vulnerable. It is increasingly clear that

> *Germany, the European Union and the industrialised countries are no longer defensible militarily, either against terror (...) or against conventional military attacks. However, these countries are extremely vulnerable because of their entire telecommunications and computer network infrastructure*[196].

[195]Anne Guibert-Lassalle et Denis Lemaître (sous la dir.), *op., cit.,* p. 50.
[196]*Ibid.,* p. 45.

As a result, the presumed effectiveness of the strategic principle of power is contradicted by current events. At the same time, the Machiavellian promotion of peace based on the principle of power is coming up against its own illusions.

One of the illusions that the Machiavellian promotion of peace based on the principle of power comes up against is the belief in the effectiveness of the ad hoc use of military force or in its ability to resolve inter-state conflicts. In the Machiavellian perspective, it is certainly established that wars are waged with the aim of establishing peace. As we have already seen, Machiavelli was neither an enemy of peace nor a supporter of perpetual war. He does not belong to the class of men usually found around ill-advised monarchs who, during peacetime, desire war because it is profitable for them. So he adopted the French principle of short, long wars, which was in vogue at the time. This choice was based on well-established economic and social reasons. Firstly, short and large-scale wars were not expensive for the State[197]; secondly, they enabled order and peace to be re-established immediately, so that from then on everyone could go about their ordinary business. This must be the aim of anyone who engages in war with a view to peace. As Machiavelli aptly puts it,

> *A king must want that at the end of the war his great vassals return to govern their subjects, his gentlemen cultivate their lands, his infantry practice their various professions, and that each of them finally willingly leaves the war to have peace and does not seek to disturb the peace to have war*[198].

But just like the strategic principle of power, the principle of short and large wars is finding it difficult to apply effectively today. Contemporary history, from the last decade of the twentieth century to the first decade of the twenty-first, shows us several cases of failed conflict resolution based on the strategic principle of short and large wars. The Machiavellian principle that military operations should be as short as possible no longer stands up to the examples of *"Cyprus, Bosnia, Kosovo and of course Iraq*[199]*".* Other examples can be added to this list to expand the reference register. But the indication of the most representative conflict model in history can suffice to prove the failure of the Machiavellian principle of short wars: *"it has often become impossible to limit a war precisely in time these days. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a clear example of this*[200]*".* How can we explain the failure

[197]NiccolòMachiavelli*, Discourses…,* Bk. II, Ch. 6, p66 .
[198]NiccolòMachiavelli, *L'Art de la guerre…*, livre premier, p. 72.
[199]Anne Guibert-Lassalle et Denis Lemaître (sous la dir.), *op., cit.,* p. 52.
[200]*Ibid.,* p. 40.

today of the strategic principle of short wars to promote peace, even though it proved its worth in Machiavelli's day, particularly in the context of France's peace policy?

The main reason why the Machiavellian principle of short and large wars has not been applied with much success is that the context in which it is operational is no longer exactly the same. Machiavelli's armed peace was part of a socio-political framework dominated by the logic of conventional warfare and all the discipline that goes with it. Conventional wars are those fought between states, with each state presenting itself with its regular troops on the battlefields, which are usually restricted, and obeying a symmetrical relationship. They have a beginning and an end, which is materialised by the signing of peace agreements between the belligerents. These types of war are described by Machiavelli in *The Art of War*, along with the corresponding military system. But observation of our geopolitical environment leads us to believe that states are now faced with nebulous entities, such as transnational terrorist networks, warlords, guerrilla groups and mercenary firms whose destabilising actions call into question all the principles of conventional warfare, including the principle of short and large wars.

The proliferation of nebulous groups in the geopolitical context of the world can be explained by the fragility of states following the breakdown of the East-West balance of terror and the meteoric rise of endemic poverty. These two phenomena continue to allow these nebulous entities to recruit their personnel from the breeding ground of endemic poverty, so that States are no longer the sole holders of military resources and the monopoly on their use. Insofar as these new entities are nebulas, they transform vast territories into theatres of war in such a way that it is no longer possible to distinguish between the front, the flanks and the rear of the fighting, as Machiavelli advocated in his day. This is compounded by the asymmetrical nature of the fighting that pits states against these new players on the geopolitical stage. Indeed, *"the asymmetry of the fighting between the belligerent parties is such that it makes it virtually impossible to conclude conventional agreements, or at least these agreements are only minimally binding on the parties involved in the conflict*[201]*".* From this point of view, there is no longer any decisive battle which is limited in time and which would verify the Machiavellian principle of short wars.

In addition to the fact that the strategic principle of short warfare is coming up against the activities of nebulous entities in the geopolitical space of the world, the new issues at stake

[201] *Ibid.*, p. 40.

in the name of which today's wars are fought also contradict this strategic principle of national defence. Indeed, what is often at stake in a war is not necessarily peace. In other words, peace is not always the end goal of war, so that once it is over, people are happy to live in harmony. Machiavelli himself had already realised that there are two kinds of war, each corresponding to a specific goal, which is not necessarily peace. In his *Discourses*, he shows that one of these two kinds of war stems from the ambition of princes or republics[202]. It is the ambition to conquer new territories of command or to extend the sphere of influence of one's state[203]. On the other hand, the other kind of war stems from the pressure of famine, which drives an entire people to conquer vital resources beyond their usual environment.

In both cases, and contrary to Machiavelli's view, the defeated are not content with their new status. Driven by the spirit of revenge, they always try to change the balance of power by prolonging the war over time. This is the logic behind the holy war and the Islamic jihad. As for the victors, they are not content simply to subjugate the peoples of the conquered territories, as Machiavelli thought in his day. Their intention often went further. In addition to the objective of retaining control of the conquered territories, the victors go so far as to abuse their resources for their own profit. There is therefore no longer any reason to speak of a limited military operation, since the victor has a greater interest in maintaining the status quo, i.e. prolonging the war situation for as long as it allows him to make profits. Thus, instead of the logic of controlling territories, which in the past motivated the development of wars, today's great powers and all the other States are replacing it with the logic of controlling strategic resources in their infinite diversity. Thus, *"in both inter-state wars and intra-state conflicts, what is at stake is securing strategic resources. At present, these are essentially oil and gas deposits[204]".*

Apart from these two types of resource, the proponents of the futuristic vision of the world even go so far as to predict, with such relevance, that *"in the future, there could well be a growing trend towards conflict over the control of water as a vital source[205]".* That said, the new stakes are at the origin of wars and their prolongation over time, so that the principle of short, fat wars is no longer the most widely shared thing in the world.

[202]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourses…,*Bk. II, Ch. 8, p101.
[203]*Idem.*
[204]*Idem.*
[205]Anne Guibert-Lassalle et Denis Lemaître (sous la dir.), *op., cit.*, p. 42.

In view of the many failures of the Machiavellian principle of short wars and its less than convincing applications in human history, critical voices are being raised every day to question the effectiveness of the military instrument, with the aim of excluding it from the register of methods useful in promoting lasting peace. Most of these voices suggest that the military instrument is unsuited to solving a political or social problem and condemns the logic of life to the infernal cycle of violence. All this leads us to believe that the establishment or maintenance of peace necessarily excludes the use of military means and armed equipment whose usefulness is of a different order. Thus, for Lucien Ayissi, *"it is an illusion to believe that by referring to Polemos or resorting to the tribunal of Mars, we can provide appropriate solutions to the problems that pit the members of the great human family against each other over time"*[206].

This is not to say that the use of military resources has never been useful, or that it never will be. But we do want to stress that there are circumstances in which the use of armed force is unnecessary or harmful to the promotion of civil peace. This should lead us to distinguish between the appropriate, moderate and rational use of force and its inappropriate, immoderate and irrational use. What should be condemned is the constant tendency to summon Polemos when peaceful means are more appropriate to the prevailing situation.

When it comes to establishing or maintaining peace, the most appropriate solution is not always to conquer the territories and towns that will serve as a vanguard or defensive shield for a state that is being destabilised by activities aimed at destabilising part of its population or neighbourhood. What we sometimes talk about is winning the hearts of people. This is a necessary condition if we are to establish lasting peace. For this reason, every nation, every State, must give priority to the search for great moral and not military power, insofar as history shows that even the most sophisticated weapons have never, on their own, enabled us to win people's support for the need for peace. This is why any peace process undertaken in a context of tension or struggle begins with the disarmament of the belligerents, because this implies ipso facto the pacification of society.

In short, two major principles of Machiavelli's strategy of defence and national security are constantly put to the test in the course of historical events: the principle of the greatest power and that of short, large wars. Their inconclusive applications show that they

[206]Ayissi Lucien, « La complexité du statut de la victime dans la dialectique de la violence », in, *Ethiopiques*, n° 59. Littérature, philosophie et art, 2ème semestre 2007, p. 195.

are no longer sufficiently adapted to the realities of contemporary conflicts, whether regional or international. They may no longer be primordial principles, although this is not to deny their importance in promoting peace. But it would appear that they are relatively effective. How should we approach the conflicts that arise in today's increasingly globalised world?

CHAPTER 8
LESSONS FROM MACHIAVELLI FOR CONTEMPORARYINTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In reflecting on the implementation of Machiavelli's philosophy of peace in contemporary political practice, our aim is to show that this philosophy still plays an important role in the behaviour and conduct of local and international actors and in their ongoing and tireless quest for peace. Two types of actor are active on the international scene and constantly draw on Machiavelli's ideas, advice and strategies to modulate their conduct in terms of the peace operations they carry out through direct intervention both inside and outside their States.

