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Inquiries: Patricia D'Allura, Assistant to the Editor,
INTERPRETATION, Queens College, Flushing, N.Y.
11367-0904, U.S.A. (718)520-7099

Dante and Machiavelli: A Last Word

LARRY PETERMAN

University of California, Davis

In a previous article in *Interpretation*, I examined Machiavelli's *Dialogue on Language* on the premise that its indictment of Dante places it in the modern lines in the battle between ancients and moderns. The article emphasizes the political dimension of Machiavelli's charge that by claiming to write in a common "courtly" language rather than Florentine Dante is unpatriotic and verges on "parricide," but in the end I concluded that linguistics and politics do not exhaust the issues between the two Florentines and that to do justice to them would require a systematic look at the performed dialogue from which the *Dialogue* takes its title.¹ In the present article, I return to this unfinished business and emend my original premise. Insofar as Machiavelli's account of his dispute with Dante is a true measure of their differences, I now think it fair to say, the dialogue becomes a sourcebook on the origins of the battle between ancients and moderns.

Situating the dialogue in the *Dialogue* as a whole is relatively simple. It is literally and figuratively the central of the tract's three divisions, following on the one side Machiavelli's negative assessment of arguments, including Dante's, for a common vernacular, and preceding on the other Machiavelli's own argument on language, which amounts to the position that all languages are made up of competing native and foreign elements.² The dialogue itself tests whether the language of the *Divine Comedy* meets the requirements of a Dantean courtly language or whether, as Machiavelli argues, it is Florentine. A contest over the *Comedy*'s language serves as a bridge, then, between Machiavelli's particular arguments against linguistic homogeneity and in favor of linguistic heterogeneity. Similarly, but more generally, by concluding that Florentine rules the *Comedy*'s writing, the dialogue reinforces Machiavelli's destructive analysis of our potential commonality and opens the way to his teaching on the essential contentiousness of all human matters.

To appreciate the dialogue's implications for the destructive end of Machiavelli's teaching, it helps to begin with the intersection between Dante's linguistic and political teachings. For Dante, a common vernacular—it would span all Italy—presumes the existence or potential existence of a political order which would be its home and to which other Italian political divisions—cities, towns,

provinces—would be subject. In this respect, Dante’s teaching on language is tied to his proposal that a world monarchy be established to serve the needs of what he calls the universal human community—the *universalis civilitas humani generis*.³ Dante’s linguistic argument thus becomes an extension of his argument in favor of a secularized version of the *respublica Christiana* of the Church, that is, a political order that temporally reproduces the ends that order the Christian afterlife in an equivalent of a universal spiritual community. From Machiavelli’s perspective this would mean that Dante’s proposals manifest the triumph of the promise of Christianity, and of the teaching upon which the Church, speaking for the *respublica Christiana*, rests its case for demanding a leading role in secular as well as spiritual affairs.⁴ For Machiavelli, in short, Dante’s linguistic-political teaching demonstrates the bitter victory of the doctrines and the agents of what he calls “our religion,” and Dante’s arguments link him to the ascendancy of the papal forces responsible for Italy’s political deterioration.

The Machiavellian animus to Dante that runs through his presentation, and destructive analysis, of Dante’s argument, then, is in some part a function of his better publicized antipathy to the Church and its spokesmen.⁵ This brings us to the specifics of the dialogue. Its first exchanges raise the question of the place of the Church in Dante’s teaching and Dante’s world. Machiavelli opens things by asking Dante to give examples of his Lombard, Latin, and invented words to support his disclaimer about using Florentine. Dante responds as regards his use of Lombard with passages from *Purgatory* 3 and—fifty-two cantos later—*Paradise* 22.⁶ Later, Machiavelli acknowledges the use of Lombard in these passages, but for our purposes Dante’s choices here are telling in another way. The first passage refers to the momentous victory of the Church over Manfred, the King of Sicily and the last of the politically effective line of the Emperor Frederick II, at Benevento in 1266, the second to the configuration of the heavens at the moment when Dante first breathes “Tuscan air” in 1265.⁷ The first quotations of the dialogue, in this respect, draw attention to Dante’s birth just as the line of the last emperor to mount a serious challenge to the Church—Dante describes Frederick as “the last of the Roman emperors”—runs out.⁸

It is a matter for conjecture whether Manfred’s death and the exhaustion of Frederick’s line cement the power of the Church for Dante in the same way that Charlemagne’s victories and his crowning by Pope Leo III do for Machiavelli: in Machiavelli’s account, Charlemagne’s conquest of the Lombards disposes of the last serious unified threat to papal dominance of Italy.⁹ The vantage of seven centuries allows us to say what Dante probably could not, that “with the defeat and death of Manfred in 1266, the Ghibelline (imperial) cause became an anachronism.”¹⁰ We can be more confident, on the other hand, that the connecting of Manfred’s death and Dante’s birth by both Machiavelli and Dante—by the dialogue’s choice of passages and the *Comedy*’s positioning of

cantos—calls attention to their agreement on the confluence of Dante’s life and Church predominance in Italian, and European, affairs. The *Florentine Histories*’ account of Manfred, for example, is consistent with Dante’s treatment of Frederick and his line. Machiavelli tells us that in life Manfred kept the Pope in “continuous anxieties,” but that after his death the Popes were able to take advantage of the ensuing period of “quiet” and “now through love for religion, now through their personal ambition, did not cease to call into Italy new men and to stir up new wars . . . thus that province which through their own weakness they could not hold, they did not permit any other to possess.” This process eventually culminates in the ascendancy of Nicholas III, whom both Machiavelli and Dante seem to hold responsible for the development of the modern Papacy.¹¹

Dante, as suggested, seems to agree with this assessment of the events at the time of his birth, that is, that they hastened his world’s deterioration and encouraged unforgiveable excesses. Compared to Machiavelli, of course, there are limits to his description of what follows Manfred’s death. However, to the extent that he can see or foresees unfolding events, he describes them in terms similar to Machiavelli. The *Banquet*, for example, reports that Manfred’s death leaves a political vacuum on the imperial stage—echoed perhaps in Machiavelli’s “quiet”—and the *Comedy* barely mentions the short-lived attempt by Manfred’s nephew Conradin to continue the family fight against the Church.¹² Nor is Dante particularly sympathetic to the Church—at least any more than Machiavelli—regarding its behavior towards Manfred. Although in the *Comedy* he has Manfred acknowledge his “horrible sins,” he places him among the late-repentent—which means he will eventually enter Paradise—and he is adamant that the Pope was unreasonable and denied Scripture in refusing to allow Manfred to be buried in consecrated ground, the act recalled in the passage quoted in the dialogue.¹³ In sum, then, calling up *Purgatory* 3 and *Paradise* 22 at the beginning of the dialogue directs attention to Dante’s and Machiavelli’s mutual awareness that Dante lived in a period that was severely affected by papal politics, and not for the better.¹⁴

