

**Machiavelli's optical arts:  
political theory, action and realism**

**i. Machiavelli's three optical arts**

The fact that humans typically “judge more by sight” and yet are “short-sighted” is a central feature of the human condition with which Niccolò Machiavelli grapples. Among his troop of political actors Machiavelli's founder and *Fortuna* alone escape the optical limitations of grounded human experience. Back on earth, literal blindness plagues the character in *Mandragola* who is primed to be duped. What humans need for political success, Machiavelli says, are the many eyes of the Greek mythological figure Argus Panoptes; such pan-optical capacity would enable earth-bound humans to see everything in the political field at once and thus both be prepared and capable of positive political innovation. Regrettably limited to two coordinated eyeballs that face one direction, human virtuosos are those who have trained themselves in ways that grant them enhanced (though never reliably complete) vision, including foresight. They also manipulate what is seen, as foxes who conceal dimensions of themselves from sight while seeing traps for what they are, and as artists who paint portraits found realistic and thus compelling by short-sighted men.

My aim in this paper is to illuminate the meaning in Machiavelli's work of the recurring metaphor of sight and seeing as an expression of modes of experiencing, knowing and thinking. Unpacking his use of the metaphor, particularly as it relates to the visual arts of painting and map-drawing and Machiavelli's linguistic approximation of these arts, I show that his political theory is structured by three distinct forms of optics. While all three are pertinent to our understanding of Machiavelli's political theory, the analysis explicates how Machiavelli's work of theorizing itself, and the way any virtuoso political actor must see both hinge on a multiplicitous perspectivism that is notably distinct from the geometric, linear perspectivism primarily associated with Renaissance art. In setting into relief this multiplicitous optical modality as a tool of the theorist as well as of the virtuoso political actor, the paper clarifies the activity of theory, etymologically and historically rooted in the Greek notion of *theoros* which conveys theory as a way of “looking at” the world.

To begin the discussion, let us first consider the passage in the dedicatory letter to *The Prince* that Machiavelli scholars recurrently engage. In this passage, Machiavelli casts his optical standpoint in writing *The Prince* as analogical to that of a landscape painter:

I hope it will not be thought presumptuous for someone of humble and lowly status to dare to discuss the behavior of rulers and to make recommendations regarding policy. Just as those who paint landscapes set up their easels down in the valley in order to portray the nature of the mountains and the peaks, and climb up into the mountains in order to draw the valleys, similarly in order to properly understand the behavior of the lower classes one needs to be a ruler, and in order to properly understand the behavior of rulers one needs to be a member of the lower classes.<sup>1</sup>

Janet Coleman, for one, sees this passage positing *The Prince* as a pithy summation of Machiavelli's accumulated sensual experience in the world, including with ancient works. She

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<sup>1</sup> Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ed. and transl. by David Wootton (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1995), 6.

<sup>1</sup> Wootton, introduction to *Prince*, xxxiii, xxxiv.

casts Machiavelli's textual "efforts as analogous to the representational method of landscape painters . . . . He explicitly states that painters represent the *nature* of what is there to be seen. They use the learned conventions of artistic representation (not least the "science" of perspective) to represent through paint on two-dimensional surfaces the *nature* of the world that is seen with the eyes and which, through another learned set of conventions, discourse, can be represented in language."<sup>2</sup> For Coleman, Machiavelli as theorist describes himself as like a painter – specifically, she hints, like a Renaissance painter who deploys scientific, that is, geometric linear perspectivism to represent the experientially grasped nature of the political landscape.

Meanwhile, David Wootton associates not Machiavelli's sensual experience of the world but rather his "science of politics" with the artistic realism of Renaissance linear perspectivism. But Wootton's point nonetheless overlaps with Coleman's: Machiavelli's text represents the world in a manner akin to the realism produced by Renaissance linear perspectivist painting. "Just as one looks *into* a Renaissance painting, seeing a world one feels one could step into and move about in, rather than regarding the painting as a decorative surface, so Machiavelli wants you to think of his books as windows on the world of politics."<sup>3</sup> Emphasizing that this artistry is specifically grounded in linear perspectivism, Wootton observes that the one artist that Machiavelli names in his work (in his Florentine Histories) is Brunelleschi, the Renaissance Italian seen to have invented this form of optics. Like Brunelleschi, whose sculptures "were supremely lifelike, . . . Machiavelli aims to conceal his own artistry behind the appearance of realism. Realism, of course, is as much a contrived effect as any other, for the appearance of fidelity to nature is itself an illusion."<sup>4</sup> For Wootton, Machiavelli as scientist conceals his artful representations of political reality behind a production of things that take on the appearance of reality.

Mary Dietz pursues a similar line of thought in her account of Machiavelli's cunning political intent in writing *The Prince*. Renaissance painters centrally lean upon deception to achieve their intended effects, she notes, tricking the eye to manufacture a sense of reality. So for Dietz, Machiavelli's text is not a straightforward representation of the nature of political reality as experienced or analysed, as it is for Coleman and Wootton. Rather, *The Prince* is a deceit designed to trap the prince of Florence to favour republican forces. She argues that Machiavelli "consciously invokes Renaissance artistry in its most literal sense" when he "draws an analogy between himself, the advisor to princes, and the landscape painter."<sup>5</sup> Whether one accepts Dietz's description of Machiavelli's intention in writing *The Prince*, her account of the forms of optics that Machiavelli's deploys as theorist and political actor should be further clarified. Dietz's article highlights Machiavelli as an on-the-ground political actor engaged in seeing the world as a political virtuoso (such as an advisor) does, one who also textually manufactures a portrait of the political world in a manner akin to the *trompe l'oeil* work of the realist Renaissance painter. This account in fact invokes two different forms of optics. First, Machiavelli as virtuoso actor sees the political landscape in its "real" complexities in order to understand it, be prepared and imagine innovations for the Florentine political scene. This first

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<sup>2</sup> Janet Coleman, "Machiavelli's *via moderna*: Medieval and Renaissance attitudes to history," in *Niccolò Machiavelli's The Prince: new interdisciplinary essays*, ed. Martin Coyle (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 40-64, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup> David Wootton, introduction to *Prince*, xxxiii.

<sup>4</sup> Wootton, introduction to *Prince*, xxxiii, xxxiv.

<sup>5</sup> Mary Dietz, "Trapping the Prince: Machiavelli and the Politics of Deception," *American Political Science Review* 80:3 (Sept 1986): 777-99, p. 794.

form of optics is not articulated in Dietz's work. Second, Machiavelli as virtuoso actor makes use of another way of seeing, one evocative of the linear perspectivism used by Renaissance painters, to construct a view to reality that is somehow realistic and thus compelling to his (short-sighted) reader. In deploying this latter way of seeing, Machiavelli as virtuoso actor artfully paints an impression of himself in the role of advisor (to the hapless Lorenzo de' Medici, Dietz suggests), one who himself sees the landscape in the first way.

My primary concern is not Machiavelli's intention in writing *The Prince*. Rather, I want to argue that our uncertainty about the intentions that produced this text is related to the fact that Machiavelli's political theory invokes multiple forms of optics, and that in the case of *The Prince*, we lack consensus about which form of optics he intends to invoke. Let me now introduce the three distinct forms of optics or ways of seeing, central to human political action, that operate in Machiavelli's work. The *first* operates when virtuoso actors (generally leaders) craft visions of reality that mould the people's imaginations in politically constructive ways. For Machiavelli, ordinary men's imaginations are prone variously to flux and sedimentation and therefore must be deliberately directed by founders, legislators, princes, leaders, in both republics and principalities, to yield visions of reality that serve the life of the polity. This artful act of leadership entails casting light on the world in a way that illuminates some things while leaving others in shadow; it involves the production of worldviews in which some things are seen or made real while other things that are real are not seen. I will explore how this production of optics connects to Renaissance neoclassical linear perspectivism, the yield of which was artistic realism – an apparently true window on the real world from the standpoint of a singular eye. In Renaissance paintings, this form of optics confirms human empirical sensibilities insofar as it produces a sense of being inside the immediate space depicted by the painting – a sense of reality as humans experience it in one moment in time and space. As we have already seen, Coleman, Wootton and Dietz all, in their varying ways, cast Machiavelli himself as textually manufacturing through such an optics a realist artistic product, a sense of present reality among the audience as he paints a portrait of the political landscape. As Victoria Kahn says, "Machiavelli's *virtù* as a writer is not simply, as some readers have suggested, to dramatize in the writing of *The Prince* the resourcefulness and inventiveness of the effective ruler but also to manipulate his audience in much the same way that the prince must manipulate his subjects."<sup>6</sup>

But Dietz's study of Machiavelli's intentions also signals a *second*, distinctly different form of optics used by Machiavelli himself as virtuoso theorist -- one that he recommends for all political virtuosos, including advisors and leaders in their effort to see for themselves the political landscape for their own understanding of it. In this alternative way of seeing, a political agent takes in as much of the real reality of the political terrain as humanly possible in order to act well – to be prepared and innovate. This optical modality collates experience gathered by way of movement through time and space, and thereby produces a multi-faceted rather than singular, unified "realist" expression of an actually pluralistic political terrain. Hanna Pitkin explains that "politics presupposes human plurality" so that political action is served by "plural vision". Machiavelli as political actor "brought to his wide experience among the great an insatiable curiosity and a passion for observation as a way of appropriating their power. Yet it was a matter not merely of external observation but of identification, the capacity to put himself in the place of another and regard the world from that location."<sup>7</sup> For Charles Singleton,

<sup>6</sup> Victoria Kahn, "Virtù and the Example of Agathocles in Machiavelli's *Prince*," in *Machiavelli and the Discourse of Literature*, eds. Albert Russell Ascoli and Victoria Kahn (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press), 195-217, 208.