8.1. Modes of Operation of Institutions and the International Coalition

Before outlining the applications of Machiavelli's philosophy of peace to the behaviour of institutions and international coalitions, we should first clarify the logic on the basis of which these two actors implement the strategy inherent in this philosophy. This logic and this strategy derive from the conception of peace inherited from Machiavelli. Machiavelli's concept of peace remained intimately linked to the phenomenon of war. We owe this to him because he was the first to update the relationship between these two concepts, as was already the case with his ancient predecessors. The history of political ideas tells us that Heraclitus, for example, placed the dynamics of peace and war at the heart of his thought. In his Fragments, it takes the form of a harmony of movement dominated by war. This Presocratic philosopher believes that it is war that transmutes some people into God and others into men. It also turns some into slaves and others into free men. Plato took up the same argument, notably in the Laws, where he asserted that

> *What is commonly called peace is such in name only, and that in fact, without there having been any declaration of war, every state is always naturally armed against those around it. If you consider the matter from this point of view, you will find that the plan of the legislator (...), in all his public and particular institutions, is based on the assumption of a state of continual war*[207].

In the same way, the two concepts are implicated in the Machiavellian perspective in such a way that we cannot say what peace is without at the same time opposing it to war, with the only difference being that in Machiavelli the articulation of peace and war does not

[207]Platon, *Les Lois*, p.4.

enshrine the thesis of the phagocytosis of peace by war, as is the case in Heraclitus. Machiavelli's specificity lies in the fact that he conceives the dynamic between peace and war in a cyclical perspective in which war is perceived as a moral obligation to which political leaders must submit in order to achieve peace.

He was therefore the first, after the Middle Ages, to conceptualise the cyclical relationship between peace and war. The correlation that Machiavelli established between peace and war enabled him to inaugurate one of the most common theses in the history of mankind, namely, "he who wants peace prepares for war". This thesis rules out from the outset the Kantian idea of perpetual peace, leaving room for the alternation of war and peace that structures the tireless rhythm of human affairs. It also excludes the Christian idea of eternal peace. This is why, for Machiavelli, peace corresponds to an interval of time that follows a storm or the fury of the waves, while awaiting a new surge of events. It is a moment of temporary calm, during which the guns fall silent to allow the belligerents to prepare for a new war. It goes without saying that Machiavelli is developing a particular conception of peace here. The way in which he characterises it in relation to war shows that, for him, peace exists only temporarily and is synonymous with truce. In a letter to Francesco Vettori dated 5 April 1527, Machiavelli establishes a semantic link between truce and peace as follows:

> *My honourable Francesco. As soon as it was seen that the truce concluded in Rome was not being respected by the Imperious, Sir Francesco wrote to the Pope that one of three courses of action should be taken: to resume the war in such a way that the world understood that there was no longer any point in talking about peace, so that the King of France, the Venetians and everyone else could do their job, and he showed that this option still offered many chances, provided that the Pope was willing to help; Failing that, take a diametrically opposed course, go straight and quickly to peace, lay your head on the Viceroy's lap and abandon yourself to your fate; finally, if you were tired of this war or disgusted with this peace, take a third course, which is not the time to talk about*[208].

Equating peace with truce can only be understood if we look at the march of human affairs through history and realise that, from this perspective, nothing is fixed, everything is in perpetual motion, as in the Heraclitean world. The thesis of anacyclosis, which Machiavelli uses to translate this historical reality, comes into its own here. It helps us to understand a dialectical approach between peace and war, an approach that is specific to the Machiavellian system of thought and that contemporary history has so faithfully reflected.

[208]Nicolas Machiavel, *Le Prince*, suivi d'extraits des *Œuvres politiques* et d'un choix des *Lettres familières*, préface de Paul Veyne, Editions Gallimard, pp. 414-415.

Indeed, contemporary history shows that peoples are subjected to a tiresome rhythm that alternates between peace and war, so much so that peace is not perceived as a definitive achievement, because as soon as a peace agreement is concluded between two warring parties, it again comes up against new disturbances. This is understandable insofar as the disturbances that hinder peace or those that cause the transition from truce to war are almost always immanent to the agreements underlying the truce.

The agreements underpinning the truce, i.e. the peace, are always precarious, either because they are obtained by force on the part of the dominator, or unilaterally, to the point where they give rise in the long run to discontent that becomes a new source of disturbance to the peace or interruption of the truce thus obtained. The example of the Treaty of Versailles of 28 June 1919 imposed on Germany by the victors of the war is instructive in this respect. It was one of the treaties that ended the First World War and marked the return to peace. The terms of this treaty emphasised Germany's responsibility for starting the war, and this was not without consequences: the first of these was that Germany was obliged to lose territory in Europe and its entire colonial empire in Africa and China.

8.2. National Defence facing the Permanence of War

The cyclical alternation between peace and war conceptualised by Machiavelli was favourably received by several other authors whose reflections were largely inspired by the Machiavellian idea that "he who wants peace prepares for war". For them, this idea forms the basis of what in geostrategy are known as the major principles of national defence. There are two of them: the permanence of war and its universality. The preponderance of these two principles of national defence and security was first set out by Thomas Hobbes in his Leviathan. According to Hobbes, peoples are driven by a permanent desire to wage war against each other. He highlights this idea when he states that

> *It is manifest that during this time when human beings live without a common power imposing on them all respect mixed with fear, their condition is what is called war; and this is such that it is a war of each against each. Indeed, war does not consist only in battle or in the act of fighting, but in that space of time during which the will to fight is sufficiently known (...). Any other time is peace*[209].

So the logic is still the same as Machiavelli's. It is clear from the above that Hobbes defines a time of peace in relation to a time of war, and vice versa. The only difference is that

[209]Thomas Hobbes, *Le Léviathan,* Paris, P.U.F, p. 224.

war implies not only the time of overt battles, but also the time when two parties demonstrate a willingness to come to blows or to clash vigorously. Rousseau agrees with Machiavelli and Hobbes in showing that the logic governing the existence of states is that of permanent war. Although it was much better for everyone to be always at peace, the common lack of security in this respect means that everyone, unable to avoid war, at least tries to make it work to his advantage when the occasion favours him.

It is clear that the obligation to wage war is imposed on States with a view to peace, which is clearly the goal of political art in the Machiavellian view. It is the duty of the political leader to promote peace and defend the integrity of the national territory by means of war. This argument was taken up again after the Second World War and embodied in the thought of Raymond Aron. In his book *Peace and War,* Aron reflects on war with a view to peace, following in the conceptual footsteps of Machiavelli. In his view, peace is the ultimate goal of war, and the victory of one state over another is a potential means of achieving it. By making war the means to promote peace, Raymond Aron's argument is based on the notions of just war and necessary war already present in Machiavelli. In the Machiavellian perspective on which his analysis is based, a just or necessary war is one that occurs when the harm that one state inflicts on another reaches its extremities. These extremities are those experienced by Italy in Machiavelli's time, as described in the final chapter of *The Prince*. It appears there as a political entity suffering from the most extreme evils, which require urgent military intervention:

> *in order to know the virtue of an Italian soul, it was necessary that Italy should have been reduced to the present terms and that she should have been more enslaved than the Hebrews, more enslaved than the Persians, more dispersed than the Athenians, without a leader, beaten, despoiled, torn to pieces, courted and that she should have endured all kinds of ruin*[210].

In the light of such atrocities, Machiavelli legitimised the need for war. We are faced with a situation of despair that leaves the political leader with no other choice, so that war only appears as a legitimate categorical imperative, since, as Machiavelli tells us, *"war is just, indeed, for those for whom it is necessary, and arms are pious where there is no hope except by arms*[211]*"*. How, finally, can we account for the implementation of this requirement in the behaviour of actors on the contemporary political scene?

[210]NiccolòMachiavelli, *The Prince…*, Ch. 26, p112.
[211]*Ibid.*, p. 164.

The imperative nature of war with a view to peace, as conceptualised by Machiavelli, was first reflected historically after the Second World War in the action plan of the United Nations institutions, which broke with the League of Nations paradigm.

In the era of the League of Nations, the desire to guarantee peace prohibited recourse to arms or war. The tool advocated to achieve such an objective was negotiation within the framework of the fundamental principles of the pact signed between the member states. Given that people are disloyal and do not always keep their word, the League of Nations strategy came to nothing. The Second World War symbolised the decline of the League of Nations and all its prohibitions. The creation of the United Nations, on the other hand, after the demise of the League of Nations, was accompanied by a change of paradigm, while maintaining at the heart of this new association the objective of maintaining peace or seeking it when it is compromised. In the event of a threat to the peace, an act of aggression or a breach of the peace, the United Nations authorises military action on the basis of the deterioration in security observed by its institutions, in particular the Security Council, even if failures can be reported on both sides. But it is well known that the United Nations' conduct is in line with the Machiavellian perspective of the war necessary for peace.

It is therefore clear from the foregoing that the behaviour of the actors on the world political scene is constantly nourished by Machiavelli's philosophy of peace. The effectiveness of the strategic implementation of this philosophy does not depend solely on the conduct of the United Nations, which should be identified here as one of the players on the world political stage in the search for peace or its preservation where it exists. It is also the responsibility of today's major powers, under the influence of a growing sense of insecurity affecting the national political climate, or in response to external aggression that compromises the internal peace of nations. The mobilisation of the instruments of war seems unavoidable in these two conditions, so that the power that feels insecure or attacked is obliged to wage war to promote national peace. The reshaping of the Greater Middle East, which was preceded by the attacks on the twin towers of the World Trade Centre in the United States on 11 September 2001, and which was achieved by force, is a clear illustration of the Machiavellian thesis of the obligation to wage war in the interests of peace. The conduct of military operations by the major powers in this part of the world has, for the most part, been carried out in the Machiavellian spirit. It was a vast project, the planning and implementation of which were divided into two main phases.