For Machiavelli, if not Dante, the consequence of living in the wake of Manfred’s death is that Dante’s teaching bears the stamp of the Church, no matter how radical it appears to his own contemporaries: the *Monarchy* was burned for its alleged Averroism. In other places in the *Dialogue*, therefore, Machiavelli makes connections between Dante, the Church, and “our religion” for which one looks in vain in Dante’s writings. Machiavelli, for example, identifies the court of Dante’s *curiale* language with the Court of Rome and at the end of the *Dialogue* exacts Dante’s “confession” for having erred.¹⁵ Machiavelli’s treatment of Dante, in this sense, is part of his general anticlerical and antitheological posture, and part of the process whereby he displaces earlier writers. Using Dante as a target, he can confront apologists for the Church, pit himself against “those bad seeds . . . which . . . ruined and are still ruining

Italy,” and put those who provide aid and comfort to religion in the ranks of the premodern thinkers.¹⁶

The question of how Dante faces his religion and the world it colors further unfolds as we go deeper into the dialogue. In effect, Dante himself defines the question’s terms when, in the sequel to the reference to his birth in *Paradise* 22, he speaks of his “genius” or the capabilities his stars bestowed upon him. By joining this comment to his reference to Manfred, he leads us to ask how he expects to make his way between his natural and astral inheritance and the unfortunate events that follow Manfred’s failure: this is the *Dialogue*’s and Dante’s version of the *Prince*’s statement on how that to which “nature inclines” relates to the “path” which we walk but for which we are not wholly accountable.¹⁷ The issue of the Church’s impact upon Dante—and perhaps the question of religion’s impact upon all of us—thereby transforms itself into the question of how men deal with circumstances or conditions outside their control.

Machiavelli’s Dante is not without resources in this matter. We see this immediately in the examples of Latin and inventions that follow his Lombard examples: the temptation is to think that Dante responds to the questions raised by his Lombard quotations with a combination of the best of the old and the best of the new. The Latin example is the word *transhumanare*—transhumanize—that Dante uses in *Paradise* 1 to express the change that takes place in him as he ascends from Purgatory to Paradise. The invented example is the pair of reflexives that he utilizes, in the Heaven of Venus in *Paradise* 9, as he induces Folco of Marseilles, who changed on earth from a life of passion to one of faith, to speak with him. The two examples have in common, then, references to capacities for change, although the types of change involved are different.¹⁸

Transhumanization’s extrahuman character is self-evident, but Dante assures that we recognize it by comparing his change to what happens to Glaucus when, as Ovid reports, he eats the plant that transforms him into a seagod.¹⁹ On the other hand, Folco exemplifies the possibility of mortal improvement, a point Dante underlines by putting him with people who are in the Heaven of Venus precisely because of their ability to alter their behavior on earth: Cunizza da Romano, who late in life turned away from youthful debauchery and acted in a way that was a reproach to her infamous and bloodthirsty brother Ezzolino, introduces Dante to Folco, who, in turn, introduces Dante to Rahab, the Whore of Jericho, who rose above her condition to aid Joshua.²⁰ The whole question of man’s confrontation with his surroundings and his conditions, we should also add, is best realized in the Heaven of Venus’s most imposing figure, Charles Martel. Charles, the promising son of Charles of Anjou who died before he could realize his potential, delivers the *Comedy*’s teaching on how to handle the intersection of character, or nature, and fortune, that is, its teaching on the question the *Dialogue* raises by linking Manfred’s death and Dante’s birth.²¹

In the wake of his examples of his Latin and inventions, therefore, Dante may say that the charge, open or implied in his examples of Lombard, that his times submerged his genius or imprisoned him misses the point. The problem of nature's rivalry with fortune is daunting, as Charles Martel's untimely death illustrates, but the Heaven of Venus demonstrates that it is not insurmountable. At the level of faith or speculation, transhumanization supplies the ultimate corrective to the possibly malign events or conditions of this life, irrespective of whether Dante depends upon the religious or philosophical tradition for the teaching and whether it is the power of grace or intellect that leads him to think we can escape from material or physical cares.²² At the mundane and material level, on the other hand, Folco and his heavenly companions demonstrate that our capacity for altering behavior at least occasionally intersects with an opportunity for doing so, with the result that it is possible for us to look for a rebirth in this life that is apart from, although patterned upon, our rebirth in the next.²³ By providing glimpses of possibilities available at the levels of faith, intellect, and morals, in short, Dante gives men cause to think that they are not captives of fate or fortune, or even half of fortune.²⁴ At the same time, he challenges Machiavellianism by leading us to see that we are not doomed endlessly to repeat the same mistakes.²⁵

In a nice instance of his artistry and fondness for symmetry, Machiavelli responds to Dante's opening references and challenge with references of his own at the end of the dialogue. The connection between the two arguments is reasonably obvious. In place of Dante's demonstration that he rises above his native vernacular through the use of Lombard, Latin, and invented words that combine with other words to produce a *curiale* language, Machiavelli gives examples of the *Inferno*'s clumsy, crude, and obscene—all "shameful"—Florentine words. Thus, particularly distasteful words from the *Comedy* defy Dante's claim to have written in a new language particularly suited for the refined men—the *huomini litterati*—of the court.²⁶ This connection is then reinforced in various ways. Without comment, for example, Machiavelli manufactures his example of Dante's purported clumsiness, the first of his concluding examples, from pieces of *Inferno* 26 and *Inferno* 20, which makes it a rather clumsy example of Dante's clumsiness but at the same time provides that there be four references to three kinds of words at both ends of the dialogue.²⁷ More importantly, the opposing sets of examples are linked by subject matter. Both for instance, begin with allusions to Dante's genius and his stars. Specifically, the part of *Inferno* 26 from which Machiavelli borrows describes Virgil's and Dante's move from the ditch of the thieves to that of the deceivers or evil counselors in Hell's eighth circle. Confronting such people grievously affects Dante. After seeing them he observes that he must "curb (his) genius" lest it run where "virtue" does not guide it, because if a "good star" or something

even “better” has granted him such a boon—that is, genius—he must not misuse it. In this sense, the fragment from *Inferno* 26 reasserts the associations initially established through *Paradise* 22.²⁸