<sup>7</sup> Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *Fortune is a Woman*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 35.

Machiavelli as theorist “move[s] about on the whole field of political action – that field for which alone he was born, as he puts it in a famous letter – looking now over the shoulder of this player in the terrible game, and now over the shoulder of that player, sizing up the chances of success, now from here and now from there.”<sup>8</sup> My claim is that this second form of optics, central to Machiavelli’s activity of theorizing and to his understanding of politics itself, is not at all akin to the Renaissance geometrical linear perspectivism developed by Brunelleschi. Rather, its multiplicitous perspectivism is symbolized in Machiavelli’s works by the Greek mythological figure Argus and by his archetypal fox, and shares impulses with medieval European optical and epistemic sensibilities.

As Wootton connects the dots of Renaissance depth perspective, Brunelleschi’s lifelike sculptures, and the artistic realism of Machiavelli’s writing, he also claims that “*The Prince* is intended to be like the bird’s-eye maps Leonardo da Vinci drew for Cesare Borgia, enabling him to envision his newly conquered territories. . . . Machiavelli probably knew these maps and marveled at them.”<sup>9</sup> In inserting this claim, Wootton collapses together two distinct optical modalities that operate in Machiavelli’s work. The appearance of three-dimensionality in space produced by the linear perspectivism of a Renaissance painting is notably different from the two-dimensional overviews of the ground found in Leonardo’s Renaissance maps, even those with some relief dimension to them. This *third* way of seeing, like the view of a bird flying overhead, is suggested by the god-like standpoint that Machiavelli attributes to founders, and by some of the scientific rationalism that marks military prescriptions found in his *The Art of War*. However, the bird’s-eye view is not signified by Machiavelli’s thought as a central mode of seeing for merely human theorists and virtuosos.

This elucidation of the three forms of optics that structure Machiavelli’s political theory complicates, first, popular Political Science accounts of Machiavelli’s realism, and second, the popular view that Machiavelli is modern, indeed, the “founder of modern political philosophy”.<sup>10</sup> I will leave the discussion of Machiavelli’s realism for the conclusion. As for Machiavelli’s modernity, the multiple forms of optics that structure his political thought signal and illuminate plural culturo-historical strands afoot in Machiavelli’s moment and thinking. Machiavelli as political actor and theorist was richly engaged with ancient texts, lived in a post-medieval period still marked by threads from that past, and was exposed to Quattrocento and later Renaissance theoretical and practical inventions. Machiavelli both integrated and contested all such historical strands; he challenged views he received from the ancients, such as Cicero and Livy, while building on their worldviews. He critiqued Christianity while presuming it as cultural backdrop to his theorising about moral practice and religion in politics. While the dominant subject matter in fifteenth-century Italian art remained Christian religion, Machiavelli adopted an a-religious moral perspective in politics.<sup>11</sup> He rejected the linear view of history developed by medieval Christian theology, one transforming in his day into a general theory of history, instead founding his political theory on an ancient pagan cyclical view of history. He rejected some of what was modern in his own day, such as Italy’s development of mercenary warfare and instead, as Hans

<sup>8</sup> Charles Singleton, “The Perspective of Art,” *The Kenyon Review* XV:2 (Spring 1953): 169-89, p. 181.

<sup>9</sup> Wootton, introduction to *Prince*, xxxiii.

<sup>10</sup> Leo Strauss, “Niccolo Machiavelli,” in *History of Political Philosophy*, eds. Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), ??.

<sup>11</sup> Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 40, 45.

Baron says, worked to “reviv[e] the citizen-army of the medieval community”.<sup>12</sup> (See Parel on all this – last ch).<sup>13</sup> Anthony Parel traces other medieval influences in Machiavelli’s thought, including in his understanding of cosmology and anthropology.<sup>14</sup> Coleman shows how Machiavelli’s use of historical texts “was part of a distinctive medieval tradition of textual study, still very much alive in his own day”.<sup>15</sup> Specifically, he educated in the Italian Middle Ages and Renaissance shared an orientation toward *historia*, learned from Aristotle and Cicero’s commentary on Aristotle, which represented an “eyewitness experience of the world,” a “freezing of sensual experiences, as it were, by representing them in language on a page,” in turn open to reflection about the general nature of the experience.<sup>16</sup>

I point to all of this to indicate that Machiavelli self-consciously as well, undoubtedly, as unconsciously, drew on plural culturo-historical strands as he developed his political thinking and understanding. This is at least partly because the Italian Renaissance, into which Machiavelli was born, was a time of transition, growing out of a past still present. The Renaissance was both explicitly invested in receiving ideas from the past, and itself marked a new pluralism in worldviews. As Agnes Heller remarks, “if we look at the Renaissance’s *ideal of man*, we are struck by the fact that *it is no longer possible to speak of a unitary human ideal. An unusual wealth of concrete human ideals* is revealed to us.”<sup>17</sup> For instance, in art, distinctively “Renaissance representations of Christ are characterized by a multifariousness of ideal content (the King, the Lord, the thinker, the plebeian with a heart of love, and so forth). . . . Similarly, the figure of Mary also turns into a pluralistic ideal.”<sup>18</sup> For his part, Michael Baxandall observes that Renaissance Italian “cognitive style” varied across class difference, and even among the upper classes, one’s life activities and social standpoint shaped in varying ways one’s ways of seeing.<sup>19</sup> Machiavelli’s thought both reflects this pluralism, and, as Isaiah Berlin has shown in his own way, posits politics itself as pluralism.

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Amid this pluralism, sight was conceived by Renaissance Italians as a key sense for apprehending the world. Coleman discusses how for medieval and Renaissance scholars alike, sight was emphasized as the central vehicle of human experience which was to be translated into language in text. The human mind was seen “to represent that aspect of the world that is experienced by a witness *in the mind’s own mode*, that is, as thoughts and images.” These scholars “then drew analogies with the representative capacities of language which re-presents in spoken and written form the representations in mind of experiences in the world. . . . Language became the key not only to thinking but to all past history which was no longer there to be experienced.”<sup>20</sup> Machiavelli likewise engaged written language as a means to access the

<sup>12</sup> Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny*, Vol. I (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1955), 430-32. CHECK.

<sup>13</sup> Frederico Chabod says of Machiavelli “he who was in his political thought a man of the Renaissance became a man of the thirteenth century when he turned his attention to military matters” {CITE} – although in this, Mallett argues, Chabod was focusing on the practical side of Machiavelli’s thoughts on warfare. Michael Mallett, “The Theory and Practice of Warfare in Machiavelli’s Republic,” in *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, ed. by Gisela Bok, Quentin Skinner and Maurizio Viroli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 173-80, p. 173.

<sup>14</sup> Anthony Parel, *The Machiavellian Cosmos* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 156, 157.

<sup>15</sup> Coleman, 41.

<sup>16</sup> Coleman, 44, 45.

<sup>17</sup> Agnes Heller, *Renaissance Man*, transl. Richard E. Allen (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), 18.

<sup>18</sup> Heller, 18.

<sup>19</sup> Baxandall, 33-40.

<sup>20</sup> Coleman, 48.

experience of those in the past, and to convey his own accumulated experience in the world and through reading. However, his (historically characteristic) reliance on the idea of sight, and his reference to visual arts including painting and sculpture, beg consideration: exactly what sort of optical conventions are replicated and deployed in his textual representations of political experience and the nature of politics? The medieval and Renaissance view of history, shared by Machiavelli, as recorded experience assumes that the world that humans experience is stable across time, and

the human mind has fixed ways of operating when it experiences and considers experience. What varies over time is not the world that is experienced or mind in its understanding of experiences but *language*. Language conventionally encodes what is there to be understood . . . . The *modi significandi* (the modes of signifying experiences) change over time and from culture to culture but what there is to be known by us and what is known by us to be there do not change.<sup>21</sup>

What this paper claims is that Machiavelli's political theory invokes three distinct modes of signifying experience that are conveyed as three distinct modes of seeing or looking at the world. One is characteristically Renaissance in its conveyance of one moment in unified time and space (linear perspectivism), a second is late or post-Renaissance (bird's-eye view), and the third, the most important, I argue, shares with medieval optics an orientation toward multiple perspectives across time and space.

## **ii. One fixed eye: linear perspectivism -- one moment in unified time/space**

Geometry is lily-white, unspotted by error and most certain, both in itself and in its handmaid, whose name is Perspective. -- Dante<sup>22</sup>

Geometric linear perspective theory emerged over centuries, accreting in scholastic writings on knowledge and optics as well as through artistic practice, and then crystallizing in the context of the Italian Renaissance.<sup>23</sup> In Florence in 1425, architect-engineer, sculptor and painter Filippo Brunelleschi performed a public experiment to illustrate what Leon Battista Alberti called the centric point and later became known as the vanishing point. Brunelleschi made a small hole in a panel painting of the Baptistry in Florence. With the painting facing the actual Baptistry, he situated an observer behind the painting to look through the hole at a mirror placed on the other side of the painting; the observer saw the front of the painting through the hole. With the painting thus viewed, Brunelleschi removed the mirror so that the observer would see, through the hole, the actual Baptistry, and be astonished at the similarity of these two sights. What Brunelleschi was illustrating to his observer was how the linear perspective that structured the painting of the Baptistry directly echoed the empirical experience of viewing the actual Baptistry from that standpoint.