The first was in the immediate aftermath of the attacks of 11 September 2001, one of the main objectives of which was not only to punish those who were presented as the main culprits of these attacks, but also to change the political situation in Afghanistan so that it no longer served as a rear base for the activities of terrorists, some of whom had just undermined the security of the United States. We would therefore like to make it clear that the military operations undertaken by the major powers against Afghanistan in the aftermath of 11 September 2001 were in response to a requirement dear to Machiavelli, which requires every nation to defend the integrity of its territory when it has been flagrantly violated. The link between the conduct of these great powers and Machiavellianism can be established at several levels. Several parallels can be drawn between the Machiavellian intelligence of the conduct of war and the strategic behaviour of the great powers in the field of operations.

Initially, the strategy of the aggressed power consisted of operating on the fringes of the United Nations to avoid the difficulties inherent in a collective decision, namely the hesitations and differences of tone that usually characterise any collective approach. The need to avoid the option of a collective approach was even justified by the opinion of those who already believed that the military intervention of the aggressed power in Afghanistan did not stem from self-defence recognised by international law, nor from the aggression of the Afghan state towards it. The underlying reason was that the attacks were orchestrated neither by the Afghan state nor by its own agents. Be that as it may, the White House's stubborn determination to do battle with Afghanistan became inevitable and was part of a Machiavellian decision to the exclusion of any other opinion that could act as a counterweight. On several occasions, Machiavelli indicates that it is necessary, on decisive occasions such as war, to be alone in making the decision and directing operations on the ground. Being the sole decision-maker is a strength in itself, and has incredible advantages. The "one" is capable of defeating the force of many. It was then up to the attacked people to protect their territory, and in this respect they needed the assent of *"one will*[212]*",* i.e. that of the attacked people, faced with the problem of insecurity.

But the Florentine also recommended that states should not undertake expeditions alone. He advised them to join forces with allies while retaining control of operations on the ground. As can be seen from the course of operations, this lesson was carefully applied by the US administration when, enlisting the help of its traditional allies, it took on the task of retaining

[212]NiccolòMachiavelli, *L'Art de la guerre…*, livre premier, p. 70.

control of Operation Enduring Freedom. The very objective underlying Operation Enduring Freedom was not far removed from the Machiavellian strategy of "short and long wars", developed in *The Discourses*[213] and The Art of War. In the latter work, the Florentine advises that *"the aim of any government that wishes to wage war is to be able to hold the campaign against any kind of enemy and to win on the day of battle*[214]". In the same way, the troops of the international coalition led by the Americans aimed to carry out massive bombing raids on Afghan territory in order to wipe out the enemy there in a short space of time.

8.3. National Defence and Preventive Wars

The second major thrust of the international coalition's policy in the Greater Middle East bears further witness to the implementation of Machiavellian intelligence in the conduct of war and all the cynicism that goes with it. The second key period under consideration brings to mind the second Gulf War. The procedures, manoeuvres and even modes of operation used by the White House to reshape the way people live together in Iraq reflect exactly the methods that Machiavelli prescribes for all those who set out to conquer and reform the institutions of a state. In the active phase of the second Gulf War, it is easy to establish a close relationship between the reasons that led to its preparation and launch and the Machiavellian strategy of preventive war. Preventive war is war declared by a state against a potential enemy whose attacks are feared to threaten the security of its near or distant neighbour. The strategy of preventive war is explicitly addressed in Machiavelli's political works and is one of the operations in the overall strategy to be implemented by a state with a view to its security.

In Machiavelli's logic of politics, the strategy of preventive war consists of declaring war on a state that is deemed dangerous to the peace of another. It may even be enough to suspect that it is likely to organise an attack against another, in whatever way or whatever we do to protect ourselves from its offensive ambitions, to declare war on it in order to thwart its ambitions. Here again, Machiavelli's strategy makes the obligation to wage war a means of guaranteeing peace and security, but in this respect it is much more a question of preventive war. This can be seen in *The Discourses*, where Machiavelli sets out the reasons why states wage war against each other[215]. The war waged by one state against another can be explained by two reasons: one is to seize it, the other is for fear of being occupied by it. In addition to

[213]NiccolòMachiavelli*, Discourses…,* Bk. II,Ch. 6,pp.
[214]NiccolòMachiavelli, *L'Art de la guerre…*, livre premier, p. 75.
[215]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourses…,* Bk. I, Ch. 6, p79.

these two reasons, there is the universal principle that determines the behaviour of states in the world. This principle stipulates that whoever does not attack is attacked, making the option of preventive war inevitable.

The legitimisation of the second Gulf War was for a long time based on arguments of this kind, so that its effectiveness was the result of a unilateral decision by the White House, in association on the ground with some of its traditional allies. The official arguments referred to the dangerous nature of the local power, stressing the possible risks it represented for the security of the whole world. George W. Bush, whose strategy in the fight against terrorism is based on the use of pre-emptive strikes, formulated this imperative as follows: *"We must take the fight to the enemy, disrupt his plans and pre-empt the worst threats before they are even identified. In the world we are entering, the only path to security is the path of action. And this country will act*[216]*".*

Reading this excerpt from the speech, we can see the determination with which the great American power intends to make the obligation to go to war a necessary option for global security, even if experience shows that the preventive wars waged in the Middle East have not necessarily led to the security that served as their honourable pretext.

From the foregoing, we can also see that the masters of the world displayed a purely Machiavellian attitude insofar as the need to intervene militarily in Iraq stemmed solely from their manifest desire to disguise their real intentions under the mask of Saddam Hussein's wrongful possession of weapons of mass destruction which he would make available to international terrorism in order to disrupt world security. In reality, the logic of the pre-emptive war that prevailed during the second Gulf conflict was born of the spirit of propaganda, which consisted in demonising Saddam Hussein's power in order to provoke his hostility so that he presented himself as a real enemy against whom it was absolutely necessary to act. In the past, the West had already displayed the same attitude against the Soviet communist regime, suspecting it of preparing aggression against Europe. This is what has happened with the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which Russia is justifying as a pre-emptive war.

Merleau Ponty examined this problem in an attempt to understand the underlying reasons for the West's hostility towards the Soviets. In the end, Merleau Ponty discovered that

[216]Bush's speech pronounced on June 1st 2002 at the Military Academy of West Point. In https://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu . Consulted on March 10th 2022 at 4 pm, Cameroon time.

the accusation levelled at the Soviets was the result of the propaganda undertaken by the West in favour of the United States, which led people to believe that the war was necessary and that they had to be for or against it. Although Merleau Ponty was not totally unaware of the Soviet Union's actions in Poland and the Baltic States and of what could be assumed about its intentions in Eastern Europe, he insisted that the Soviets had no obvious intention of being an imperialist or conquering power in the same way as Nazi Germany under Hitler. Nor does it rule out the possibility that the Soviet Union could become an aggressive nation by acquiring greater strength. The acquisition of the greatest power by a communist nation was bound to arouse the fear of capitalist countries, particularly the United States and Europe.

According to Merleau Ponty, the West's hostility towards the Soviet Union reflected the spirit of the post-World War II years, a spirit that had spread throughout the world and made the capitalist West a power of oppression directed against the socialist countries. Whether it was the Soviet communist regime or that of Western capitalism, Merleau Ponty established that both operated on the basis of Machiavellian principles in which violence and cunning are intimately intertwined. Thus, "*in the Soviet Union, violence and cunning are official, humanity is in everyday life; in democracies, on the other hand, principles are human, cunning and violence are in practice*[217]".

The Soviet Union and the capitalist West have both practised Machiavellianism. Each has sacrificed morality and humanity to make violence and cunning the maxims of its foreign policy. For this reason, unilateral condemnation of the Soviet Union's foreign policy is no longer relevant. The reasons for this condemnation must be sought elsewhere, perhaps on economic grounds, because capitalism is fundamentally opposed to communism. As a result, the preventive war that the West and the United States were preparing to wage against the Soviet Union could no longer be justified by the imperialist intentions that were falsely attributed to it. Rather, it must be understood that the Western democracies' obstinacy in waging war against the Soviet Union was the result of a fear of being dominated economically by the latter, given that the Soviet Union, after rejecting the Marshal Plan, quickly restored its economic reputation by its own efforts. The anticipation of the Western democracies is clear proof of the application of the principle of prudence recommended by Machiavelli in matters of security. All the wars of the twentieth century show us that they were the fruit of political realism, which is more or less openly based on Machiavellianism and the Prince.

[217]Merleau Ponty, *Humanisme et terreur*. *Essai sur le problème communiste*, Paris, Editions Gallimard, 1947, p. 302.

Moreover, other types of comparison can be drawn between American strategy in the Middle East and that advocated by Machiavelli in The Prince, particularly when it comes to describing the methods used to reconstitute authority in a newly conquered territory. Before proceeding to compare the two types of strategy, it seems appropriate to show that the two contexts, that in which Machiavelli's conquering prince evolves and that in which the American work of reforming the Middle East is modelled, have some similarities. Firstly, both the Americans and the Machiavellian prince found themselves in new territory, occupied by force. What's more, each is faced with a hostile population, distinguished by its differences in language, customs and political habits.

On the other hand, both are driven by the same desire, the same ambition, to institute a new order. Achieving such an ambition therefore requires effective strategies. This is also where the White House's approach intersects with that advocated by the Florentine in The Prince. It reflects a genuine implementation of Machiavellian tactics for rebuilding the State. How does this tactic play out in the American effort to reconstitute the state, particularly in Iraq? What are the stages involved? In what way does this approach have a Machiavellian character?