Their common features notwithstanding, however, Dante’s and Machiavelli’s references work at cross purposes. Machiavelli intends to demonstrate through his that Dante cannot erase his linguistic roots, a point he drives home by reminding Dante that “art can never entirely deny nature.”²⁹ Where Dante’s examples point to an ability to improve and develop and lead us to construe genius or nature in terms of potential, Machiavelli’s raise the specter of a nature that constrains rather than liberates and is understood in terms of necessities, curbs, and limits rather than opportunities and potential. Machiavelli, in short, uses his examples to reconfigure nature such that we are bound by natural necessity rather than defined by natural potential. For Machiavelli, Dante’s inability to “avoid” Florentine celebrates nature’s triumph over art.³⁰

From this perspective, we can restate the differences that frame the dialogue. Dante’s repudiation of Florence and his claim to a language that supersedes hers are of a piece with his vision of man as a being of natural potentiality. Conversely, Machiavelli may take artistic manipulation of politics to hitherto unknown heights, but his argument against Dante is in keeping with his identification of nature with compelling necessity. The effect of Machiavelli’s teaching is that Dante’s audience needs to redefine its ends, substituting the idea that freedom means rising above necessity and remaining constant in the face of fortune for the idea that freedom means moving in the direction in which nature, or providence, impels.³¹ It is worth repeating, in this respect, that Machiavelli’s examples all come from the *Inferno*, whereas Dante’s come from the *Purgatory* in the first instance and the *Paradise* in the rest. For Machiavelli, the *Inferno* conveys an idea of nature as constraining that is seditious of the teaching of the rest of the *Comedy*. To see the why and how of this, we need look more closely at the examples themselves.

Machiavelli’s closing reference to *Inferno* 26, for a start, adds something to Dante’s discussion of genius which is not apparent in the earlier case. As opposed to the celebration of genius in *Paradise* 22, *Inferno* 26 emphasizes the need sometimes to keep genius under wraps. About to enter the realm of those who put their gifts to bad purposes—Ulysses, Diomed, Guido da Montefeltro—Dante indicates that keeping talents in check or reining in genius as circumstances demand guards against betraying one’s promise like those evil counselors, who, to quote Grandgent, “applied their burning eloquence to the concealment of their real mind.”³² The irony here is not far from the surface. Dante conspires to veil his abilities in reaction to those who hide their intentions by fully utilizing their abilities.³³ More to the point, Machiavelli’s passage reveals that Dante’s self-acknowledged abilities notwithstanding, he admits that genius and candor are not always companions.

The hint that Dante employs veils in his teaching is reinforced by the pas-

sage from *Inferno* 20 at the other end of Machiavelli's manufactured quotation. Machiavelli borrows here from another transitional moment in the journey through Hell. Dante and Virgil are walking downward from the diviners to the barrators in circle eight. As they move they talk, which Dante mentions twice, but we are not told what they talk about. All Dante cares to say is that he and Virgil speak "of other things of which my comedy does not care to sing": in Dante's other specific reference to "my comedy," he emphasizes his refusal to remain silent.³⁴ Between them, it follows, the passages that make up Machiavelli's example of Dante's alleged clumsiness show Dante curbing his genius and then maintaining a purposeful silence. Why Dante is loath to "sing" of his talk with Virgil is intriguing in its own right—they may be discussing the troublesome position in Hell of respected ancient diviners—but in our context it is secondary to the way Machiavelli combines these passages to give a new, and subtle, response to the question Dante poses at the dialogue's inception. Rather than handle the tension between genius and circumstances by stressing our potential for development and growth, Dante here more quietly teaches that problems may be avoided by maintaining reserve or avoiding self-exposure. Restraint—curbing genius and not "singing" of everything—becomes a practical response to the difficulties that arise when circumstances oppose talent.

Machiavelli responds, then, to the questions Dante raises at the dialogue's opening by bringing forward the reticent end of Dante's teaching at the dialogue's close. In effect, Machiavelli turns Dante's argument for artistic restraint back upon him by using it to accuse Dante of being injudicious or indiscreet in his writing: in the course of arguing Machiavelli tells Dante to "consider well what you have written."³⁵ Machiavelli rejects the open teaching of the *Paradise*, in this respect, in favor of the closed teaching or the teaching on discretion of the *Inferno*. Despite encouraging men to be adaptable, Machiavelli suppresses Dante's argument that men may alter themselves and gives us a foretaste of his own teaching that morally neutral artistry, guided by morally neutral prudence or wisdom, is the key to navigating the waters aroused when nature and fortune collide. A new version of the old teaching on deception overcomes the old teaching on human potential. By such methods, the fox becomes the lead animal in Machiavelli's modern bestiary.³⁶

An obvious next question is why Machiavelli calls attention to Dante's methods but will not apply them to Dante's ends. Presumably, he thinks that it would have been preferable for Dante to be more discreet about the teaching represented by the examples of Glaucus and Folco, but he fails to tell us why he thinks so, a silence that anticipates his silence on why he foregoes ancient ways. This matter brings into play the remaining quotations in Machiavelli's concluding set—and the last from Dante in the *Dialogue*. The quotations, which finish off Machiavelli's demonstration that the *Comedy* is Florentine,

arise in *Inferno* 28 and 25 and refer respectively to Mahomet, who is in Hell as a sower of religious discord, and to Vanni Fucci, who is among the infamous Florentine thieves because of his involvement, in about 1293, in the looting of a treasury in the Church of San Zeno in Pistoia. Insofar as the charge that Dante employs crude and obscene Florentine expressions in the *Comedy* is concerned, Machiavelli could hardly choose better than these cases, which vividly describe Mahomet's spilled entrails—"that makes shit of what is swallowed"—and Vanni Fucci's defiance to God—"he lifted his hands with both the figs."³⁷ The passages also, however, carry a subtext which bears on the question of why Machiavelli accepts Dante's methods but not his ends. In context, they reveal the difficulties in trying, like Dante, to join pagan Glaucus to Christian Folco or, more broadly, to fashion an accommodation between Athens and Jerusalem: that Dante and Glaucus transhumanize in a canto which begins with a call to Apollo for inspiration and that the canto which commemorates Folco's reform begins with Beatrice's reassurances signals Dante's approach to the problem.