Brunelleschi's painter and sculptor friends began deploying this form of visual representation in their own art and in 1435, Alberti committed to paper these optical laws.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Coleman, 49.

<sup>22</sup> Dante, quoted by Baxandall, 124.

<sup>23</sup> Samuel Y. Edgerton, *The Renaissance Rediscovery of Linear Perspective* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1975), 16.

<sup>24</sup> Edgerton, 3, 5-6, 26. Book I of Alberti's treatise *On Painting* "is a geometry of perspective" (Baxandall, 117).

This articulation of linear perspectivism enabled Italian Renaissance painters to create the illusion of a window on the immediate, empirically experienced material world.<sup>25</sup> It was presaged by the Florentine fascination with mirrors following their introduction into the city in the thirteenth century<sup>26</sup>, and is explicitly reflected in Alberti's *velo* technique in which one traces on a window what one sees while standing at and looking out that window.<sup>27</sup> Through such an optics the artist represents the world in a manner that illustrates not strictly what is present but what the artist empirically sees with fixed eyes, and what any single viewer would see if standing in the same spot as the artist. Leonardo da Vinci describes how a painter using this method edits and signifies reality. The painter expresses

how the likenesses of objects adjacent to the eye converge with true images to the pupil of the eye; which of objects equal in size *appears* larger to that eye; which of equal colours *appears* more or less dark, or more or less bright; which of objects equally low *appears* more or less low; which of objects standing at equal heights will *appear* more or less high; why, of two objects standing at different distances [from the eye], one will *appear* less clear than the other."<sup>28</sup>

Through this method the artist represents one event at one time in one space as experienced from one standpoint.<sup>29</sup>

Grounded as it is in visions of the local world as produced by a fixed, singular set of eyes, this form of perspectivism went hand in hand with the individualism that was simultaneously emerging across Europe.<sup>30</sup> In subsequent centuries, people living amid this perspectival tradition have deemed it to produce greater realism than previous traditions and have expressly associated it with the discovery of truth: "many present-day historians of science, in fact, tend to view the advent of linear perspective in the same way they do Columbus' discovery of America or Copernicus' apprehension of the heliocentric universe: as a definitive victory over medieval parochialism and superstition."<sup>31</sup> But this is an inadequate account of what is signified by this perspectival tradition. More accurately, its realism as an artful product lends an empirically resonant view of one particular space unified with one moment of time as visually perceived from one location. As Antonio Manetti writes in his *Life of Brunelleschi*, linear perspective "is that part of the science of Perspective which is in practice the good and systematic diminution or enlargement, as it *appears* to men's eyes, of objects that are respectively remote or close at hand . . . to the size they *seem to be* from a distance, corresponding with their greater or lesser remoteness."<sup>32</sup> For good reason, linear perspectivism, though typically associated by moderns

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<sup>25</sup> Edgerton, 6.

<sup>26</sup> See <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~matc/math5.geometry/unit11/unit11.html>.

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~matc/math5.geometry/unit11/unit11.html>.

<sup>28</sup> Leonardo da Vinci quoted by Baxandall, 119-21. Emphasis added.

<sup>29</sup> Roland Mushat Frye, "Ways of Seeing in Shakespearean Drama and Elizabethan Painting," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 31:3 (Autumn 1980): 325-6.

<sup>30</sup> While the Renaissance reclamation of linear perspective may suggest a triumph for objective reality and science over the mysticism of the Middle Ages, "the early users of the new art-science thought of it as a tool which might help restore the moral authority of the Church in a world becoming progressively materialistic. In this sense, the advent of the new perspective represented not a revolt but a recrudescence" (Edgerton, 6, 7). European exploration of the globe drove the development of a mathematical conception of space. However, as Francis Bacon's work suggests, Christian thinkers also pursued mathematics and geometry as means to develop Christian moral doctrine and an understanding of God (Edgerton, ch. 2).

<sup>31</sup> Edgerton, 7-9.

<sup>32</sup> Quoted by Baxandall, 124, italics added.

with truth, has been characterized by some as a constructivist as well as an inconclusive representation of reality.<sup>33</sup>

How does this constructivist, inconclusive, “realist” optics operate in Machiavelli’s political theory? Coleman, Wootton and Dietz all suggest that Machiavelli himself (as theorist or engaged actor) uses language in a parallel manner to produce for his reader a compelling experiential, on-the-ground sense of reality. What I want to explore is how Machiavelli also praises this technique when used by virtuoso actors to shape what the people (subjects, citizens) see. In working innovatively to shape what ordinary short-sighted, manipulable humans see, and thus what they consider real or true, Machiavelli’s founder or virtuoso leader exercises something akin to the *trompe l’oeil* technique being perfected by Renaissance artists in Machiavelli’s day. Ordinary men tend toward habituation in their ways of thinking and perceiving the world, he argues.<sup>34</sup> Chronically myopic and bound to walk beaten paths, ordinary humans see that which their eyes register immediately, habituating themselves in what this limited vision perceives. Their ill-functioning eyes do not continually move around to keep registering afresh the many dimensions of the complex world; rather than alternating their social location and moving their eyes they tend to remain fixed in a calcified standpoint. This way of seeing produces a limited visual experience of the world and as ordinary men “judge more by sight than by touch”, they are open to skillful leaders’ efforts to structure their imaginations. Machiavelli says, “You will find people are so simple-minded and so preoccupied with their immediate concerns, that if you set out to deceive them, you will always find plenty of them who will let themselves be deceived.”<sup>35</sup>

A leader skilled in the artful techniques of *trompe l’oeil* can and must appear to be certain things, depending on circumstances, and manufacture appearances in general to serve the broader goals of *mantenere lo stato* and *gloria*. Much is hidden or invisible in a Renaissance linear perspectivist representation, though these representations are, if well executed, deeply compelling in the local experience of ordinary human subjects, citizens and enemies alike. The effect for the leader manufacturing such appearances is that “everyone sees what you seem to be; few have direct experience of what you really are. . . . The common man accepts external appearances and judges by the outcome”.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, the polity itself is in good part also an imaginative construct: Numa’s false claim to have received divine laws from a nymph serves Rome’s need for religiously legitimated laws, and thus artfully creates a city founded in “real” events and the principles derived therefrom. Because such representations of reality are limited, distorting, and leave much unaccounted for, manufactured Machiavellian appearances are not full-proof and, like all things political, will decay in time: just as skilled leaders strive to conjure up imaginings of reality in ways compelling to subjects/citizens, so too do other social phenomena compete to populate these minds with accounts of the truth. For instance, while republics must return regularly to founding principles, be they grounded in lies or not, to keep citizens focused on a vision of public life as the greatest good, the lure of wealth as a competing image of good will eventually corrupt this collectively-held image of the people’s highest interest.

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<sup>33</sup> Edgerton discussing Erwin Panofsky’s work, 153.

<sup>34</sup> See Laura Janara, “Machiavelli, Elizabeth I and the innovative historical self: a politics of action, not identity,” *History of Political Thought*, forthcoming 2006.

<sup>35</sup> *Prince*, 54.

<sup>36</sup> *Prince*, 55.



Kahn, Wootton and others say that Machiavelli deploys this “realist” way of seeing in his writing to produce effects on the reader, but does this mean that he uses it authentically to see the world in his activity of theorizing? In *The Prince*, he claims that he has opted stylistically for brevity and plainness, that he has “not ornamented this book with rhetorical turns of phrase, or stuffed it with pretentious and magnificent words,” relying on “examples” rather than “embellishments”.<sup>37</sup> Such rejection of surface ornamentation echoes Renaissance preference for representational modes that evoke empirical on-the-ground human experience. To represent linguistically in his texts the nature of politics, Machiavelli does in theorizing exhibit some such Renaissance habits and preferences. Heller argues that the Renaissance’s programmatic break with the past entailed the fact that

[t]o be scientific was tantamount to becoming conscious of what one was doing. It was not enough for the artist to learn his art as a craft. He had to know what he was doing. He must be aware of the laws of his art and, what is more, of the laws of nature and reality which he is obliged to reproduce in his art. Finally, he must be conscious of the methods which make it possible to render as well as possible the observed relationships of nature. These methods are scientific and technical. . . . In order to be able to mirror nature and reality, then, the artist must be a philosopher of nature and a natural scientist, and – a technical innovator as well. The theory of perspective was a science. Anatomy was a science. Yet without a thorough knowledge of these sciences *convenientia* could not come into being, for behind the sensuous experience the *ratio naturae* would be absent, and so mimesis would suffer injury.<sup>38</sup>

As political theorist, Machiavelli exhibits this intellectually scientized worldview in which laws of nature are sought to be understood. He then articulates this understanding to recommend it to virtuosos: to best ensure prudent choices, the virtuoso as artistic innovator must consciously grasp the regularities that govern human life, not merely replicate actions or formulae for action taken from the past. Theorists and virtuosos alike must understand that humans are prone to dishonesty, self-interest and short-sightedness in their understandings of the political landscape; corruption is inevitable in a principality and republic, hence the cyclical nature of politics, although the true circularity of events is not guaranteed. Indeed, Machiavelli’s effort to elucidate technically generalities in politics does not reveal politics as a realm of predictability. This is because these laws neither govern all dimensions of political life, nor do they, in what they define, necessarily facilitate prediction. For one thing, the inescapable presence of *fortuna* as a dimension of both the interiority of humans and the outer world disrupts prediction. Further, Machiavelli’s account of human nature includes the observation that “people are by nature inconstant. It is easy to persuade them of something, but it is difficult to stop them from changing their minds.”<sup>39</sup> Humans are prone to external pressures that alter them; while leaders themselves make use of this malleability to politically productive ends, the emergence and effect of other external pressures is not fully predictable. Humans are predictably not always honest, but how (and even when) they may “not keep faith with you” is not necessarily

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<sup>37</sup> *Prince*, 5, 6; see Andrew Mousley, “*The Prince* and Textual Politics,” in *Niccolò Machiavelli’s The Prince: new interdisciplinary essays*, ed. Martin Coyle (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 151-73; pp. 155-59.