The strategy of the international coalition in the Middle East has not been limited to destroying the physical and symbolic structures of the previous power. It has often gone further, applying severe measures against the dignitaries of the old order. Here again, the second phase of the Machiavellian strategy was implemented. It was just as decisive, so much so that it left no other choice. It consists of a series of necessary physical eliminations of all those whose presence can be deemed threatening, even dangerous to peace. As Machiavelli says, in these circumstances, *"men must either pamper or annihilate*[218]*",* especially since, when it comes to the security of the world, no means should be skimped on[219]. This is the price to pay for living in peace. It goes without saying that no state, even one that is more powerful than all the others, can live in security as long as its near or distant neighbour is governed or harbours fearsome enemies, unless, as Fichte says, it is forced to consider it as a natural ally against another power that threatens both of them[220]. But this is not often the case, and recourse to radical purges appears to be the only alternative, although the application of

[218]NiccolòMachiavelli, *L'Art de la guerre…*, p. 64.
[219]NiccolòMachiavelli*, Discourses…,* Bk. III, Ch. 41, p. 211
[220]André-Marie Yinda Yinda, *op. cit.*, p. 220, citant Fichte,*Über Machiavelli, als Schriftsteller aus seinen Schriften*, 1807.

this measure by the international coalition proves problematic from the point of view of ethical deliberation.

The proof of this is that the recourse to radical purges has aroused widespread indignation within international society, decrying the Machiavellian nature of the international coalition's practices. In a highly suggestive article on this subject, André-Marie Yinda Yinda[221] highlights the grey areas on which international opinion bases its assessment of the Machiavellian nature of the coalition in the Middle East. These include the abusive use of the threat of fear, the instrumentalisation of terror by making terrorism the spectre of the post-bipolar world, cold calculation and the exaltation of cynicism. It is worth remembering that this criticism is in line with that which has accompanied the reception of Machiavelli since the publication of *The Prince* in Florence, providing in the course of the history of the French language the noun Machiavellianism and an adjective Machiavellian.

8.4. The Role of Individual Actors

However, the applications of the peace-building strategies advocated by Machiavelli are not only perceptible at the level of institutions and the international coalition. They are more apparent at the level of individual actors, whose local activities can have a global impact. The application of Machiavelli's peacemaking and peacekeeping strategies by individual actors is historically justified by the close relationship they have with his work, in particular *The Prince*. Insofar as these intimate relationships are constantly cultivated by individual actors, they end up forging in them behaviours similar to those that characterise the conduct of the Machiavellian prince. Jean-Jacques Chevalier has produced an interesting study that identifies in certain dominant figures in our history the characteristic traits of the political conduct of the Machiavellian prince. He points to the example of Napoleon, whose enemies, like Chateaubriand, consider him to be the most perfect example of the Machiavellian prince. It is the same impression we get when we observe the behaviour and actions of the individual actors in our contemporary history in favour of the peace and security of the states they are responsible for leading. In what way, however, does the behaviour of these actors reflect the Machiavellian spirit? In what way does this behaviour reflect a strategic implementation that proceeds from the Machiavellian understanding of the question of peace?

[221]André-Marie Yinda Yinda, *Machiavel et les néoconservateurs : l'empire en jeu,* in *Etudes internationales,* Vol. 38, n° 1, 2007, pp. 33-50.

The first approach to the answer that we recommend is based on a logic that is specific to the Machiavellian approach to security. It takes into account a certain number of guarantees that the political leader of a state must surround himself with in order to be safe from external attack. Chief among these guarantees is the possession of the greatest power. Our observation of today's political scene shows that most state leaders are engaged in the quest for the greatest power. The search for the greatest power that our political leaders frantically indulge in consists concretely in increasing their military potential by building up robust armies and a sophisticated, large-scale war arsenal. It's a kind of arms race, in which a state's greater mastery would automatically make it safe from a potential aggressor. All the major Western powers of our time are involved in this race, so much so that each of them boasts to the world about the degree of power it has achieved thanks to the global reach of its weapons. It goes without saying that the daily media sorties of the leaders of the great powers also constitute an important moment in Machiavelli's overall strategy of the quest for peace. This is the moment when each power builds up a monstrous image of itself, or of the great Leviathan capable of thwarting all kinds of attempts, wherever they may come from. The aim of this image is to instil fear and respect in the minds of individual states for a power whose increasingly sophisticated weapons are capable of unparalleled effectiveness. States are thus engaged in what is known as the power game, the avowed aim of which is to make the prospect of war between States improbable.

Finally, this chapter has enabled us to determine the uses to which Machiavelli's philosophy of peace was put by actors on the international political scene before and after the events of 11 September 2001. These uses were authorised by a colonial interpretation that was made in America by third-wave neoconservatives and their own interventions in the political spheres of the United States, notably Harvey Mansfield and Allan Bloom, who were trained by Leo Strauss. Other neoconservatives can be mentioned, mainly those trained by Harvey Mansfield and his comrade Allan Bloom. Similarly, the implications of Machiavelli's philosophy of peace for the strategic conduct of the quest for power are legion and go back further in time. Most political leaders have used *The Prince* as their bedside book or breviary, like Benito Mussolini. This is why the book is often considered to be the mirror of princesengaged in the quest for the greatest power. This certainly shows that Machiavelli's thought is still alive.

CHAPTER 9
COERCIVE DIPLOMACY AS A MEANS FOR PEACE IN A GLOBAL-WAR- ENDANGERED-WORLD

Our aim in this chapter is to reflect on how peace can be promoted in today's world. It is a question of going beyond Machiavelli to consider the question of conflict resolution from the point of view of strategic approaches that would take us away from the obligation to wage war in order to achieve peace. But how can war be avoided in today's globalised world, where human relations are constantly dominated by the principle of political predation? How can we promote peaceful coexistence without resorting to war in a world where human relations are subject to zoological determinism, or to the logic of universal competition, and placed under the sign of Darwinism[222]?

9.1. Coercive Diplomacy and Its Use in Resolving International Conflicts

With the aim of promoting peaceful coexistence in the context of current globalisation, contemporary political philosophy is increasingly moving away from a strategy based on the obligation to wage war and all that goes with it. In the context of contemporary political philosophy, the strategy of the obligation to wage war is clearly an inappropriate solution to the problem of peace, because war is counter-productive. It is historically established that the posture of the strongest favoured by those who arrogate to themselves the status of masters of the world does not always succeed in dissuading those who are dominated by the passion to destroy or terrorise the world. Instead of seeking peace through the strategy of compulsory war, which simply leads to Pantagonism and the logic of domination, contemporary philosophy has forged a new path, one that favours the use of "coercive diplomacy", to which everyone must refer or participate.

But the concept of "coercive diplomacy" itself is not sufficiently known, popularised or even used in the common circles where discourse on peace is held on a daily basis. More often than not, we have become accustomed to the concept of diplomacy pure and simple. In the field of legal philosophy, diplomacy is seen as an instrument in the service of peace. Initially, it had a preventive vocation because it was used before local or global conflicts arose. Over time, however, the concept has evolved, taking on a broader scope that has enriched it by giving it new missions. In addition to its recognised preventive role, it has taken on a restorative role. It is now part of the reconciliation process in international conflicts.

[222]Lucien Ayissi, « La promotion de l'éthique de la paix dans le pantagonisme »,pp.195-196.

Negotiation, dialogue and discussion are all part of its essence. It is through these that it aims to avoid or halt intra- or inter-state conflicts by encouraging the signing of peace agreements or treaties. But the question arises as to how effective diplomacy can be in an international context where peoples and states are obsessed with violence. How can peace be promoted globally and sustainably through diplomacy when we know that the negotiation, discussion and dialogue on which it is based are constantly being put to the test by the will of those who find fulfilment in chaos? How can we give diplomatic action a chance in the current context of international anarchy in which, in addition to the masters of the world, rogue states and what Lucien Ayissi calls the great entrepreneurs of terrorism are collaborating?

The above questions lead us to believe that diplomacy without force is powerless. To be effective and to achieve the objectives assigned to it in the promotion of international peace and security, diplomacy must rely on force, or include the prospect of its use in its approaches. It is against this ideological backdrop that the concept of "coercive diplomacy" has emerged from the realist theories of international relations that are relevant today. But in what sense should we understand this concept? What are its uses and results in world conflicts?

It should be said at the outset that, beyond the antinomic relations that the notions of diplomacy and coercion may have, the concept of “coercive diplomacy” is first and foremost Anglo-Saxon in origin. It is the work of Thomas Schelling, who conceived the idea that it is necessary to combine force and diplomacy in the search for peace, seeing them as complements rather than alternatives. The term by which he translated this idea was the concept of compellence.

Even if this did not win over its author, it is roughly translated into French by the term persuasion which, in Schelling’s view, evokes the idea of getting someone to believe, want or adhere to a project without any physical constraint being exerted against them. Through the term compellence, Thomas Schelling conceptually inaugurated a new approach to the use of force in the resolution of international conflicts, which before him had been based on the promotion of the balance of power. In the use of coercive diplomacy, as Michel Liégeois points out, it is no longer a question of who wins or loses, victor or vanquished. As he sees it,

> *The evaluation of a strategy was no longer limited to knowing whether it had succeeded or failed, but more broadly to determining its outcome (...). In order to diagnose the success or failure of a strategy, it is necessary to identify precise causal links: country A did not attack country B because it*

was dissuaded from doing so by some action taken by B. In practice, however, it is extremely difficult - if not impossible - to establish such causal relationships rigorously. In the case of political phenomena, the large number of players and variables to be taken into account, as well as the opacity of the motivations of decision-makers, are all factors that oblige the observer to refrain, most of the time, from formulating a diagnosis of the success or failure of a given strategy. At most, they can compare the initial situation with that which prevails once the strategy has been implemented, without being able to accurately estimate the real influence of the strategy implemented by the actors[223].

But for the first time in the history of American thought, which follows in the footsteps of Thomas Schelling, Daniel Ellsberg and Alexander George used the verb to compel in their work, in which they tried to combine diplomacy and the use of military tools. The verb to compel actually means forcing a state, rebel or ethnic group to change its behaviour without actually declaring war on it. Coercive diplomacy" therefore uses the threat or limited use of force as an instrument for negotiating peace with a view to influencing the adversary's willingness to give up the conflict. Its aim is to persuade an adversary not only through the threat of violence, but also through the limited, gradual and reversible use of force, in order to avoid a large-scale conflict.