In the medieval framework, Mahomet is a religious "provocateur," either in the role of apostate Christian or as the founder of Islam.³⁸ In both instances, he stands for religious "scandal and schism" and is appropriately punished for creating disorder: he is hacked apart by a devil, thus the spilling of his entrails, and after he heals is hacked anew. The sacrilegious thief Vanni Fucci suffers similarly: a snake's sting reduces him to ashes, after which, "like the Phoenix," he regains life only to be stung and reduced again.³⁹ Even such a terrible punishment does not, however, quell his "bloody rage," and he is still capable of the "obscene" gesture to God which marks him as the most "proud" spirit Dante encounters in Hell.⁴⁰

In referring us to Mahomet and Vanni Fucci Machiavelli supplies a series of rejoinders to Dante's heavenly references. Vanni Fucci, for example, describes himself as more than a beast in a way that sets off Dante's becoming more than human at the gates of paradise. Similarly, Mahomet's tortured form acts as a counterpoint to Folco's resplendence.⁴¹ More to the point, however, Machiavelli's examples deflect the message conveyed by Dante's. Whereas Dante and Folco become something new in Paradise and on earth respectively, Mahomet and Vanni Fucci undergo repetitive transmutations but always return to their original forms. Indeed, in Hell the latter are hardly different than on earth, their terrible punishments notwithstanding. Mahomet continues to sow discord by asking Dante to convey advice to the still living rebellious friar Fra Dolcino, and Vanni Fucci's "obscene" gesture to God carries forward the defiant attitude that led him to desecrate San Zeno.⁴²

Machiavelli's examples, then, carry an interconnected set of messages that oppose the arguments contained in Dante's opening. First, with a nod toward the fifteenth chapter of the *Prince*, there is what amounts to a warning that the world that is renders impossible—in the *Dialogue's* term, "incredible"—the

world of the *Paradise*.⁴³ Mahomet, the sower of religious discord, and Vanni Fucci, the impious and defiant thief, illustrate the sectarian antagonisms and divisiveness that tear late medieval and early renaissance Florence and make Dante's attempted accommodations between Athens and Jerusalem, and generally the secular and spiritual worlds, impractical, and probably dangerous. Alternatively, the world we behold in Machiavelli's hellish examples is in such disrepair that it exposes the improbability of the world we behold through Dante's heavenly examples.⁴⁴ In this latter respect especially, the *Dialogue* thereby repeats the message on religion of the early part of the *Discourses*, where, as Harvey Mansfield, Jr. says, "we are presented with a contrast between ancient veneration of religion and modern contempt for it, leading to political unity among the ancients and disunity among the moderns" and eventuating in the provisional doctrine that "religion is incapable of producing unity" and that religious veneration must thereby give way to the view that religion is merely useful.⁴⁵

This points to another count in Machiavelli's indictment of Dante. Dante miscalculates the impact upon his audience of sectarianism and religious instability and, by extension, fails to see that there is no educating his contemporaries. The best that can be hoped for is that they be manipulated. The covert teaching of the *Dialogue* is that life in a world molded by figures like Mahomet and Vanni Fucci requires that the methods and arts of deception become the critical tools of rule where once they had been one among other important tools. By bringing forward Mahomet and Vanni Fucci as rejoinders to Dante-Glaucus and Folco, Machiavelli elevates Dante's Hell at the cost of his Paradise, and demonstrates that Dante's arts, the arts of discretion and dissimulation, are more necessary for facing the world than the promise underlying Dante's teaching.

As well as responding to Dante, it follows, the Machiavellian conclusion of the *Dialogue* suggests something of what we may expect at the end of the new route Machiavelli lays out. If it is correct that Machiavelli sees in his world the lower regions of the *Inferno* made real, the cyclical or at least repetitive punishments of Hell will compel human affairs, and Aristotle's universe, where natural cataclysms manifest nature's beneficence by presenting the opportunity to start things afresh, is lost.⁴⁶ The world Machiavelli describes contains men damned, by Dante's infernal standards, to repeat their own and their ancestors' mistakes. This bleak picture, one should add, probably leads Dante to leave the stage at the end of the *Dialogue*. Much later, it will move the first wave of modern thinkers to struggle over how to honor Machiavelli's view of man without having to give up hope of relieving the human condition.

Machiavelli's closing examples in the dialogue, in sum, counterbalance Dante's opening examples and challenge the credibility of the Christian-Aristotelian synthesis that is the theoretical highwater mark of late medievalism. For Machiavelli, the combination of Mahomet and Vanni Fucci defeats the

combination of Dante-Glaucus and Folco. By the same token, Christian-Aristotelian ideas of human potential are set aside and artistic manipulation of one's fellows, the secrets of which Machiavelli attributes to Dante, becomes the route to survival and political triumph—it is most fully realized in the art of propaganda.

Machiavelli's reservations about Dante's teachings become apparent at the center of the dialogue as well as its peripheries. There, for example, Machiavelli replies to Dante's opening claim to having used Lombard by citing a Florentine usage in Beatrice's Thomistic message to Christians to avoid worry about unwanted or unforeseen consequences of vows by being more grave and more careful about vowing in the first place.⁴⁷ In the immediate sequel to this, Dante, arguing that it is allowable to use a few foreign words in a long work, cites a Persian word in Virgil's account of Aeolus's sinking of Aeneas's fleet at the urging of Juno.⁴⁸ Outside the linguistic issue, it follows, quotations from Dante's two guides place Christian sentiment in favor of stripping vows of their mystery and avoiding the unforeseen or unanticipated alongside paganism's sense of our helplessness before oftentimes fickle and indifferent but always fearsome gods. The central section of the dialogue may thereby be said to be dominated by the tension between Christianity and paganism and between Dante's Beatrice and Virgil, which repeats, at a higher level, the competition between native and foreign elements in Dante's writing.

The same sorts of conclusions follow from passages Machiavelli cites immediately after the illuminating confrontation of Beatrice and Virgil. In this instance Machiavelli, prefiguring Dante's confession at the end of the *Dialogue*, says that Dante "confesses" to using Florentine in *Inferno* 10 and 23 by having men recognize him as Tuscan and Florentine when they hear him talking. The characters in question are respectively Farinata degli Uberti, the Ghibelline hero and savior of Florence, and Catalano dei Malavolti and Loderingo degli Andolo, hypocritical friars who had once ruled Florence. For Machiavelli, the relationship between these characters parallels that between Beatrice and Virgil. Where the latter indicates the tension between the two ends of Dante's teaching, the former points to the incompatibility between the lifestyle Dante admires, that of Farinata, and the dominant lifestyle of Dante's world, that of Catalano and Loderingo, who as friars and rulers of Florence represent the meeting ground of Dante's religion and his political association.