<sup>38</sup> Heller, 410, 411.

<sup>39</sup> *Prince*, 20.

perceptible let alone predictable.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, enduring human nature is paired in history with human character, itself formed by particular circumstances and habituated ways of thinking that have formed in response to those circumstances. While human nature is constant, human character varies, rendering individuals and peoples distinct.<sup>41</sup> Because of this historically/culturally specific dimension of humans, a new prince's task is to re-make the specific people he conquers in ways amenable to them, and in a republic, the legal and institutional framework must re-"make" existing formed men to be "good" so that they, despite human nature, function appropriately as citizens. Given all this, the aim for the theorist and virtuoso actor alike is to collate the most complete knowledge possible in a world in which situations are not fully predictable; Machiavelli advises preparedness – to be "perfectly prepared for anything that might happen" precisely because events themselves are not perfectly predictable.<sup>42</sup> As Andrew Mousley puts it, "Machiavelli's commitment to flexible methods appropriate to changing circumstances . . . militates against the attempt to lay down anything other than provisional rules. Particular circumstances will always be tantalisingly beyond the grasp of the systematically deployable rule or general principle."<sup>43</sup>

Renaissance linear perspectivism as a way of seeing, one that purportedly reveals reality and truth, conveys a compelling image of what a stationary pair of eyes would see in a local, unified moment of time and space. This objectifies the space and, as Dietz argues, opens up the people and events in question to manipulation by the artist.<sup>44</sup> While Machiavelli recommends to virtuoso actors such an artful use of appearances strategically to shape the polity in politically constructive ways, and while Machiavelli himself in the work of theorizing does to some extent see the world in the law-oriented scientific manner reflected in the science of linear perspectivism, his work of theorizing and his prescriptions for virtuosos predominantly feature another optical modality. This alternative way of seeing, I will suggest, has more in common with medieval optics than Renaissance linear perspectivism.

### iii. Many eyes: medievalism, Argus Panoptes, foxiness

Let us return to Dietz's account of Machiavelli's landscape painting passage. She says that "by inviting us to recalibrate the great innovation of Florentine painting . . . Machiavelli also discloses a necessary quality of the political advisor." What Dietz describes as the *sine qua non* of Renaissance Florentine painting is the concern for "accurate representation of pictorial space" which yields a "fully dimensional and complete" view of the terrain. For Machiavelli this means "avoid[ing] the restricted perspectives of the prince or the populace, whose visions are governed solely by their respective relationships to one another." In contrast to rulers or the people, the advisor better grasps the full reality because he

stands 'outside' the political canvas and integrates particulars into a sweeping contextual vision of reality. He sees actors not as isolated figures and events not as disconnected instances, but as parts of a richly constituted tapestry, a variegated field of competing interests and ambitions. The advisor's special disposition and imagination are, then, the very opposite of the short-sightedness Machiavelli

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<sup>40</sup> *Prince*, 54.

<sup>41</sup> Cite Machiavelli, me, Coleman.

<sup>42</sup> *Prince*, 47.

<sup>43</sup> Mousley, 161.

<sup>44</sup> Dietz, 793.

deplores as the mark of politically ineffectual men, those who cannot control events or see beyond their immediate circumstances.”<sup>45</sup>

Dietz is right to say that Machiavelli seeks to prescribe to his virtuoso political actor access to a “fully dimensional and complete” vision, one unrestricted by the limits of one specific standpoint and that reaches beyond “immediate circumstances” to capture the pluralism of the political landscape. However, such an integrated view of all the particulars on a “variegated field” is not in fact what Renaissance linear perspectivist painting achieves. Rather, such perspective captures what is seen by *one* set of eyes fixed in *one* moment of time coordinated with *one* space. This singular standpoint is located not “‘outside’ the political canvas” but rather is integrated into the work of art – one feels oneself present in the very space that the art depicts, as though one could step into it, hence its production of a sense of reality. From such an immediate and localized perspective, only parts of things that are present are visible while other parts are hidden, some things present in the field of vision are concealed, that which falls into the periphery of this gaze is invisible, and much fades into the distance where it cannot be fully discerned. One’s capacity to achieve a “fully dimensional and complete” vision is disabled by this form of optics because one is integrated into the space depicted. Here time is one-dimensional so there is none of the historical perspective that Machiavelli himself gained as theorist and that he recommends to other virtuosos. In sum, being a virtuoso means, precisely, finding techniques to reach beyond the ordinary human way of seeing, which is short-sighted, local, fixed – the way of seeing conveyed by Renaissance linear perspectivism.

So Machiavelli recommends a different kind of optics to facilitate the “fully dimensional and complete” vision that virtuosos themselves need. Be they theorists, princes of the first-order or advisors who compensate for their princes’ second-order brains,<sup>46</sup> all virtuosos must capture as best possible a fully dimensional and complete view of the political landscape to facilitate understanding and prudent judgment. Indeed, Machiavelli emphasizes sight not only as the sense on which ordinary men most rely and thus regularly fail in their plans, but also as the sense that enables a virtuoso to grasp plurality. The virtuoso must actively educate and train himself in a way of seeing that presents the world in a manner different from the “realist” optical mode that resonates with ordinary, short-sighted, uninformed human experience. To idealize this alternative, virtuoso way of seeing, Machiavelli deploys the Greek mythological figure, Argus, a monster with many eyes that signify vigilance. In “The Golden Ass,” Machiavelli refers to the “eyes of Argus” as that which facilitates more complete vision; in his “Epigrams” he writes of how “many eyes” like those of “Argus” grant political ability, hence the utility of collecting the eyes of many people.<sup>47</sup> Whereas linear perspectivism entails a single vision from one standpoint fixed in time and space, this alternative way of seeing produces a “sweeping contextual vision of reality” by demanding ongoing movement among and envisioning from the multiple standpoints that constitute the variegated political terrain. The virtuoso must break with the one-dimensional temporality of linear perspectivism to see across time, and must escape the local space registered from one side only by a fixed pair of eyes. Machiavelli’s famous passage on painting suggests that a fully dimensional sense of the landscape requires movement both among princes (up in the mountains) and among the lower classes (down in the valley) as the means to gain experiential insight into the political terrain that is comprised of these multiple subject positions. Kahn

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<sup>45</sup> Dietz, 794.

<sup>46</sup> *Prince*, 71.

<sup>47</sup> “The Golden Ass,” p. 752; *Chief Works*, Epigram 2, Volume 3.

characterizes this multifaceted mode of seeing as a “double perspective”<sup>48</sup>; what I now turn to is how this suggests a kind of seeing and knowing that is more consistent with medieval European art than with the Renaissance science of geometric linear perspectivism.

How did Europeans “see” the world, its reality and truth before Renaissance developments in linear perspectivism? What other optical conventions might have informed Machiavelli’s notion of seeing? Medieval European paintings that pre-date the use of linear perspective conceived of space not as integrated with one-dimensional time but rather as multifaceted, to be seen from multiple spatial standpoints and to be known across moments of time. On this worldview, a representation of reality is compelling if what the viewer sees convincingly conveys “what it fe[els] like to walk about [that landscape], experiencing structures, almost tactilely, from many different sides”. Evident in art of the European Middle Ages then is a “split perspective”, an artistic “propensity to represent three-dimensional objects as if split apart and pressed flat, so that the picture shows more sides and parts of the object than could possibly be seen from a single viewpoint.”<sup>49</sup> In this way, the medieval “encircling eye” captures a vision of space from multiple standpoints simultaneously, registering a wider assortment of realities than that captured through linear perspectivism.<sup>50</sup> The distinction between linear perspectivism and the medieval encircling eye marks the distinction between the visual field and the visual world. The visual field is experienced and perceived “when we fixate with the eyes . . . . It is in the visual field that we become aware of linear perspective, that is to say, the distortion of shape, size, and distance in the aspect of the seen objects according to the viewer’s single eyepoint.” The visual world, in contrast, “is what we experience in the broadest sense of seeing, that is, as we move about, orienting ourselves to objects from all sides. In the visual world phenomena are experienced in their three dimensions and with cognizance of their complete form”. As such, the medieval encompassing eye grasps the visual field as just one facet of the broader visual world.<sup>51</sup> Even the realism of linear perspectivism at some point assumes or relies upon the viewer’s experientially gained knowledge of the visual world: from one place in time with the eye fixed, as the viewer sees only some of the things that are spatially present, s/he must fill in blanks in the visual field by checking that view against empirical evidence gathered otherwise from the visual world. This is how we know that railway tracks do not in fact gradually converge but rather run parallel.