While it is clear that the Schellingian term compellence incorporates the threat and limited use of force to induce or compel an adversary to change his behaviour and cooperate in the effort to achieve peace, it should be noted that the action of "coercive diplomacy" is distinct from pure deterrence and conventional military strategy. To give us a better understanding of the notion of 'coercive diplomacy' as conceptualised by Thomas Schelling, Pascal Vennesson highlights the nuances that exist between coercive diplomacy, deterrence and conventional military strategy. Rereading Schelling, Pascal Vennesson writes as follows:

Deterrence means ensuring that the adversary refrains from taking action because the chances of success are too uncertain and/or the cost disproportionate to the expected gains. It is a strategy of non-use of forces, and this feature is even more marked with nuclear deterrence. When the adversary ignores this threat of punishment and launches military action, deterrence has failed. Coercive diplomacy, on the other hand, requires the adversary to change its behaviour in one way or another. The actor who engages in coercive diplomacy is not content to wait, but must act to change the status quo. Moreover, coercive diplomacy is indeterminate in terms of the means used and may include the use of force. Schelling points out that the threat that compels action, as opposed to that which dissuades, often,

[223]Michel Liégeois,*Stratégies de maintien de la paix de l'OTAN*, rapport final établi dans le cadre du programme de bourse de recherche individuelle de l'Organisation du Traité de l'Atlantique Nord, 1997, p. 21.

but not always, implies that punishment is administered until the other party acts, and not only if he does. The threat of destruction is based on real destruction. Nor is coercive diplomacy the same as conventional military strategy. Schelling contrasts "brute force" and coercion. In the case of coercion, armed force is not used to occupy and hold a territory, or to carry out an offensive manoeuvre aimed, through a combination of fire and movement, at destroying a localised enemy or driving it out of the areas it occupies while inflicting as many losses as possible[224].

In the light of the above, deterrence and coercion are theoretically distinct. However, they are linked in the practice of "coercive diplomacy", since the use of armed force is accompanied by an element of deterrence. In "coercive diplomacy", the aim is not to win a war in the traditional sense of the term, but to use coercion to obtain the agreement or collaboration of the enemy by threatening action that could cause considerable harm. It is clear here that the coercion used in "coercive diplomacy" is based on a process of manipulating risk in such a way that the responsibility and consequences of this process are borne entirely by the party forced to change its behaviour. The power to do harm is used to force restraint. In this context, armed force is also held in reserve, as it is not the damage it can cause to the enemy that is most important, but its impact on the opponent's belligerent behaviour.

9.2. Offensive and Defensive Strategies in Coercive Diplomacy

To better explain what "coercive diplomacy" really is and to show how it works, Alexander George provides further clarification by contrasting the concepts of offensive and defensive strategies. For him, the former strategies are used to modify the status quo, while the latter are designed to prevent or annihilate the effects of offensive actions, because such strategies are applied during a crisis. Alexander George's thinking leads to the conclusion that "coercive diplomacy" is solely a matter of defensive strategies characterised by an appropriate combination of diplomatic and military means. Alexander George therefore opted for a restrictive use of the concept of "coercive diplomacy". This approach marks a stage in the semantic evolution of the concept. By strictly reducing "coercive diplomacy" to defensive strategies, he undertakes to go beyond the meaning it has received from Schelling's notion of compellence. But what do the defensive strategies advocated by Alexander George actually correspond to in his perception of "coercive diplomacy"? What are the variants of this strategy? How do they fit together and how are they implemented?

[224]Pascal Vennesson, «Bombarder pour convaincre ? Puissance aérienne, rationalité limitée et diplomatie coercitive au Kosovo»,in *cultures et conflit*,n° 37, Printemps 2000, p.27.

Broadly speaking, Alexander George identifies ten defensive strategies. These include the ultimatum, the tacit ultimatum, the coercive test, gradual pressure, limited escalation combined with counter-escalation deterrence, identical response and deterrence, the capacity test combined with deterrence, drawing a line, communicating commitment and resolve, and buying time to negotiate. But only the first four forms of defensive strategy are genuine variants of "coercive diplomacy" according to Alexander George. The first variant, the ultimatum, is the basic strategy of Alexander George's "coercive diplomacy" and is characterised by a series of pressures that a state exerts on its adversary. Indeed, says Alexander George

> *The ultimatum is characterised by three elements: a demand, a deadline, and a threat of sanction if the demand is not met in time. The pressure exerted on the opponent is therefore twofold. The threat of sanctions is compounded by the sense of urgency created by the existence of a deadline. The choice of an ultimatum strategy inevitably implies that the crisis has entered a phase of great tension, which will increase until the deadline. Managing this tension requires composure and diplomatic skill on both sides. (...). It is also important to note that the ultimatum, as a power strategy, should not be understood as the final stage before military confrontation. There are many variations among the threats that can be brandished by the person issuing the ultimatum. The threat of war is only one of them. The Ultimator can just as easily threaten to: break off ongoing negotiations; denounce existing agreements; make a show of force, troop movements and other military gestures; take measures including the non-violent use of military force such as blockades, embargoes, etc.; make violent use of military force to achieve limited objectives; initiate an escalation in an ongoing conflict*[225].

The second defensive strategy, which corresponds to "coercive diplomacy", is the tacit ultimatum. What distinguishes it from the first form of ultimatum is that the ultimator does not set a deadline for his request and does not explicitly express the threat of sanctions. But the absence of an explicit deadline does not preclude the use of other means to create a sense of urgency in the recipient of the tacit ultimatum. However, this does not diminish its effectiveness. The coercive test is the third form of defensive strategy. In this version of "coercive diplomacy", which Alexander George calls the "try-and-see approach", only the first component of the ultimatum is present, i.e. the demand. The defendant does not set a deadline or brandish any specific threat. It is content with a limited threat to which it adapts its behaviour while waiting to see what the challenger's reaction will be.

[225]Alexander L. George, « Les limites de la diplomatie coercitive: Laos, Cuba, Vietnam », Boston, Little, Brown, 1971, pp. 16-35.

Finally, gradual pressure is the fourth and last variant of "coercive diplomacy" and is referred to in Alexander George's typology as "gradual turning of the screw". This last variant differs from the coercive test in that a gradual increase in pressure is applied by the applicant. The strategy of gradual pressure thus transforms the ultimatum process into a continuous process, less risky in its consequences in the event of failure and easier to control in terms of escalation. In all cases, the aim of "coercive diplomacy" is to back up a request made to an adversary with the promise of punishment if the request is not complied with. In defensive strategies, the threat of punishment is central to "coercive diplomacy". It is used to avoid large-scale conflict. For this reason, several criteria must be taken into account when applying it in order to maximise the chances of success. But how can the threat of violence be used in the context of "coercive diplomacy" to make it effective? Is it a simple threat or the actual use of violence?

The above questions require us to re-examine the meaning of the concept of 'coercive diplomacy' in Pascal Vennesson's thinking. Updating its content by this author allows us to better understand the strategic use of violence as he envisages it in his system of thought. For Pascal Vennesson

> *Coercive diplomacy is a deliberately limited and gradual threat and/or use of armed force in order to persuade an adversary to put an end to an action in progress, to return to the "status quo ante", or to force him to take an action that he considers undesirable. The terms "coercion", "strategic coercion", "coercive diplomacy", "compellence", "strategy of persuasion", "strategy of blackmail" (...), "strategy of constraint", "gunboat diplomacy", or "strategy of action" are often used interchangeably to refer to this diplomacy of violence which uses armed force to exploit the fears and desires of the adversary*[226].

For Vennesson, "coercive diplomacy" first seeks to persuade an adversary not only by the threat of violence, but also by its limited, gradual and reversible use. Unlike pure and especially nuclear deterrence, the threat can then be used to achieve the desired end. The test of strength may be effective, but if a war breaks out following the use of "coercive diplomacy", it may mean that the strategy has failed. Hence, there are three essential dimensions to the use of "coercive diplomacy". These include persuasion, in addition to coercion; the reaction of the adversary in favour of the success of the threat; and the desire to negotiate peace.

[226]Pascal Vennesson, *op., cit.*, p. 29.

While the concept of "coercive diplomacy" is relatively new, having entered the vocabulary of political philosophy in the 1960s, the practice of this strategy goes back a long way. Even in Machiavelli's time, Caesar Borgia implemented a similar strategy in the form of the "diplomacy of fear". Indeed, Caesar Borgia's diplomacy was always characterised by a number of features that are close to or similar to those associated with the current concept of "coercive diplomacy", if we take into account the terms of the reports sent by Machiavelli on this subject to his Florentine hierarchy.

During the diplomatic missions of the Florentine embassy that Machiavelli took part in with Caesar Borgia, accompanied by Bishop Francesco Soderini, he was able to appreciate the throes of the "diplomacy of fear" through the evolution of the figure of Caesar Borgia. To make his first threats, according to Machiavelli's letter of 26 June, Caesar Borgia began by subjecting his counterpart to the stern test of political dialogue, as the following extract shows:

> *First of all, I want to know with whom I will have to deal with our agreement; then I want to obtain good assurances from you; if this agreement is concluded you will always find me favourable to any project; if it is not concluded, I will be obliged to continue the enterprise and to secure you at all costs*[227].

The rest of the conversation was characterised by threats and extremely violent comments from the Duke against the Florentine authorities, who, according to him, were not to his liking and wanted to make this clear to his host. This is why, the Duke told him, *"I don't like this government and I can't trust it; you have to change it and if you don't want me as your friend, you'll have me as your enemy*[228]*"*.