Farinata, a hero of extraordinary proportions, an example of what Dante terms noblehood, and "the greatest of Dante's colossal sculptures," is in Hell for his Epicureanism. Despite this, but consistent with his old-fashioned bent, he is one of two figures in the *Comedy*—Virgil is the other—whom Dante, after Aristotle, styles *magnanimo*. Characteristic of the magnanimous, Farinata is exceedingly proud, even in Hell: he displays "great scorn of Hell" and ad-

dresses Dante “half disdainfully.”⁴⁹ Conversely, the friars are sullen and fearful. In contrast to Farinata’s openness and self-aware greatness, they are always looking over their shoulders, and they worry that Dante will scorn them.⁵⁰ Moreover, where Farinata is a throwback to pagan beliefs—Epicureans are punished for making “the soul die with the body”—the friars identify themselves according to their religious orders, and Dante keys their punishment to their monastic ways: they wear leaden versions of Cluniac cloaks and cowls.⁵¹ Finally, further establishing the antithesis, *Inferno* 23 refers expressly to the accusation that Catalano and Loderingo burned the palace of Farinata’s family, the Uberti, at the instigation of the Pope.⁵²

As he exacts Dante’s confession, then, Machiavelli leads us to Dante’s contrasting pictures of an Epicurean heretic who is the last representative of pagan magnanimity and of religious hypocrites who are also Christian monastics and papal deputies. The initial conclusion that we draw from this is relatively simple, and not much different from that which Dante induces without Machiavelli’s help. In a world of men like the friars, Farinata’s model, to which Dante is openly sympathetic, becomes suspect.⁵³ As Beatrice’s and Virgil’s essential contentiousness comes to the surface in Machiavelli’s framework, so Catalano and Loderingo signify conditions unfriendly to a Farinata. The theoretical division between Dante’s guides repeats in the political and practical divisions between his interlocutors. At the simplest level, the friars help destroy the Uberti, and at a more complex level their actions refute the notion of magnanimity identified with the family’s greatest spokesman.

While Dante brings the Farinata versus the friars tension to our attention, he does not openly resolve it. Typically, he leaves it to us to decide whether we can steer between the ancient and modern perspectives. Machiavelli, however, is not so generous. He leads us to a decision by causing us to see, in a characterological version of Gresham’s law, that Catalano and Loderingo win out over Farinata. To this end, Machiavelli enlists the example of Count Ugolino, a Pisan contemporary of Dante and the central figure in the longest episode of the *Inferno*: Ugolino is in Antenora, the part of lowest Hell assigned to traitors to party and country, where he is punished by having endlessly to devour the cleric, Archbishop Ruggieri, who had starved him so terribly that he cannibalized his dead children. After a brief change of direction in his argument—we shall return to this—Machiavelli causes Dante to admit that he uses Florentine by reminding him that Ugolino addresses him as Florentine after overhearing him talking to Virgil. Machiavelli overcomes Dante’s resistance to admitting that he speaks Tuscan and Florentine on the basis of the examples of Farinata and the friars, in other words, through the similarly directed example of Ugolino. Ugolino’s added weight, however, also tips the balance against Farinata as regards the question of what models of behavior are and will be compelling for either Dante or Machiavelli’s audience. For a start, Farinata, and to a lesser degree the friars, draw attention to Dante’s provincial roots by

initially addressing him “*O Tosco*,” but Ugolino greets Dante as a Florentine. This simultaneously bears out Machiavelli’s linguistic point; leaves the impression that Florence, Dante’s *patria*, is more compelling than Tuscany, his province; and obscures the ancestral sensibilities that for Dante and Dante’s Farinata are intertwined with province.⁵⁴ Ugolino, in these senses, testifies to the conditions that ultimately defeat Dante. Dante’s collapse in the face of his example—after admitting Machiavelli is “right” and himself “wrong” he does not speak again in the *Dialogue*—is tacit admission that what Machiavelli holds is true and that Ugolino, the devourer of his own children and spokesman for a city which is the “shame of the peoples of the fair land where the *si* sounds,” is more representative of Italy than Farinata, who was dominated by family concerns and was alone (*fu’io solo*) responsible for saving Florence from being razed by the Ghibellines but whose cause, and goodness, are little more than a dim memory by Dante’s own time.⁵⁵ Where Machiavelli exposes the self-destructive tension at the heart of Christian-Aristotelianism with the Beatrice-Virgil dichotomy, he uses Farinata, the friars, and Ugolino to write finis to the Farinatan, and Aristotelian, end of any potential ancient-modern synthesis.

Although Machiavelli shows Dante little mercy in the *Dialogue*, he is fair in that he allows Dante to suggest some of his, premachiavellian, objections to Machiavellianism. A case in point occurs in a short exchange just before Machiavelli mentions Ugolino. For the purpose of “convincing” Dante that he writes Florentine by comparing his writing to that of a contemporary, Machiavelli has Dante read sequentially from the *Comedy* and Luigi Pulci’s *Morgante*.⁵⁶ The exchange begins with Machiavelli ordering Dante to read the first line of the *Inferno*: “In the middle of the journey of our life, I came to myself in a dark wood where the straight way was lost.” Next, he asks, not orders, Dante to read from the *Morgante*. In this instance, Machiavelli does not specify a particular reading, a failure Dante underlines by asking where he should begin. Machiavelli replies that the choice is his or that he can choose at random, *a caso*. Dante selects a line from the beginning of *Morgante* 24: “The one who begins does not deserve merit, it is written in your Gospel, benign father.”⁵⁷

Machiavelli’s argument here is that there is no difference in language in the passages Dante reads, but the passages are also similar in another way. Both focus on beginnings. On this subject, Dante and Machiavelli differ substantially. Whereas Dante shares Aristotle’s suspicion of beginnings, Machiavelli is deservedly famous for celebrating founders and innovators.⁵⁸ This, in turn, gives Dante’s reference to Pulci’s reference to the Gospel—*Matthew* 10 and 24 both fit—an interesting twist. The Scriptural message is not, as Pulci’s tone might lead us to think, that we ought to refuse to reward originators because of qualms about the new. Rather, it is that perseverance guarantees salvation, the

point being that we are to commit ourselves unwaveringly to our spiritual objectives no matter what pitfalls we encounter and how tempted we are to stray because of new but false prophets: “you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake . . . (many) will betray one another, and will hate one another . . . false prophets will arise and lead men astray . . . but whoever perseveres to the end, he will be saved” (*Matt.* 24.9–13); “brother will hand over brother to death, and the father his child. . . , children will rise up against parents and put them to death . . . And you will be hated by all for my name’s sake, but he who has persevered to the end will be saved” (*Matt.* 10.21–22). In the context of Dante’s suspicion of innovation and respect for tradition, it follows, the passage he chooses from Pulci has a double force. It brings together Aristotle and Scripture by the expedient of identifying distrust of beginnings with Christian belief in steadfastness. Dante’s quotation from Pulci, in other words—it is the thirteenth of the dialogue and occurs in the thirty-third of the *Dialogue’s* combined paragraphs and exchanges—conceals the gap between Aristotle’s bias toward the long standing and Scripture’s willingness to overthrow all in the name of faith by reading Christianity’s praise of perseverance into Aristotle’s argument against opening new ways, at least in politics. The alliance between Dante and Pulci, or Aristotle and Scripture, is uneasy, but Dante apparently accepts it as the cost of mitigating a practical problem that sets apart Jerusalem and Athens—the clash between spiritual commitment and habitual respect for tradition—without employing Machiavelli’s more acid remedies. Through Pulci, Dante restates the ancient challenge to innovators, and to Machiavellianism, and suggests a way to ease the strain between reason and revelation.