For Machiavelli, mere humans that seek virtuosity as theorists and actors must actively learn skills that enable them to see the visual world rather than only the visual field. The plurality to be grasped is not a matter of the degree of texture and detail found in the visual field, as in Alberti’s admonition to painters to represent “*varietà*” as a diversity of things shown.<sup>52</sup> Rather the pluralism of the visual world signals a plurality in human standpoints, perspectives and thus of visions of the world. Geometrical perspectivism reconciles *varietà* into oneness by way of *composizione*, the “systematic harmonization of every element in a picture towards one total desired effect”.<sup>53</sup> The multiplicitous optics of Machiavellian virtuosity and foxiness, in

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<sup>48</sup> Kahn, 197.

<sup>49</sup> Edgerton, 14.

<sup>50</sup> Edgerton, 15.

<sup>51</sup> Edgerton, 10. Edgerton nonetheless contrasts the medieval view “from many different sides” with a Renaissance view “from a single, overall vantage” (9). But geometric linear perspective does not achieve an “overall” vantage, as the all-seeing eye of a god would, but rather captures that seen, conceals that not seen and distorts that distorted by the eye of a single person located in one space in one moment.

<sup>52</sup> Baxandall, 134.

<sup>53</sup> Baxandall, 135, 136.

contrast, does not harmonize into unity the multiplicity but rather manages to register the likely dissonant plurality all at once. In seeing this way, one generates internally through external experience multiple standpoints across space and time.

Let us first consider this form of optics in terms of how it moves the virtuoso across space, outside the three-dimensional box of the visual field, to gain many visions. For Machiavelli, warfare serve as a metaphor for politics in general. In preparation for warfare, he recommends the “continual theorizing” born of continual movement across physical terrain. A ruler should “study the lie of the land” not by standing in one place and in his mind mirroring that singular vision, but rather he should study by “climbing the mountains, descending into the valleys, crossing the plains, fording rivers, and wading through marshes. . . . his knowledge and experience on his own terrain will make it easy for him to understand any other landscape with which he has to become acquainted from scratch.”<sup>54</sup> Such experience in spatial diversity, he argues, usefully translates to other spatial contexts to aid a virtuoso in grasping the variegated terrain one encounters in any political context. Deftly slinking around in the shadows to sniff out traps and to discover where he may lay his own, the *modus operandi* of Machiavelli’s fox is precisely to view the situation from as many spatial standpoints as possible, experiencing multiple perspectives to collect multiple visions of things. Grounded like humans, the fox’s constant movement is what grants him his practical knowledge. This is what enables him to know many things, unlike Berlin’s hedgehog who knows one big thing.<sup>55</sup> Further, as Kahn says, Machiavelli joined the humanists in

criticizing an unreflective relation to past examples that would take the form of slavish imitation, simple re-presentation, or a one-to-one correspondence. In fact, it is precisely in the absence of correspondence, of a mirror reflection of the exemplar, that the humanist prince or poet finds both the room to exercise his own will and the measure of his own achievement. . . . And this in turn gives rise to texts designed to dramatize and inculcate such judgment, whose rhetoric is, therefore, not ornamental but strategic.<sup>56</sup>

The point is that a virtuoso must not see like a mirror, the technique involved in linear perspectivism. Equally, he must not ornament the world with ideal fantasies of “imaginary republics and principalities”, a way of seeing found among ancients (Plato is Machiavelli’s target<sup>57</sup>) and Christian humanists. Rather, a virtuoso must collate the multiple visions operating in the world to enable a strategic sensibility. For Kahn, “Machiavelli’s defining truth pragmatically (*la verità effettuale*), rather than ontologically or epistemologically as correspondence to a fixed or absolute origin” means that he “makes the agent an actor who is capable of (mis)representation”.<sup>58</sup> But there is a political truth about the landscape operating here as well – not that produced by “realist” appearances but the inescapable multifariousness of human presence in the world, and the multifariousness of the visions yielded by that variegated presence.

The virtuoso must experientially gain knowledge not only by breaking out the box of space produced by a fixed view of the visual field, but must also gain multiple visions through

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<sup>54</sup> *Prince*, 47, 46.

<sup>55</sup> Isaiah Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox: An Essay on Tolstoy’s View of History* (Chicago: Elephant Paperback, 1993) (1978 revised text).

<sup>56</sup> Kahn, 197.

<sup>57</sup> *Prince*, 48.

<sup>58</sup> Kahn, 198.

movement across time. Circumstances continually change, Machiavelli says, so for a virtuoso to be as well prepared as possible to respond, he recommends that the political actor exceed the immediate present (registered by linear perspectivism) by looking carefully at the past.<sup>59</sup> The study of history yields not a transcendent view of the human condition, but rather, according to Machiavelli's and the medieval/Renaissance view of the meaning of historiography, exposes the reader to the many experiences of many humans that have been recorded in language. While ordinary humans "almost always walk along the beaten path," merely imitating the local and familiar,<sup>60</sup> "Every ruler" must resist this calcification; he "should read history books".<sup>61</sup> While manipulating what his subjects/citizens see, a leader as human is also a creature of perception; lacking a god's eye, he is unable to grasp reality perfectly. A virtuoso is thus advised to study events and imitate not the intentions but actions of great men of the past, also creatures of perception engaged in the manipulation of perception.<sup>62</sup> Machiavelli treats the sweep of time as a resource that feeds a virtuoso with a wider field of experience than would otherwise be available to him as a historically located person. This temporally widened vantage point on human experience radically outstrips the singular moment of time captured by linear perspectivism, permitting the virtuoso to situate his political goals in a broader earthly context to orient his eye not only to staving off future corruption for as long as possible, but also to *gloria* which unfolds not in the short but long run. (The study of history even relieves Machiavelli's existential fear "of death" insofar as it situates him in a broader, ongoing human narrative.<sup>63</sup>) In sum, Machiavelli's inductivist science is governed not by a singular eye's perspective on truth, but by this multiplicitous way of seeing human perceptual experience itself. The Machiavellian study of history does not provide the virtuoso with iron laws of action; judgment is still required as "no historian, present or past, tells you 'how it really was' but, rather, how it appeared to be. Consequently, the laws of human behaviour cannot be infallible and necessary; they are hypothetical constructions which tell us of likely, probable outcomes, once the similarities of conditions have been so judged."<sup>64</sup>

At the same time that this multiplicitous way of seeing is prescribed to virtuosos, Machiavelli's healthy republic itself, his symbol of political liberty, is structured by multiple standpoints. His innovative institutionalization of competing monarchical, aristocratic and democratic perspectives – perspectives that must continually be present through debate and accusation – institutionally represent the variegated political terrain. In effect, the republic itself replicates multiplicitous standpoints to see many things at once. No one citizen must achieve this optical capacity in the way that a virtuoso prince (and/or his advisor) must, hence Machiavelli's greater confidence in the durability of healthy republics than principalities.

#### **iv. Bird's-eye view: maps, founders, the art of war**

Interestingly, the dedicatory letter to *The Prince* in which Machiavelli invokes the double perspective of the ruler and the people has been translated into English by reliable translators in competing ways. Machiavelli's Italian reads:

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<sup>59</sup> Coleman, 52.

<sup>60</sup> *Prince*, 18.

<sup>61</sup> *Prince*, 47.

<sup>62</sup> Coleman II, {cite} 254.

<sup>63</sup> *Letter to Vettori* in Wootton, *Prince*, 3.

<sup>64</sup> Coleman, "Via Moderna," 57.

*perché, così come coloro che disegnano e' paesi si pongano bassi nel piano a considerare la natura de' monti e de' luoghi alti, e per considerare quella de' bassi si pongano alto sopra monti, similmente, a conoscere bene la natura de' populi, bisogna essere principe, et a conoscere bene quella de' principi, bisogna essere popolare.*<sup>65</sup>

The phrase “*coloro che disegnano*” literally suggests a coloured drawing or design. Where Wootton captures this as a reference to “those who paint landscapes” and “set up their easels”, Quentin Skinner and Russell Price see Machiavelli’s words signifying “those who draw maps”.<sup>66</sup> This alternative map-making image suggests a different kind of optics than that implied by landscape painting. I have been proposing that the optical mode signified by the landscape painting metaphor is not necessarily that of Renaissance linear perspectivism’s snapshot registration of unified time and space, although such a form of optics is significant to Machiavelli’s political theory. I have suggested that the landscape painting metaphor alludes to a perspectivism that collates plural standpoints across time and space, an alternative form of optics that Machiavelli prescribes for virtuosos, including himself as theorist. But what of Skinner’s and Price’s map-making image? What might an optics associated with mapping look like? Does such a way of seeing also operate in Machiavelli’s work to convey something about politics and human political capacity? To explore this question, let us first turn to both discursive and pictorial map-like Renaissance representations of Florence as a city.