In the light of these remarks, we can see that Caesar Borgia was already resorting to the use of threats, which today constitute one of the major criteria of "coercive diplomacy". Circumstances were favourable to him insofar as he occupied a position of strength that enabled him to put constant pressure on Florence and obtain its unfailing cooperation. His reputation and that of his army enabled him to occupy this position unquestionably. After a series of interrupted victories that had given him the opportunity to take possession of Romagna and a large part of the Marches, extending his sphere of power, he appeared invincible in the eyes of anyone who wanted to attack him. What's more, the propaganda in honour of Caesar Borgia continued to grow at this time. He was portrayed as invincible,

[227]Machiavel, quoted byJean-Jacques Marchand, *op.cit.*, p. 330.
[228]*Idem.*

ambitious, courageous and blessed with a remarkable fortune. In short, the propaganda in favour of Caesar Borgia emphasised the exceptional qualities of his character. The strategy of threat he was relying on therefore had every chance of succeeding. The rest of the letter of 26 June shows us that Caesar Borgia's diplomacy was close to, if not similar to, "coercive diplomacy" because, like coercive diplomacy, Caesar Borgia's diplomacy was based on the gradual use of threats: *"You must resolve this quickly, because here I cannot keep my army and between you and me there is no room for evasions; you must be either my friends or my enemies.*[229]*"*

From time to time, Caesar Borgia's use of threats oscillated between offensive and defensive methods, depending on the circumstances. At the meeting between Machiavelli and Caesar Borgia in Urbino, the latter's diplomacy was essentially offensive by virtue of the position of strength he occupied in relation to Florence. But the situation changed when he began to lose this position and needed the support of the Florentine Republic against his enemies in Magione[230]. Machiavelli took on the role of observer during this mission, which enabled him to closely follow the stages of Caesar Borgia's diplomatic approach. When Machiavelli came into contact with the Duke again, he immediately noticed a change in what he was saying. From violent and offensive, they had become defensive and apologetic, reflecting a change in tactics. Jean-Jacques Marchand sums up the quintessence of the first phase of the two men's conversation in the following terms:

> *The first part of the Duke's long reply to the Florentine secretary's introductory words is a vast overview of his entire policy towards Florence, which he tries to present as constantly dictated by "friendship towards Your Lordships"; the affronts committed are blamed on the "malice of others" and he shows himself ready to forget that the Florentines have obviously broken the promises they had made to him the previous year, claiming that all this has not "bothered him much*"[231].

However, Caesar Borgia's tone suddenly changed in the second half of the conversation between the two men and became threatening towards Florence, which was now under great pressure. He even formulates an ultimatum to the government of Florence, whose response must not wait long. This is a typical "coercive diplomacy" approach.

The application of "coercive diplomacy" to the resolution of inter-state conflicts was revived following its conceptualisation in the 1960s by Thomas Schelling and his successors.

[229] *Idem.*
[230] *Ibid.*, p. 332.
[231] *Ibid.*, p. 333.

It was used to resolve major intra- and inter-state conflicts during and at the end of the Cold War. In the 1990s, the masters of the world resolved to rely on the limited use of force against the enemies of peace in order to influence them to return to the status quo, and not with the aim of destabilising their states or changing the face of power, as is often the case in traditional wars. It is with this in mind that, most of the time, the masters of the world resort to the use of air power to carry out what they call "targeted" or "surgical" attacks with a view to weakening the adversary and discouraging it from pursuing reprehensible actions. Pascal Vennesson makes the link between air power, limited rationality and "coercive diplomacy" in its use in Kosovo[232]. Apart from Kosovo, this form of diplomacy, also known as the diplomacy of violence, has been used in several other conflicts. Our aim now is to analyse the use of diplomacy of violence in certain conflicts to understand why it was used and how it worked.

Alexander George also justifies the failure to use "coercive diplomacy" in Vietnam by the fact that there was no room for negotiation: it is true that President Johnson tried to offer the two protagonists a compromise whereby a major financial plan for the development of the Mekong River would benefit both South and North Vietnam if the latter agreed to end the conflict on American terms. But this proposal, apart from the fact that it was a late option, did not meet with favourable opinions in the United States, Hanoi or Moscow, so it was quickly set aside by all the parties[233].A few months later, the American President finally decided to deploy ground troops, thus definitively thwarting all previous attempts at "coercive diplomacy".

An analysis of these two major conflicts demonstrates all the difficulties associated with the success of "coercive diplomacy". We can assume that the context of bipolarity, as was the case during the Cold War, was not sufficiently conducive to the success of this strategy. Justin Carlson points out that at that time, the notion of "coercive diplomacy" did not particularly attract the attention of most leaders, especially the two leaders of the political game in the world, the United States and the Soviet Union. They were more engaged in a global ideological conflict in which the nuclear threat predominated in any armed conflict that might involve either of these two powers. The lack of interest shown in this strategy by the leaders of the States at that time may explain its approximate application and the oversights that characterised President Johnson's approach during the Vietnam conflict. However, since

[232]*Idem.*
[233]*Ibid.*, p. 46.

the end of the world's ideological bipolarity, the application of "coercive diplomacy" has been revived in the hope that it would help the world to limit the inflation of war. In this new context, can we say that the use of "coercive diplomacy" strategies has fulfilled all its promises?

9.3. Problems relating to the use of "coercive diplomacy" in international conflicts

An analysis of international conflicts such as those in Haiti, Iraq, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo certainly shows that the use of "coercive diplomacy" is now an integral part of strategies to promote peace in the context of new armed conflicts. The world's major powers do not hesitate to make use of it, even if its results remain approximate. Indeed, its chances of success seem very limited, so much so that in a very interesting article that follows on from Pascal Vennesson's, Alexander George analyses the limits of "coercive diplomacy" in Laos and Vietnam. To this he adds the difficulties associated with its efficient application in Iraq, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. What can explain the difficulties in applying "coercive diplomacy"? How can we account for its many failures in the conflicts where it has been used?

There may be reasons specific to each conflict situation that explain why "coercive diplomacy" has been applied with little success. This objective is at the heart of Alexander George's thinking in an article devoted to the study of the limits of the strategies inherent in the diplomacy of violence or fear. In the case of Laos and Vietnam, the failure of 'coercive diplomacy' can be explained, as we have shown, in relation to the socio-political context of the time, dominated by the preponderance of the logic of bipolarity, which itself provided the bedrock for the nuclear conflict and the rivalry between the two nuclear superpowers of the time. As a result, the players on the international political scene, although they often resorted to this strategy, applied it so carelessly, leaving little or no room for negotiation. The world's political climate has finally forced them to forget the major objective of "coercive diplomacy", namely that its use should enable them to avoid war in order to favour peaceful means of conflict resolution. Blinded by ideological ambitions, each power strove to demonstrate its military might on the battlefield rather than its negotiating skills. This is why, in the particular case of the Vietnamese conflict, where the use of "coercive diplomacy" proved to be a total failure, the masters of the world finally succeeded in deploying ground

troops in addition to the multiple air offensives that had already demonstrated their inadequacies, thus creating what came to be known as the "Vietnamese quagmire".

The situation was hardly any different in the global conflicts that followed the Cold War and the collapse of the Communist regime. Here too, the strategies of "coercive diplomacy" proved to be of little use, even though their use was increasingly presented as a genuine alternative to the logic of radical and devastating war. Alexander George and many other exegetes of the contemporary political scene have tried to find the root of the many failures and mixed successes that the use of "coercive diplomacy" has had and continues to have in the resolution of contemporary conflicts, when the ideological ambitions that compromised its effective use in the context of bipolarity are no longer on the agenda. But how can we explain the fact that the masters of the world are failing to use the diplomacy of fear?

It would be inappropriate to follow in the footsteps of Alexander George, whose explanations simply cast anathema not only on the impact of the political context of ideological bipolarity that prevailed during the Cold War, but also on the attitude of the states, governments or individuals on whom all the pressure of "coercive diplomacy" falls. This would mean wiping the slate clean of all the criticisms that deserve to be made of the behaviour of those who unilaterally arrogate to themselves the status of master of the world. To get a better grasp of the problem we are posing here, it is first important to return not only to the critical observations made by Pascal Vennesson, but also to make a diversion towards the thinking of Khaled Taktek and Houchang Hassan-Yari.

For Pascal Vennesson, "coercive diplomacy" is mainly confronted with three types of stopper. Firstly, the users of this strategy tend to overestimate the coherence of their actions and, in particular, to assume that the implementation of their decisions always corresponds exactly to their initial intentions. Secondly, they assume that the meaning of the message they are conveying through coercion will be perfectly understood by their adversary. Finally, they also tend to assume that their opponent can be likened to a rational individual[234], thus underestimating the fact that he might react differently.

In the context of thinking about peace, we have often wondered why "coercive diplomacy" has been used so ineffectively to resolve certain conflicts in recent years, in which

[234]Marie-Claude Smouts, Dario Battistella et Pascal Vennesson, *Dictionnaire des relations internationales : approches, concepts, doctrines*, Paris, Dalloz, 2003, p.140.

the current masters of the world have always been involved. Our approach to answering this question leads us to examine the stance that the masters of the world most often adopt when they intervene in a conflict. Based on Transactional Analysis data, we thought that the current masters of the world could play the role of Nurturing Parent, i.e. the one who has the potential to manage a situation adequately by helping his child to recover, to ensure his autonomy by repositioning him on the path of reason. But whenever they have been given the opportunity to intervene in a conflict, whether in the Middle East or elsewhere in the world, we have always found that the Parent-Critic attitude is their favourite posture. Instead of playing the role of the Nurturing Parent, whose main task should be to rationalise or humanise the behaviour of those they put on the list of villains, in this case the regime of Saddam Hussein and many others, the current masters of the world are content to wear the mask of the Angry-Critical-Parent and take the path of obstinacy, thereby compromising any chance of success of "coercive diplomacy". Their obstinacy in dismantling Saddam Hussein's regime on the pretext that it possesses weapons of mass destruction, promotes terrorism, brutalizes its people and causes serious problems throughout the Middle East region has frustrated efforts to bring about peace through "coercive diplomacy". From this perspective, the masters of the world are to blame. Their fault lies in having swapped the image of Nurturing Parent for that of Critical Parent.