At a critical moment in the dialogue, it follows, a fundamental of Dante’s and Machiavelli’s dispute emerges. For reasons implicit in his respect for both Vergil and Beatrice, Dante accepts the concessions and uncertainties in the Christian-Aristotelian synthesis on beginnings, but because of his reading of his world, which includes appreciation of what “our religion” has wrought, and because of the impact of figures like Mahomet and Vanni Fucci, Machiavelli will not accept the thinly supported compromises the synthesis demands. When Machiavelli says here that he wants to “convince” Dante “with book in hand,” he shows his disdain for the uncertainties tolerated, even welcomed, by Dante and ancient thinkers and is true to his greater project of replacing them with a hope, as Leo Strauss put it, “which approaches or equals certainty.”⁵⁹ Machiavelli’s design in the *Dialogue*, in such terms, is to eliminate the forbearance in the face of uncertainty that colors the *Comedy*: having said that he began his journey lost in a wood, Dante immediately admits that he cannot account for his escape from it.⁶⁰ It appears that for Machiavelli confronting fortune and natural necessity, the point of the *Dialogue’s* comments on “artistry,” and living in uncertainty are mutually exclusive. To succeed in his purpose, and to provide dependable truths, he must overcome Dante, the last great medieval spokesman for classical rationalism’s reservations about knowing.⁶¹

To the degree that Machiavelli corrects and convinces Dante, in summary, he eases the uncertainty the ancients beget and caters to a modern need for surety. When Dante quotes Pulci, on the other hand, he turns the pagan and revelatory traditions on Machiavelli by combining suspicion of originators with high valuation for perseverance and steadfastness. Machiavelli's attempt to make Dante more assured or convert him to Machiavellianism, in this way, elicits a challenge to Machiavelli's confidence in inventiveness. This is the closest Dante comes—or perhaps can come—to ancient skepticism while he wears his Christian-Aristotelian garb, but it is instructive as regards his and Machiavelli's relationship. At their hearts, their teachings go in opposite directions according to the way the one deflects the modern desire for certitude and the other feeds it.⁶²

We conclude by returning to the specifics of the dialogue. According to what has been said, the dialogue turns on questions that divide ancients and moderns. At its center—and the *Dialogue's*—there is the contrast between Farinata, at once an Epicurean heretic, the savior of Florence and the last magnanimous man, and Catalano and Loderingo, at once hypocritical men of the cloth, betrayers of Florence, and objects of scorn. These figures are surrounded by references on one side to Beatrice on vows and Virgil on the fickleness of the gods and on the other side to the *Comedy's* beginning and the *Morgante's* scripturally supported warning to originators. The differences between Farinata and the friars, in this way, radiate outwards to the differences between pagan and Christian appreciations of the gods and ancient and modern appreciations of beginnings. Finally, framing the whole dialogue, we find opposed alternatives regarding our natural potential and the influence upon us of circumstances and surroundings. Looking at the dialogue as a whole, different types of men and different ways of looking at human possibilities face each across a medium composed of different ways of looking at the gods and at beginnings. This can be restated as follows: the contrasting psychological models or souls at the core of the dialogue become, through contact with different forms of belief, the contrasting moral types at its peripheries. Whichever way one takes Machiavelli's argument, however, it leads to the conclusion that the quarrel between ancients and moderns is a function of the way ancient and modern views of the gods and God, and beginnings, mediate between the soul and the belief in human flexibility and growth that most of us identify with freedom.⁶³

NOTES

1. "Machiavelli versus Dante: Language and Politics in the *Dialogue on Language*," 10 (1982), 201–21. *Dial.* 25. Citations are to the critical edition of Ornella Pollidori, included in her *Niccolò Machiavelli e il "Dialogo intorno alla nostra lingua"* (Florence: Leo Olschki, 1978). The argument

of the original article is that Dante's stance on language is tied to his view of his political associations, Tuscany and Florence, which is in turn governed by Aristotle's discussions of *polis* and *politeia*. In criticizing Dante, I consequently argue, Machiavelli opposes Aristotelianism and anticipates the modern state. At *Dial.* 34, Machiavelli assures that we be aware that the dialogue is performed by expressly dispensing with the "he said" and "I replied."

2. The *Dialogue* is carefully crafted. Its 52 paragraphs and exchanges, for example, are divided into an introductory paragraph and a 13-paragraph section, the dialogue, and a 13-paragraph section and a concluding paragraph. There still exists some controversy over the *Dialogue's* authenticity. Pollidori gives a compelling defense of Machiavelli's authorship in her edition and in her *Nuove Riflessioni* (Rome: Salerno, 1981). For a recent note on the relevant literature, see Charles Davis, "Dante, Machiavelli, and Rome," *Dante Studies*, 106(1988), 46 and n. 4. An adequate appraisal of the dialogue demands that special attention be given to the authorities and quotations that occur in its give and take. They supply the heavy weapons in Machiavelli's and Dante's struggle and occur in great density: nothing I know in Machiavelli compares with the dialogue in this respect.

3. *Monarchia*, I.ii.8, Pier Ricci ed. (Verona: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1965); *Dial.* 1-4, 9-10, 22-26. See Larry Peterman, "Dante's *Monarchia* and Aristotle's Political Thought," *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, 10(1973), 13-16. Charles Davis, in *Dante and Italy* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1984), 14-15, says that the absence of an Italian court does not foreclose a common language, for "Italy once had a united court under Frederick II and still has a dispersed court whose members are united all the same by the gracious light of reason, that is to say, by the bonds of custom and usage and most of all of language," points that Davis reinforces by quoting Pier Mengaldo to the end that the argument of the *Vulgari Eloquentia* accurately reflects the interconnection of the political activities of Frederick and Manfred, the formation of the Magna Curia, and the formation "of the first unitary Italian language."

4. On the interpenetration of theology and politics in medieval thought, a good place to begin is Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).

5. *Discourses*, II.3 [I.237]. Unless otherwise indicated, page references to Machiavelli, in square brackets, are to *Tutte le Opere di Niccolò Machiavelli*, Francesco Flora and Carlo Cordié eds., 2 vols. (Milan: Mondadori, 1968).