One of Machiavelli’s key contributions to political thought is his sensitivity to the temporality of political circumstances. His theory is marked by a struggle to understand sustenance in coordinated time and space, corruption and decay all as parts of a republic’s and principality’s mortal life cycle. As Pocock has argued, stimulated by the Aristotelian view of the polis as both universal, on one hand, and “finite and located in space and time”, on the other hand, Florentine political thought in Machiavelli’s era displayed an emergent historicism, working with “ideas about time, about the occurrence of contingent events of which time was the dimension, and about the intelligibility of the sequences (it is as yet too soon to say processes) of particular happenings that made up what we should call history.”<sup>67</sup> As Heller put it, “Machiavelli discovered the multifaceted significance of time in politics.” He “already knows of the time out of joint. If time radically changes, a successful man of politics can perish for having failed to notice that everything got out of order.”<sup>68</sup>

Machiavelli’s *History of Florence* is marked by this developing Renaissance concern with temporality; it offers a perspective on the city as situated in broad, complex historiographical terms, a view that highlights politics’ pluralism and dynamism. Of interest here is the fact that the Renaissance’s emerging historicism also helped drive the development of geometric, linear perspectivism which coordinates one singular moment in time and space – that specify time in conjunction with space. At the same time that the Renaissance period features increasingly historicist literary perspectives on Florence, so too does it feature pictorial

<sup>65</sup> <http://bepi1949.altervista.org/biblio4/principe.html>

<sup>66</sup> Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ed. Quentin Skinner and Russell Price (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 4.

<sup>67</sup> J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 3.

<sup>68</sup> Heller, *The Time is Out of Joint: Shakespeare as Philosopher of History* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002), 5. In *Renaissance Man*, 176-92, Heller articulates the developing Renaissance notion of temporality as tripartite, involving a notion of time as continuity, as rhythm, and as a point in time, the latter being the dimension of time that Machiavelli most richly theorizes.

representations of the city that situate it in spatially and temporally unified contexts. But whereas for Machiavelli such Renaissance sensitivity to historicity and context meant that Florence must be grasped in and across time, Renaissance linear perspectivism's coordination of time and space had a tendency to produce idealized, geometrically pure visions of the city – a way of seeing influenced by the ancient geometry of Pythagorus. These related but distinct Italian Renaissance ways of seeing highlight how this culture traded simultaneously in notions of the one (evident in Western political thought since Plato) and the many (reflected in Aristotle and much subsequent thought). While I want to emphasize the distinctness of these two ways of seeing, Hans Baron, in his influential work on the Italian Renaissance and its political culture, has argued that Machiavelli's political analysis directly echoes not only Renaissance historicism but also geometric linear perspectivism: "By the time the efforts to create an integrated analysis of the Florentine institutions had come to maturity – in Machiavelli, Guicciardini, and Giannotti – original minds were to choose their analogies from fields in which Renaissance Florence had achieved her greatest glory: the visual arts."<sup>69</sup> To what extent does Machiavelli's historian's way of seeing Florence reflect or depart from the geometric idealism that marks the linear perspectivism of Renaissance visual arts?

To exemplify the ideal representations of Florence that the geometric spirit produced, and to begin to develop the theme of map-making elicited by Skinner's and Price's translation of Machiavelli, I turn to Baron's own study of Leonardo Bruni's map-like accounts of Florence. Baron sees Bruni developing a historiographical method in his introductory book of his *History*, a way of seeing echoed later in Machiavelli. Bruni's emergent historicist optics is triggered by the realization that pre-Roman, ancient Etruria had featured independent city-states, "and that much of this flowering life was subdued by Rome's ascendancy but rose again after the destruction of the *Imperium Romanum* – this wider vista was needed before a ripe dynamic concept of history could emerge, and before the idea of a God-willed universal Empire, transcending history, could be overthrown by a realistic vision of historical growth and decay."<sup>70</sup>

But when it comes to how Bruni sees Florence spatially, he deploys a way of seeing that is very distinct from Machiavelli's multiplicitous perspective and the kind of knowledge it yields. Baron argues that in Bruni's earlier Quattrocento work, *Laudatio Florentinae Urbis*. Bruni's textual description of the city exudes the first effort to "discover the secret laws of optics and perspective that make the Florentine landscape appear as one great scenic structure."<sup>71</sup> Baron quotes Bruni's language as it conjures up an ideal geometric design structuring the city and its surroundings:

The city herself stands in the center, like a guardian and master; towns surround her on the periphery [of the picture], each in its place. A poet might well speak of the moon surrounded by the stars; and the whole is very beautiful to behold. ... [W]e here see the regions like rings surrounding and enclosing one another. Among them, the city is the first, like to the central knob, the center of the whole orbit. The city herself is ringed by walls and suburbs. Around the suburbs, in turn, lies a belt of rural mansions and estates, and around them the circle of towns; and this whole outermost region is enclosed in a still larger orbit and circle.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Baron, 176.

<sup>70</sup> Baron, 53; see 167-8.

<sup>71</sup> Baron, 169.

<sup>72</sup> Bruni quoted in Baron, 170.



Baron rightly recognizes in Bruni's discursive map of Florence

the same style, the same approach to the visual world, that are so well known from the contemporaneous great masters of architecture and the plastic arts – Brunelleschi and Donatello. In every field – the visual arts, literature, and historiography – the Florence of the first years of the Quattrocento shows the same turning away from an indiscriminate interest in an abundance of insignificant details – the same effort to seize upon the large structural traits – the same delight in what is rational, symmetrical, and open to mathematical calculation. . . . [T]he picture of the *urbs florentina* as the geometric center of the surrounding countryside is a striking anticipation of the ideal of the “perfect city,” and of what has been called the “geometric spirit” of the Renaissance.<sup>73</sup>

Baron rightly concludes that the *Laudatio*'s geometric way of registering space implies not a mortal city but rather an ideal model, and “the very simile of musical harmony was not drawn from fresh experience; it echoed ancient Pythagorean ideas.”<sup>74</sup> Without noticing, Baron exposes not the similarity but the notable difference between Bruni's and Machiavelli's ways of seeing. Where Bruni casts the city in geometrically idealized terms, Machiavelli's political thought, while otherwise sharing a historicist sensibility with other dimensions of Bruni's work, conceptualizes space as governed by multiple standpoints, by many experiences emanating and many eyes seeing from many locations in space as well as in time. Machiavelli's historicist sensibility does not yield in his histories of Florence or elsewhere the Pythagorean unity evident in Bruni's spatial treatment of the city.<sup>75</sup> [For a reconsideration of Baron's thesis on Bruni etc., see James Hankins, “The ‘Baron Thesis’ after Forty Years and Some Recent Studies of Leonardo Bruni,” *J of the History of Ideas* 56 (1995): 309-38; Hankins, ed. *Renaissance Civic Humanism*, 2000.] Problematically, in associating Machiavelli with the way of seeing developed in the Quattrocento by Bruni, Baron miscasts the non-geometrical, multiplicitous perspectivism of Machiavelli's approach to space. Machiavelli's way of seeing as theorist appeals to the natural order of things without repairing to mathematics, deploying a mode of seeing that shares more with the medieval Trecento paintings of Florence than Baron admits.

In his *History of Florence* (most accurately translated into English as *Florence's stories*, a plural formulation of the experiential standpoints constituting the city), Machiavelli sees the history constituted across time and spatially structured by multiple subject positions. Through his literary style of choice, he works to allow multiple subjects to record their perceptual experiences from their own locations. This way of seeing political pluralism is something Machiavelli borrows from the past. As Coleman observes, Thucydides and the Romans Livy, Tacitus and Sallust who influenced Machiavelli all participated in an ancient tradition of *historia*

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<sup>73</sup> Baron, 170, 171.

<sup>74</sup> Baron, 176.

<sup>75</sup> Baron compares Bruni's mapping of Florence to a woodcut copy of a late Quattrocento panoramic painting of Florence which, he says, “provides a perfect illustration of what the *Laudatio* had envisaged more than two generations before: there is the same convergence of the whole picture in a towering central “castle,” the same successive “rings” of city fortifications, suburbs, hill-towns, castles, and higher mountains surrounding this center.” In contrast, in an earlier Trecento painting of the “*Civitas Florentine*” Baron describes, “all buildings, while realistically showing some characteristic features, are alike in importance and size. . . . There is the same difference between the mural of the Trecento and the engraving of the 1470/80's that we have found between the chronicles of the Villani and Bruni's *Laudatio* and *Historiae* – the difference between the late medieval pleasure in details without accents and distinctive order, and the interest of the Renaissance in mathematical rule and the natural order of things.” (Note, 171-73.)

that fed medieval and Renaissance habits. Here, “*historia* was understood to be the recording in language of one’s own experiences (not pure events), so that fleeting experiences could be preserved, but in words. . . . The experiences of these witnesses were revived, reread and listened to” by medieval and Renaissance readers alike.”<sup>76</sup> Gisella Bok adds that like Thucydides and others working in this historiographic tradition, Machiavelli “presents events and activities from the different and sometimes opposing perspectives of their protagonists and he by no means always and explicitly tells us how he himself evaluates them. This is most obvious in the fictive speeches of individuals and groups which present . . . what the author interprets to be their causes and motives and the inner logic of events.”<sup>77</sup> Machiavelli’s *History of Florence* hereby represents the city spatially by way of movement among multiple standpoints that often sit in tension with one another. This way of discursively mapping the city sits entirely at odds with the unified, harmonious geometric sensibility governing Brunetti’s discursive description of Florence.