The effectiveness of "coercive diplomacy" can also be assessed in the context of the fight against international terrorism. Terrorism is one of the tests of the effectiveness of "coercive diplomacy". Whenever this strategy is used as a response to a terrorist act, the conditions for its success seem problematic from the outset, since they are rarely met. This is because the aim of terrorism is identical to that of "coercive diplomacy", i.e. to force an adversary to put an end to violent or simply threatening action. Although the world's major powers have already succeeded in using "coercive diplomacy" against states that have incited or committed terrorist acts, they have not yet found an effective formula for using a combination of threat and promise of reward to force non-state actors to return to the status quo. In fact, the aim of terrorism is also to use violence to force a government to cease any political involvement. So the use of "coercive diplomacy" often clashes with the ambitions of terrorism in such a way that each side wants to weaken the motivations of the other by giving it the impression that the benefits of its actions are less than the disadvantages of the consequences of those same actions. To achieve this, each side tries to use the level of violence necessary to be credible and to make the other side back down. On both sides, the

possibility of there being positive motivations is absolutely rare insofar as each side wants to use the threat, even if the actualisation of this threat is much less obvious on the side of terrorism in a context of escalating violence than on the side of the major powers or any other state faced with the phenomenon of terrorism.

The use of "coercive diplomacy" also comes up against certain obstacles inherent in terrorist organisations that are not present in inter-state conflicts. First of all, there is the problem of properly identifying the targets to be destroyed in order to weaken the power of a terrorist group. As it happens, such an adversary constantly escapes the control or vigilance of the masters of the world, making it more difficult for the international coalition or any other organisation to intervene. Then there is also the fact that communication with such an adversary is particularly difficult, with the result that everyone is stuck on positions that are often extreme, without the slightest possibility of reaching a compromise.

Since the very raison d'être of a terrorist group is to use violence to coerce its adversary, their motives can be quite disproportionate in achieving their end. However, the target state, aware of the desperate motivations of the terrorists and the inconceivable methods they use to achieve their goal, seeks nothing other than the pure and simple annihilation of the terrorist organisation.

What's more, it is extremely difficult to judge the real effects of using threats or force against terrorists, given that they never see this form of coercion as a simple punishment, but rather as a declaration of war. Moreover, the purpose of the use of force by a State is not only to put an end to terrorist acts, but also to prevent other manifestations of the same kind. It is therefore tempting to use force that goes beyond simple punishment.

Finally, a government wishing to attack terrorist forces cannot publicise its intentions without at the same time revealing its knowledge of the adversary. This other reality undermines the use of "coercive diplomacy". The specific characteristics of terrorism therefore make the use of "coercive diplomacy" practically impossible. The problems of interaction between the parties, the difficulty of identifying and attacking the many terrorist targets, the use of tactics based on the element of surprise and unconventional violent measures, the disproportionate motivations, the extreme level of risk acceptance on the part of terrorists and the impossibility of putting forward any form of ultimatum to force them to cease their actions are all factors that make it virtually impossible to use "coercive diplomacy" effectively in response to such acts.

To conclude this chapter on the modalities of promoting peace in international conflicts, it should be said that the approach currently in force does indeed depart from one of the major procedures advocated by Machiavelli in his time. In Machiavelli's view, war is the only way for states to protect themselves from external attack. This is why Machiavelli speaks of armed peace, to highlight the fact that he advocates the use of armed force to establish security in an international context where, according to him, every state, having been born of violence and force, must rely on the same means to persevere in the long term. Contrary to this approach, the management of international conflicts is based on the use of "coercive diplomacy", which has less and less recourse to the radical use of armed force, even if its effectiveness is far from absolute.

PARTIAL CONCLUSION

The first aim of this part of our work was to evaluate the principles of national territorial defence advocated by Machiavelli. The need to organise the defence of national territory can be understood in relation to the fact that each state is faced with a threat from its neighbours, each driven by the desire to dominate the other and even to destabilise it. The only way to face up to this threat and stay safe is to anticipate the intentions of your neighbour, remembering that the best defence is a good offence. It is therefore the duty of every State and its leader to ensure the security of its territory and its inhabitants by engaging in battle with a near or distant enemy whose actions constitute a real or potential danger. However, current political events show that attacks on States are no longer exclusively perpetrated by territorially determined political entities. Increasingly, they are carried out by non-state organisations that are difficult to locate in space and that impose on established states the logic of asymmetric warfare that undermines the Machiavellian principles of national defence, namely the principle of power and the principle of short, sharp war.

Current events show that the quest for the greatest power no longer offers absolute guarantees of national security. The greatest military powers of our time are just as vulnerable as militarily weak states. The strategic principle of power has been contradicted by terrorist attacks in ultra-secure cities around the world. Similarly, the application of the strategic principle of short war is no longer effectively adapted to the realities of asymmetric warfare. It has become difficult today to limit a war in time. This requirement has hardly stood up to the examples of Cyprus, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan or even Iraq. There are several reasons why this principle has been applied with little success. In addition to the asymmetrical nature of today's wars, we can also mention the fact that, in the configuration of new conflicts, there is no longer a decisive battle as can be the case in conventional wars.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

At the outset of this reflection, we set out to study the question of peace, both in the sphere of the state and at world level. Our interest in this issue is not in vain. It is justified on the basis of a certain number of facts or observations which are essential in the light of current political events. Indeed, current political events show that peace is constantly compromised by acts of violence that multiply like mad both within States and at international level. As we have said, these multiple conflicts are accompanied by the terrors that are the bedrock of pantagonism, i.e. the globalisation of the agonistic logic that makes the human community endure the horrific consequences of violence. The multiplication of this violence therefore poses for this community the problem of peace and the means of its lasting establishment.

The question of how to promote peace is also relevant to the human community insofar as, up to now, the strategies put in place to prepare for the advent of peace have not always been successful. They have not always met the expectations of humanity, which, through its many efforts in this area, aspires to peace. Sub-regional organisations and even the creation of the United Nations at world level are all instruments through which the human community intends to promote lasting peace. Yet the purpose of creating these instruments was to promote the collective pursuit of peace. At the same time, these instruments were forums for peaceful and legal alliances between member states, for strategic collaboration to neutralise the common enemy. Despite the establishment of these instruments, conflict remains a rapidly expanding activity in the world. Human groups are increasingly clashing, undermining the authority of the State. States are also confronted with the violence of the major international terrorist organisations, whose actions jeopardise world peace. This can be seen in the logic of general warmongering dramatised by the New Information and Communication Technologies. Every day, they highlight the global or omnipresent nature of violence insofar as it affects every region of the world. The perpetual globalisation of violence is therefore the obvious expression of the crisis of peace. It carries the burden of alienating peace. Whatever its form, violence is part of the logic of the negation of peace, stability or social harmony.

In the light of the foregoing, it is legitimate to think that the recurrence of intra- or inter-state conflicts, in addition to the ineffectiveness of the instruments responsible for promoting social peace, may also be at the root of causes that remain unknown or even neglected until now, and on which we needed to focus. This is why it seemed appropriate to follow in the footsteps of Machiavelli in an attempt to understand the reasons that give rise to conflicts that compromise the peace that the human community aspires to. So Machiavelli's

choice is not in vain. On the contrary, it seems to us to be relevant insofar as he is one of the authors whose thinking is effectively centred on the causes that can destabilise a state and compromise its freedom, in other words the free and peaceful coexistence of its citizens. Machiavelli first takes up this question in chapter 24 of The Prince, where he seeks to identify the reasons why the princes of Italy lost their kingdoms. In examining this question, Machiavelli's intention is effectively to reveal the internal and external causes of the political instability of states. Machiavelli expresses this objective clearly again in the *History of Florence* when he writes: *"If any reading is useful for the citizens who govern states, it is that which uncovers the causes of the hatreds and divisions of the cities, so that they may, tempered by the perils incurred by others, maintain themselves in union"*[235].

Machiavelli therefore emphasised the study of the specific case of Florence. He makes it a textbook case for all those in charge of the administration of the State, because it is significant for the unprecedented violence that led to its total collapse. As a result, the question that needed to be asked was how Machiavelli justifies the origin of the violence that undermines the peace and stability of the state, and how this violence can be annihilated in favour of peace.

Machiavelli adopts a different approach to the origin of the violence that undermines peace, depending on whether the perspective is internal or external. Internally, the crisis of peace can be explained by a number of reasons spread across his various works. Firstly, it can be understood from the angle of the natural necessity that governs all states and subjects them to a number of variations. This natural necessity confines the behaviour of individuals in the direction of rebellion. It was in chapter 3 of *The Prince*, dealing with mixed principalities, that Machiavelli highlighted the action of this natural necessity on men. It is this necessity that subjects individuals and peoples to the logic of war, which can be seen in their behaviour. It is because of this necessity that men experience the desire for perpetual change. It is a desire that both determines and acts. It constantly drives people to take up arms against the established power. It is therefore one of the causes of rebellions that undermine social peace. This phenomenon, as Machiavelli shows, is linked to all mixed societies. A mixed society is defined as a political entity that is heterogeneous in terms of the nature of its populations, their languages and the habits and customs that characterise their ways of life. In all cases, this diversity is one of the causes of rebellions that undermine the stability of a state.

[235]NiccolòMachiavelli, *History of Florence…*, foreword, p11.