6. *Dial.* 35-36.

7. *Dial.* 35, *Purg.* 3.128, *Para.* 22.115. References to the *Divine Comedy* are to the John Sinclair text and translation, 3 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961).

8. *Convivio* IV.iii.6, G. Busnelli and G. Vandelli eds. (Florence: Felice Le Monnier, 1964). In the same place, Dante says that since the death of Frederick and his "descendants" there has been no worthy claimant to the title up "to the present time." Cf. *De Vulgari Eloquentia* I.xii.4, Pier Ricci ed. (Florence: Felice Le Monnier, 1968).

9. *Florentine Histories*, I.11 [II.24]: ". . . and whereas the pope used to be confirmed by the emperors, the emperor began in his election to have need of the pope. As the Empire was coming to lose its privileges, the Church acquired them, and by these means it kept increasing its authority over the temporal princes," trans. Laura Banfield and Harvey Mansfield, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 22; Larry Peterman, "Machiavelli's Dante and the Sources of Machiavellianism," *Polity*, 20 (Winter, 1987), 249-53. See, too, *Conv.* IV.ix.17. Marco Lombardo (*Purg.* 16.115-20) uses Frederick II as the dividing point between his country being full of "valore e cortesia" and becoming shameful.

10. Richard Kay, *Dante's Swift and Strong* (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1978), 14.

11. *Flor. Hist.*, I.22-23. [II.37-40]. See *Flor. Hist.*, II.10, 26 chapters later, where Nicholas III is shown to ruin Charles in the same manner that Charles had ruined Manfred. Nicholas III was, in Machiavelli's account, not only the first pope of open ambition, he was also the first to attempt to "honor and benefit" his own relatives. Machiavelli says that after him mention of the relatives of pontiffs will fill history and all that is left is for popes to try to make their office hereditary. Dante places Frederick among the simonists in Hell. The first portion of the dialogue (35-36, 41-42) is dominated by examples which point to the growth, and impact, of papal secular influence before and during Dante's time. To the reference to Manfred's defeat are added a reference to Char-

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lemagne's defeat of the Lombards and two references to Nicholas III. Thus, the act that solidifies the power of the Church in Italy is enclosed within references to the last serious secular threat to the Papacy and the first of the truly modern popes.

12. *Purg.* XX.68, *Conv.* IV.iii.6.

13. Charles Singleton, in *Purgatory 2: Commentary* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 59, quotes Villani: "(Manfred) was generous, courteous, and debonair, so that he was much loved and enjoyed great favor. But his whole life was Epicurean; he cared neither for God nor for the saints, but only for the delights of the flesh. He was an enemy of the Holy Church, of priests, and of monks. Like his father, he occupied the churches; and he became even richer, for he had inherited the treasure of the emperor and of his brother, King Conrad. Moreover, he had a large and prosperous kingdom, which, despite the wars with the Church, he kept in good state as long as he lived, increasing its riches and power on land and sea."

14. Cf. *Purg.* 3 and *Para.* 22.74–84. For Dante's view of degenerating affairs after the deaths of Frederick and Manfred, see *Vulg. Eloq.* I.xii.4–5. For a recent assessment of Dante's critique of the Papacy, see Peter Kaufman, "Foscolo, Dante, and the Papacy," *History of European Ideas*, 12, No.2(1990), 211–20. More clearly than Dante, Machiavelli holds that the well-being of the Church and of the secular community are inversely proportional. Peterman, "Machiavelli's Dante," 251–53.

15. *Dial.* 79. Dante does not say his language attaches to any particular court (38), but Machiavelli still "marvels" that he might assign such importance to the Court of Rome (58–59).

16. *Hist. Flor.* VIII.36 [II,434].

17. *Para.* 22.114, *Prince* XXV [1,80]. Cf. *Dial.* 22–24, where Machiavelli acknowledges Dante's "genius" but claims that fortune "gives (Dante) the lie" as regards his portrait of Florence: in the process Machiavelli describes a Florence of such well-being that his own description becomes incredible. See on the possibility of a middle way between the choices Machiavelli lays out in *Prince* XXV, Harvey Mansfield, Jr., *Machiavelli's New Modes and Orders* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1979), 100.

18. *Dial.* 36; *Para.* 1.70; *Para.* 9.81 (*io m'intuassi come tu ti immii*, "were I in you as you in me"). The change in Folco is sufficiently radical that Sinclair speaks of his "transfiguration" (*Para.*, p. 143). Folco was a troubadour and poet who early in life was given to the pleasures of the flesh but later became a Cistercian monk and eventually the Bishop of Toulouse, in which office he demonstrated his dedication to the spiritual life by taking a vigorous part in the persecution of the Albigenian heretics. As in the case of *transhumanare*, Dante's invented reflexives signify what cannot adequately be conveyed by language, an interpenetration of minds or "spiritual telepathy" which renders speech redundant. For this characteristic of Paradise, see Sinclair's gloss on the passage (143–44). Erich Von Richthofen locates thirteen such inventions in the *Para.*, *Veltro und Diana* (Tubingen: Max Niemeyer Publisher, 1956), 102–3.

19. *Para.* 1. 64–69, *Metamorphoses* XIII. 898–968.

20. *Para.* 9. 22–66, 109–26; *Joshua* 2:1, 3. Sinclair (p. 143) quotes Grabher on Rahab's transformation of human passion into "holy ardour."

21. Charles Martel creates problems for critics—Dante is unclear about why he is in this particular place—but he fits nicely into our framework. Having died young and before his political promise could be borne out—"the world held me only a little time, and if I had lived longer, much evil that will be would not have been" (*Para.* 8.49–51)—he becomes a good example of the oft-times malign influence of fortune in active affairs and a case study in what can happen when nature and fortune collide. Thus, he also becomes a good source for the warning that men must be on the lookout for fortune yet not abandon nature: recollecting Aristotle, he says that men are moved to pursue different ends and should "nature" be discordant with "fortune" it will fail, from which he concludes that men must pay greater attention to the foundation nature lays and build on it in order to improve (121–48). See Peterman, "Machiavelli's Dante," 254–55. For Dante, we should add, the short-term consequences of Charles Martel's death—the overthrow of the White Guelphs and Dante's eventual exile from Florence—are on a par with the long-term consequences of Manfred's death—the triumph of the Church and its party. Between them, in other words, Manfred and Charles define Dante's major political problems, i.e., an unrestrained Church and an

unstable Florence. It is interesting in this respect that Dante mentions Manfred and Charles at the ends of thirty-nine cantos at the center of which Statius describes his remarkable change of life after experiencing Christianity (cf. *Purg.* 3, *Para.* 8, *Purg.* 22).