So far, to investigate the map-making analogy of Machiavelli’s work unleashed by Skinner’s and Price’s translation, I have considered the sorts of optics that Machiavelli uses in his discursive mapping of Florence, as distinct from the sort used by Brunetti. Are there other ways to make sense of the map-making analogy that Skinner and Price posit? Roger Masters provides evidence to suggest that Machiavelli had contact and possibly friendship with Leonardo da Vinci, Machiavelli’s Florentine contemporary, including in 1503-04 when Machiavelli consulted the artist/scientist about plans to divert the Arno River to defeat Pisa.<sup>78</sup> At the very least, Leonardo was “a leading representative of the intellectual transformations in the first years of the sixteenth century” and thus played a role in Machiavelli’s public world.<sup>79</sup> In assessing Leonardo’s contributions to the visual arts, Masters observes that the painter did not work solely within the realm of three-dimensional linear perspectivism. He also transcended “Renaissance humanism through the invention of a radically new perspective which might almost be called surrealist: the aerial view, as if the artist and viewer are already flying in Leonardo’s imagined airplane or even a contemporary satellite. This new perspective first appears in Leonardo’s maps,” including that of Imola drawn under the employ of Cesare Borgia, and those intended to enable the rerouting of the Arno.<sup>80</sup> Where Brunetti in the Quattrocento discursively deploys a geometric, linear perspectivism – one later echoed in paintings of the city -- to map Florence, Leonardo in the next century looks down on cities from above.<sup>81</sup> Whereas the linear perspective deployed in so much of Leonardo’s paintings “places the naturalistic visual perception of the painter before the observer . . . , giving rise to the realism of the image,” Leonardo’s innovative aerial perspective signals an utterly different optics as “no viewer can approximate the standpoint achieved by Leonardo. . . . In this sense, the artist becomes a creator”.<sup>82</sup> Leonardo himself wrote that the “painter is lord of all types of people and of all things” and thus enjoys the power

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<sup>76</sup> Coleman, “Via Moderna,” 47.

<sup>77</sup> Bok, 186.

<sup>78</sup> Roger D. Masters, *Machiavelli, Leonardo, and the Science of Power* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), 5.

<sup>79</sup> Masters, 170.

<sup>80</sup> Masters, 171.

<sup>81</sup> More specifically, Leonardo’s maps feature optical perspectives that suggest either a directly overhead aerial view (his map of Imola being an example), or an overhead view from an angle that captures some topographical texture (as seen in his map of the Arno). (Masters, 171.)

<sup>82</sup> Masters, 172.

of creation.<sup>83</sup> Does such a transcendent, supra-human, even creationary perspective on the human world operate in Machiavelli's thought?

Machiavelli's virtuoso, be he a theorist, advisor or prince, is merely human and can at best only multiply on-the-ground experientially produced visions to move beyond the visual field to the visual world. Even Machiavelli's goddess, *Fortuna*, lacks a transcendent view of the human world. When he does not reduce her to the status of mere female human, he says she "sits on high above all".<sup>84</sup> But her elevated standpoint is not that of a bird overhead, let alone omniscient god. Rather, "She stands on the highest point, where the sight of her is not denied to any man; but a little time turns her about and moves her." As man moves around her on the turning wheel of fortune, he sees she "has two faces, one of them fierce and the other mild; and as she turns, now she does not see you, now she beseeches, now she menaces you."<sup>85</sup> Fortuna does not see all at one time; her part-time blindness to individual humans perhaps explains some of the randomness and unpredictability of her actions. So too does she boast two faces and four eyes that produce double visions of people, which also fuel her varying, unpredictable treatment, as good or bad luck, of humans.

But whereas *Fortuna* does not exercise the optical perspective suggested by Leonardo's maps, Machiavelli's supra-human founder more closely approximates the perspective of Leonardo's creator in the sky. Although Machiavelli rejects as irrelevant a heavenly god in his theorization of earthly politics, he nonetheless invokes founders as agents able to see and know more than mere humans. Perhaps unlike Leonardo's mapmaker, these founders are constrained by the *necessita* of (human) nature. But within those limits, Machiavelli's founder founds institutions and religion to structure what an oddly unformed people will then see and think as they move into history.<sup>86</sup> The founder himself transcends human relations and the influences of society and history, engaging the human world from some sort of detached vantage point. The founder is thus for John Pocock a demiurge evocative of Aristotle's "beast or God"; for an example, Machiavelli points to Romulus, a figure more mythological than historical.<sup>87</sup> Pitkin observes that "the Founder's world is abstract and . . . disembodied, sometimes in the sense of technical artifice that denies the difficulties of human relationships, sometimes in the sense of edifying exhortation that denies passion and animal need."<sup>88</sup> Exceeding the on-the-ground experiential perspectives of mere humans, the founder as creationist is a sculptor who for Machiavelli "extract[s] a beautiful statue from a rough piece of marble."<sup>89</sup> But the significance of the founder for Machiavelli's political theory is open to question given Machiavelli's central investment in human action in time. As Pitkin argues, the founder is not a real character type but a myth that performs a function – creating out of raw material by establishing good laws and institutions a people to manifest *virtù* – that Machiavelli finds no other way to solve.<sup>90</sup>

Let us now finally turn to Machiavelli's *The Art of War*, as this text suggests both the kind of bird's-eye perspectivism seen in Leonardo's maps and something akin to the rationalist, unitary way of seeing suggested by Brunel's geometric spatial perspective on Florence. Pitkin

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<sup>83</sup> Leonardo's *Notebooks* as quoted in Masters, 172.

<sup>84</sup> "Tercets on Fortune," p. 745 (lines 19-22).

<sup>85</sup> "Tercets on Fortune," p. 746 (lines 52-57).

<sup>86</sup> Niccolò Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, in *Niccolò Machiavelli and the United States of America*, transl. by Anthony Pansini (Greenvale: Greenvale Press, 1969), I:1; I:2.

<sup>87</sup> Pocock, 170, 167.

<sup>88</sup> Pitkin, 54-55.

<sup>89</sup> *Discourses*, I:11.

<sup>90</sup> Pitkin, 54-55.

describes *The Art of War* as “the epitome of the world of the Founder”, not because it expressly tells a story of a founder but because it features a “singular patriarchal authority” striving to re-foster the *virtù* of ancient Rome by deploying a good army.<sup>91</sup> On one hand, the text makes claims about the value of republican political pluralism and inter-state competition for human greatness.<sup>92</sup> But on the other hand, despite the dialogue between Fabrizio Colonna, once a mercenary general, and some young interlocutors, Fabrizio speaks unchallenged and with unquestioned authority, not unlike Plato’s Socrates in *Republic*. For Pitkin, “The text lauds the virtues of plurality and conflict, of consultation and competition, except in military command itself. Yet the general who is its principal speaker and teacher takes no advice, meets no opposition, and learns nothing from the young men with whom he converses. . . . [T]he book is in no sense a true dialogue but a mannered monologue”. Pitkin is frustrated that one finds in this text “no cynical fox” and foxiness is “strictly contained”. The text instead describes a world that, though a site of (potential) war, is oddly free of dissent among humans; the soldiers “exercise no independent initiative or judgment at all” such that the text “enacts a fantasy of perfect military discipline”.<sup>93</sup> So preoccupied with rationalist *techne*, Pitkin says, this text “is a stunning contrast to Machiavelli’s other works,” grounded as they are in the view that politics is (about) pluralism.<sup>94</sup> Here, “only the means are at issue, and among these, one can identify technically correct choices.”<sup>95</sup> Indeed, other scholars find *The Art of War* “purely and paralytically theoretical. Giorgio Bárberi Squarotti, for example, argues that Machiavelli’s emphasis on foresight renders action impossible; the formation of a perfect model of action, in which all is foreseen, precludes the possibility of action, and hence of history itself.”<sup>96</sup> Does *The Art of War* retreat into the kind of harmonious geometric oneness found in Brunni’s mapping of Florence? What of Machiavelli the virtuoso theorist’s erstwhile multiplicitous optics?

One feature of *The Art of War* overtly combines a geometric rationalist perspective with a god’s eye view: the set of overhead maps of battalions, armies and encampments that specify locations for infantry, cavalry, velites, centuries, flags, music and so forth. Echoing such geometric perspectivism as a theme of the book, the cover of the University of Chicago Press’s recent edition of *The Art of War* illustrates Paolo Uccello’s *The Battle of San Romano* (c. 1435-36). In preparing to paint, Uccello, an important Italian Renaissance painter, would sketch in underdrawings geometrical linear lines to produce “a ‘pavement’, a regular receding chessboard of notional, and in many pictures actual, squares” upon which to “set[] and calculate[] the size of his pieces . . . . The principle was simple; the practice raised difficulties in detail . . . [as] . . . There are many more right angles, many more straight lines and many more regular solids in Quattrocento paintings than there are in nature or had been in earlier painting.”<sup>97</sup> But given that Machiavelli’s military advice in *The Prince*, I have argued, prescribes the deployment of a multiplicitous perspectivism produced by ongoing movement among different standpoints, is Pitkin’s account of the optics that govern this text adequate? While Fabrizio apparently functions as a Platonic instructor, in *The Prince*, Machiavelli describes reflective dialogue as a

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<sup>91</sup> Pitkin, 55, 63, 65.

<sup>92</sup> Pitkin, 68.

<sup>93</sup> Pitkin, 70.

<sup>94</sup> Pitkin, 69.