According to Machiavelli, the conflicts that jeopardise the peace of a state are best described in terms of the variations linked to the violence that follows a prince's conquest of power. All those who are victims of the violence that founds power are in turn driven by a spirit of vengeance that makes them take up arms with the aim of reversing the balance of power imposed on them by the conquering prince.

The above shows that Machiavelli describes society as an inherently hostile environment. He enriches his thesis with additional, relevant references. These new references are first highlighted in chapter 9 of *The Prince*, where he discusses the civil principalities. In this chapter, he shows that peace is constantly alienated by the conflicts that characterise relations between the people and the Great, two social categories with opposing and even contradictory moods. The same references then appear both in chapter 4 of the first book of *The Discourses* and in *The History of Florence*. After identifying the behavioural patterns of these two social partners, Machiavelli discovers that it is the thirst to rule that is at the root of their enmities.

On the one hand, the" Great Ones" want power in order to dominate the people; on the other, the people want access to power in order to escape the domination of the "Great Ones". Both struggle for exclusive possession of power in order to satisfy their appetites. Based on the binary schema considered here, Machiavelli describes the crisis of peace. The oppressor, i.e. the Great Ones, acts violently to dominate. The oppressed, i.e. the people, also use the strategy of violence to gain power for themselves. As we have said, these two tendencies are expressed in terms of extremely violent desires. "*The desire of the people to be free and the desire of the nobles to command inevitably lead to serious enmities*[236]". As a result, the relationship between the people and the nobles is essentially one of conflict, which jeopardises peace.

Machiavelli also justifies the opposition between the nobles and the people as being the result of the unequal possession of economic wealth and political office. Conflict erupts in a society as a result of the unequal distribution of wealth among the different strata of society. The less well-off take to the streets to express their discontent. For Machiavelli, the desire for wealth felt simultaneously by the great and the weak is also at the root of conflict and is rooted in human nature. This is why, in Machiavelli's view, human nature is seen as the manifestation of the appetites inherent in every man in his daily life.

[236]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourses…*, Bk. I, Ch. 40, p89.

At the international level, on the other hand, Machiavelli justifies the crisis of peace by the bellicose behaviour of states among themselves. According to Machiavelli, every state in the world is driven by the mutual desire to dominate the other or to extend its sphere of power. The achievement of this objective by one state stops only when faced with another state driven by the same ambitions and wishing to protect itself from real or potential assaults from near or far. It can rightly be said that international peace is a victim of the effects of predatory rationality, as seen daily in the hostile behaviour of states around the world. Given the horrific consequences of the predatory rationality of states in the world, every nation now lives in fear of being attacked by another. How can we understand the stubbornness of states in confronting each other? Machiavelli offers a rather pertinent explanation, demonstrating that "*Such obstinacy also stems from the natural hatred that neighbouring princes and republics feel for each other. It stems from jealousy and the desire to dominate the other, especially between republics, as happened in Tuscany*"[237] .

From this point of view, it is now clear that Machiavelli was already developing the thesis of cosmo-pessimism in his time, which establishes the idea that relations between states are essentially strained. As a result, the logic of predation in which states are ensnared means that even weak states organise themselves at their level in order to persevere in existence.

The crisis of peace in the international context is also justified by Machiavelli on the basis of the idea that every state is naturally subject to a process of corruption. The corruption in question here is linked to the phenomenon of alteration that all temporal realities undergo at a given moment in history. Machiavelli always insisted on this phenomenon. This is why he writes :

> *In their evolution, countries usually go from order to disorder, then from disorder to order. For, unable to stop, the things of the world, when they reach their ultimate perfection, can no longer rise and must therefore decline. In the same way, once they have descended and reached the bottom because of disorder, they can no longer descend and are forced to rise. So we always descend from good to evil and rise from evil to good. For value begets peace, peace begets idleness, idleness begets disorder, disorder begets downfall*[238].

So, just like man, the State is also seen as a living reality which, through the stroke of fortune, can go from prosperity to decadence, particularly the decadence of political morals. This inevitably leads to a return to incivility, characterised by factional fighting. Factional

[237] *Ibid.*, livre III, chapitre 12, p68.
[238] NiccolòMachiavelli, *History of Florence…*, Bk. 5, Ch. 1, p4.

strife is peculiar in that it introduces enmity into the city, disunity and weakens the homeland by exposing it to foreign invasions, as was the case with the states of Italy.

So how can peace be promoted in a particularly hostile domestic and international environment? How can relations be harmonised between social partners with opposing and contradictory desires, on the one hand, and between states driven by the desire to dominate, on the other? Machiavelli adopts a differential approach. The package of measures for domestic peace differs markedly from the strategy he advocates at the international level. In each case, the recommended solution is adapted to the nature of the difficulty, which corresponds either to the object of the internal crisis or to that of the crisis of international peace.

Internally, Machiavelli highlights two main causes of the crisis of peace. The first is the struggle for exclusive possession of power by one of the social partners, the people or the Great Ones, a struggle to which ambitious individuals can be invited by means of conspiracies. Secondly, there are conflicts arising from the struggle for possession of the wealth to which the Great Ones are exclusively entitled by virtue of their social position. To restore peace in this particularly hostile environment, Machiavelli recommends a series of complementary measures, including radical purges such as the immolation of the sons of Brutus. The reason for this radical solution was that *"a prince cannot live in security in a state as long as those who have been robbed of it live"*[239], so the politician had to carry out exemplary executions. Aside from this somewhat disconcerting provision by virtue of its cynical nature, Machiavelli advocated a second measure to calm relations between the various players in the political game in the city.

This is the solution that consists in republicanising power, distributing it among all strata of society so that everyone feels involved in the management of government. The co-management of power allows the parties to keep a jealous eye on each other, each on the lookout for signs that the other is appropriating power. To carry out this mission successfully, the politician who embarks on this path must himself learn to live in separation so as not to depend on one or other of the parties involved in the struggle. In short, they must adopt the posture of referee. The posture of referee that the political reformer must adopt to maintain a balanced distribution of power is accompanied by an important issue, namely the legitimisation of the game of possession.

[239]NiccolòMachiavelli, *Discourses…,* Bk. III, Ch. 4, p88.

Machiavelli advocated other means of promoting internal peace, in particular recourse to religious worship. Through religious worship, the politician instils in man the fear of God that he needs to maintain the stability of his state. In insisting that politicians must have recourse to religion to stabilise their state, Machiavelli is basing himself on the conviction that *"any state in which the fear of God does not exist must perish"*[240]. From this point of view, he valued the instrumentalisation of religious worship over the deployment of princely power. In other words, the fear of the prince should only take over if the fear of God is lacking. The effectiveness of religious worship is no longer in doubt insofar as it forces opposing parties to live in peace, just as it forces soldiers to respect their leader.

On the basis of all the foregoing, it is legitimate to say that Machiavelli's political thought is distinguished by a terrible resilience and that it is highly topical. The topicality of his thought can be justified from the moment it expressly poses the problem of national security and defence in a national and international context marked by the recurrence of violence. To pose the problem of national security and defence in a context dominated by the recurrence of violence is precisely to pose the problem of the crisis of peace and the modalities of its promotion from the perspective of pantagonism. Machiavelli's problematic thus goes far beyond the Florentine framework from which it was formulated, and intersects with the concerns of humanity today, overwhelmed by the horrors of the violence that characterise the problematic relationships that peoples and states maintain on a daily basis, and anxious to understand what is going wrong. Machiavelli's thought helps us to shed light on the deep-rooted causes of the violence that compromises our ability to live together, both nationally and internationally.

Moreover, the relevance of Machiavelli's political thought to the logic of pantagonism in which humanity is caught up today lies in our perception of what the world really is. For Machiavelli, as for us, the world is an inherently hostile environment, where every nation is a wolf to every other nation. Each nation is driven by a predatory rationality that tends to reduce the other to political prey. In such an environment, the only way to be safe from the acts of aggression of another nation is to accumulate as much strength as possible, to form a political entity that commands both respect and fear. A state thus constituted has a responsibility to eliminate sources of disturbance and areas of turbulence in order to ensure not only its own security, but also that of others. The relationship between Machiavelli and the neo-

[240] *Ibid.*, Book I, chapter 11, p145.

conservatives to whom Yinda Yinda alludes is justified in that both are driven by a passion to serve their respective states, or, as Yinda Yinda puts it, *"to enter the intimate spheres of political decision-making in order to be able to put their ideas into practice and influence government decisions in an immediate and concrete way"*[241].

Similarly, Machiavelli's political thought is also relevant to the conduct of American operations to put the world in order. In many respects, it corresponds to the strategies advocated by Machiavelli in the colonies.

But the techniques advocated by Machiavelli are far from offering absolute guarantees for the conduct of international affairs. Certain strategic principles of Machiavelli's approach to shaping the world have, in some cases, shown their limits. The strategic principle of short wars, for example, did not really work in the case of the Cypriot war or the second Gulf campaign against Saddam Hussein, even if, in the case of the second Gulf war, some Machiavellians, notably André-Marie Yinda Yinda, ignore the fact that the bogging down of the second Gulf campaign was the result of the failure of this strategic principle and like to justify the prolongation of the unrest on the grounds of the inability of the police and the administration to maintain order. However, the bogging down of the second Gulf campaign was the result of a change of perspective in the logic of warfare, thus jeopardising the application of the strategic principle of short wars. This new logic is inherent in asymmetrical wars which relatively weak nations impose on the great powers in order to stand up to them or to resist their imperialism. This failure perhaps shows that radical war is certainly not a solution that leads to lasting peace. As a result, the argument of the search for the greatest power also loses all its relevance insofar as no military power is totally beyond the reach of acts of aggression by terrorist cells scattered around the world. We therefore need to enhance the value of diplomacy by combining it with military force, provided that each obeys the requirements of a genuine negotiating ethics.

[241] André-Marie Yinda Yinda, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

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