<sup>95</sup> Pitkin, 71.

<sup>96</sup> Barbara Spackman, “Politics on the Warpath: Machiavelli’s *Art of War*,” in *Machiavelli and the Discourse of Literature*, eds. Albert Russell Ascoli and Victoria Kahn (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 179-93, pp. 187-88.

<sup>97</sup> Baxandall, 126-27.

key source of Philopoemon's preparedness for war: "When he was out riding in the countryside with his friends . . . he would invite them to discuss . . . all the possible eventualities an army may have to face. He listened to their views, he explained his own and backed them up with arguments."<sup>98</sup>

In her study of *The Art of War*, Barbara Spackman insightfully interprets warfare for Machiavelli as primarily a domain of meaning and communication among political actors.<sup>99</sup> While Machiavelli has been chided by many commentators for underestimating the import of artillery in the future of warfare, Spackman explains that for him, artillery disrupts the battlefield's political process that is, like all politics, largely grounded in optics:

the smoke caused by artillery fire would block the visibility necessary for communication and thereby introduce 'noise' into the channels of communication, both within one's own army and between one's own army and that of the enemy. Fabrizio points out that the same smoke and confusion might become useful if one wished to impair the enemy's vision, or to block those channels of communication. But the usefulness of artillery is judged not from the point of view of destructive force, but rather from the point of view of messages that can or cannot be transmitted, of the "text" that can or cannot be constructed. . . . the general's voice, the colored banners, the roll of drums, the order of the troops according to the arms they carry, and so on, would be obscured by the smoke and literal noise of artillery. . . . By introducing noise – both literal and figurative – into the channels of communication, artillery destroys both sight and the 'order' upon which the army's effectiveness depends."<sup>100</sup>

Since war is an extension of and metaphor for politics for Machiavelli, one expects that the optics at play in his military theory will share considerably with the optics he recommends as instrument to political virtuosos in general. Spackman also sees this overlap, claiming that the battlefield is a realm where virtuosos manufacture appearances, where the illusion of force at least as much as force itself is the medium of war; the discerning and deceptive fox must always be present, while the lion, an underling, will appear only when needed. Fabrizio's military strategies thus aim not for "destruction by whatever means and at whatever cost, of life and property, but rather the disturbance of the other army's strategic predictions. The most effective strategy is therefore one that creates confusion and disorder in the enemy camp, without damaging either the order or the predictions of one's own camp."<sup>101</sup> Where the military virtuoso must be prepared by having studied in advance spatial terrain from multiple standpoints, in the battlefield he becomes a manufacturer, like the Renaissance linear perspectivist painter, of compelling, "realist" images to shape the thinking and actions of his troops, a potential enemy,<sup>102</sup> and his enemy. On the battlefield, however, the virtuoso manufacture appearances to confuse and disorient as well as to convince and create stability. Drawing upon the commonplaces of military procedures found in classical texts, Fabrizio recommends the production of "some strange incident . . . whose novelty may cause [the enemy] to marvel and thus stand indecisive

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<sup>98</sup> *Prince*, 47.

<sup>99</sup> Spackman, 182.

<sup>100</sup> Spackman, 183.

<sup>101</sup> Spackman, 184.

<sup>102</sup> Spackman, 187, 192.

and without acting.”<sup>103</sup> At the same time, one trains the enemy in one’s own habits, creating expectations about oneself, then disrupting this apparent predictability to catch the enemy off-guard. Meanwhile, “should an unforeseen incident occur, one must present it as already foreseen, part of a complicated and preestablished program. One must never trip on the stage of power without immediately regaining the appearance of strength.”<sup>104</sup> In sum, *The Art of War* “aims to create a certain semiotic sensibility, to enrich intertextual competence, and to teach a language of power.”<sup>105</sup>

Spackman’s analysis suggests that Machiavelli theorizes warfare and the battlefield by seeing them as rhetorical terrain that is structured by plural standpoints that the virtuoso must understand and over which he must gain manipulative power. The realism of *trompe l’oeil* – creating an empirically compelling, apparently real window on reality for the enemy -- is therefore an indispensable instrument here as elsewhere for positive political innovation, which in the case of warfare may mean innovations that deconstruct or destroy.

#### **v. Conclusion: realism, pluralism, democracy**

At the beginning of this paper I promised that this study of Machiavelli’s optical arts would reveal something about his realism. Superficial accountings of the sort of realism that structure Machiavelli’s thought abound in Political Science textbooks and beyond. What the present study suggests is that Machiavelli’s realism is in part a form of constructivism that virtuoso actors deploy as an instrument in their strategic action in the world. The realism here refers to the impression made by a manufactured view of things, one that is empirically convincing in that it tends to resonate with people’s on-the-ground, limited, short-sighted daily experience. It is here that Machiavelli’s political theory is marked by the techniques of Renaissance linear perspectivism as an artful representation of human experience that integrates the viewer into the present space in question. Meanwhile, Machiavelli’s own way of seeing the human world, and the optics he recommends to virtuosos for their own understanding, involves the collating of multiple perspectives from multiple standpoints, as a means to grasp the dissonant pluralities of the political landscape. This way of seeing suggests a type of mapmaking, though not of the aerial variety fostered by Leonardo da Vinci. Skinner’s and Price’s translation suggests that the virtuoso maps the complex, temporally and spatially multidimensional lay of the land – but, I have argued, not in a way that produces over all geometric harmony and unity. Machiavelli’s multiplicitous perspectivism is tied to a notion of realism, one that eschews “ornamentation” like that of idealists, and that also eschews the unified harmony of geometry (reflected in the work of Plato, a closet Pythagorean). This realism is entirely distinct from the ordinary, everyday human sense of reality; it seeks the reality that virtuosos in particular can see by virtue of their special training and skill.

Where does this discussion leave us? My final claim is that the multiplicitous perspectivism that characterizes Machiavelli activity of theorizing and the way of seeing that he prescribes to virtuosos resonates with democracy. For Kahn, the “double way of seeing” that

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<sup>103</sup> Spackman, 185. Machiavelli turns to the history books to draw from Hannibal’s experience when surrounded by Fabius Maximus. Attaching at night lit torches to the horns of a stream of oxen stumped Fabius who was then distracted from blocking Hannibal’s passage (book 6, 172-73 [484-85]).

<sup>104</sup> Spackman, 186.

<sup>105</sup> The result is three rules: “(1) never trust appearances, but always project the appearance of being in total control; (2) do not rely upon any habitual “frames” but create them yourself with the goal of violating their parameters and taking the enemy by surprise; and, above all, (3) anticipate and upset the enemy’s predictions.” (Spackman, 188.)

Machiavelli's painterly passage suggests does not guarantee any 'simple or single' effect.<sup>106</sup> For Mousley as well, this multiple perspectivism may seem to enable the virtuoso to wrestle the scene under control (as he manufactures the sort of "realism" of linear perspectivist paintings). However,

it is also an image of carnivalesque inversion, with ruler and ruled exchanging positions or at least points of view . . . . The metaphor may suggest a stable correspondence between a hierarchical order of society and a hierarchical order of nature but it simultaneously unleashes a series of destabilising alternative perspectives: what if the elevation of the people has the effect of enabling them to understand better their subjugation? What if bringing the ruler down to the level of the people has the effect of permanently undermining his authority?<sup>107</sup>

The virtuoso is thus enormously challenged by the very nature of politics itself as Machiavelli conceives it: while he must continually move among the multiple standpoints that structure the political terrain in order to grasp the visual world in as complete of terms as possible, this very movement threatens authority. *Machiavellian theorizing and action itself hinges on a mode of seeing that invites democratic thinking.* At the same time that he himself relies on this democratizing optics, the prince must invest enormous energy in the productive of "realist" views of reality that *mantanere lo stato*. The decay of his authority is inevitable, as is the decay of republican health. However we can see why for Machiavelli, republicanism holds out a better promise for a period of durability, as its structure institutionalizes at least in broad outlines the pluralism of the broader political terrain.

In *Phenomenology of Perception*, Maurice Merleau-Ponty argues that in the world that humans inhabit, "every object is the mirror of all others. When I look at the lamp on my table, I attribute to it not only the qualities visible from where I am, but also those which the chimney, the walls, the table can 'see'". On-the-ground humans "can therefore see an object insofar as objects form a system or a world and insofar as each of them treats the others around it like spectators of its hidden aspects and a guarantee of their permanence."<sup>108</sup> This study of Machiavelli's political thought suggests that for ordinary humans politics is unlike these physical objects in the world, but this way of seeing objects is central to the insights of virtuoso actors. Ordinary, variously located human actors see each other from local, partial perspectives alone. Appearances adroitly manufactured by leaders will deliberately pose for these many different standpoints, and produce a sense of reality to them. Virtuosos, in contrast, must grasp the political terrain as a "system" of human standpoints (analogous to Merleau-Ponty's objects) that from their specific locations see one another in very partial terms. There is no universal standpoint that is yielded, and the fomenting of political liberty entails some dissonant inclusion of these partial standpoints and their competing views on one another.

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<sup>106</sup> Mousley, 159.

<sup>107</sup> Mousley, 159-60.

<sup>108</sup> Translated by and quoted in Sean Dorrance Kelly, "Seeing Things in Merleau-Ponty," 74-110, 76, in Taylor Carman and Mark B.N. Hansen, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Merleau-Ponty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).