22. Cf. *Conv.* II.xiii, xvi.22.

23. The Heaven of Venus is characterized by rhetoric at *Conv.* II.xiii.13, which is consistent with Folco's position that it is a contact point between the temporal and extratemporal orders: Folco (*Para.* 9.107–20) tells Dante that in the Heaven of Venus "the shadow of your world comes to an end" and we "discern the good for which the world above turns about your world." As rhetoric is a path between philosophy and politics, however imperfect, the Heaven of Venus mediates between the heavens and the earth.

24. There are interconnections between these passages that go beyond those suggested in the text, and which would have been seen by Machiavelli. The examples of Lombard and invented words, for example, belong to a sequence—it includes *Purg.* 3, Manfred's canto; *Purg.* 16, Marco Lombardo's canto; *Purg.* 29, Dante's account of the chariot; *Para.* 9, Folco's canto; and *Para.* 22, Dante's birth under Gemini—that speaks to the question of man's permanence and his place between the stars and the earth, a question that bears as well on Dante's transhumanization. Cf. *Para.* 8.115–48; *Mon.*I.ii.2.

25. *Disc.* I.xi.end [I,128].

26. *Dial.* 38.

27. *Dial.* 50; *Inf.* 26.130, 20.13; Polidori, p. 243, n. 81. To argue that describing the two passages as one is an oversight ignores the fact that Machiavelli refers correctly to the same place in *Inferno* 26 at *Dial.* 26. By counting the incorrect attribution as a single quotation, the number of explicit quotations in the *Dial.* totals twenty-six. Making two quotations one reminds of Machiavelli's use of prefaces to give the *Disc.* the same number of chapters as Livy has books.

28. *Inf.* 26.13–24, *Para.* 22.112–14. On the significance of genius (*ingegno*) as used by Dante, see *Inferno*, Singleton, vol. 2, 452.

29. *Dial.* 51.

30. *Dial.* 50; Leo Strauss, *Thoughts on Machiavelli* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1958), 241.

31. Strauss, *Thoughts*, 217–18. For a more conventional view of this subject, see Quentin Skinner, *Machiavelli* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 15.

32. *La Divina Commedia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), 227. The evil counselors create problems for critics because of difficulties in reckoning their sins together. See, e.g., Mark Musa's comments, *The Divine Comedy*, 3 vols. (New York: Penguin, 1981), 1, 313–14. Other things being equal, the extraordinary abilities of the evil counselors are obvious. Sinclair, for example, speaks of their "high mental gifts" and their "higher endowment(s)," and concludes that Dante's "main thought is that great mental powers are a great trust and that the expending of them on ends which are not God's is treason and disaster" (*Inferno*, p. 329).

33. Here again the passage Machiavelli utilizes is from a greater sequence. *Inf.* 26, with its comment on curbing "genius," falls between *Inferno* 9, where those of "good intellect" are to note "the teaching hidden under the veil of (Dante's) strange verses" (61–63) and—33 cantos later—*Purgatory* 8, where "readers" are to penetrate the "veil" over Dante's "truth" (19–21). See, e.g., Vincent Hopper, *Medieval Number Symbolism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), 137.

34. *Inf.* 21.2, 16.128. In the *Conv.*, Dante speaks of writing with *discrezione*, and allows himself and other writers room for *dissimulazione* within the discretionary purpose. See Peterman, "Reading the *Convivio*," *Dante Studies*, 103 (1985), 126–30; *Inf.* 31.54; *Para.* 12.144.

35. *Dial.* 50. Machiavelli, of course, is shockingly forthright about utilizing lies. See "Letter to Guicciardini," 17 May 1521, in Allan Gilbert trans., *The Letters of Machiavelli* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1961), 200.

36. Mansfield, *Modes and Orders*, 299.

37. *Dial.* 50; *Inf.* 28.27; *Inf.* 25.2.

38. Singleton, *Inferno*, 2, 503.

39. *Inf.* 24.97–108.

40. Vanni Fucci's status in Hell is remarkable. Machiavelli compares his defiance to that of Capaneus. Cf. *Inf.* 25.13–14, 14.46–72.40.

41. The replacement of Dante-Glaucus and Folco by Mahomet and Vanni Fucci recalls the replacement of the God-Man Chiron by the Beast-Man Chiron of *Prince XVIII*. See Strauss, *Thoughts*, 78.

42. The heretical sect of the Apostolic Brethren, which Fra Dolcino led, is still active at the time in which the *Comedy* is set (*Inf.* 28.55–60). See Grandgent, *Commedia*, 247, n. 55. Vanni Fucci's pride is associated with that of the Black Devil of *Inf.* 21.29, to which Machiavelli refers in the *Castruccio* [I.673]. On the connection, see Davy Carozza, "The Motif of Maturation in the *Commedia*," *Lectura Dantis Newberryana*, 1(1988), 60–61.

43. At *Dial.* 26 Machiavelli notes the incredibility of Dante's finding Brutus in the mouth of Lucifer, five Florentine citizens among the thieves, and Cacciaguida in Paradise.

44. Vanni Fucci prophesies the deterioration of Florence through Black-White party strife, and Mahomet's Fra Dolcino was successful for a time, thereby disrupting the spiritual world. On Dante's accommodations, see, e.g., the statements on the *documenta phylosophica* and the *documenta spiritualia* and the Emperor and the Pope in *Mon.* III.xv.7–18. *Inf.* 24.142–51, 28.55–57. For Machiavelli, perhaps, Dante's too rosy view is manifested in Folco's prediction (*Para.* 9.139–42) of the imminent end of the corrupt government of the Church.

45. *Disc.* I.xi [I.127–28], Mansfield, *Modes and Orders*, 73.

46. See Strauss, *Thoughts*, 299.

47. *Dial.* 43, *Para.* 5.64. Machiavelli's point is that Dante utilizes the Florentine *ciancie* (light or frivolous) rather than the Lombard *zanze*—in Dante's text the word used is *ciancia*. See, too, Larry Peterman, "Gravity and Piety: Machiavelli's Modern Turn," *The Review of Politics* (Spring 1990), 189–214.

48. *Dial.* 43, *Aen.* I.119. The Persian word is *gaza*, treasure.

49. Sinclair, 141. It is surprising that Singleton fails to mention the delicacy of Dante's handling of magnanimity. He notes its opposition to pusillanimity in his comments on Virgil (*Inferno*, 2, 30) but he is silent on the subject in his comments on Farinata.

50. *Inf.* 10.41; 23.92–93. Singleton (*Inferno*, 2, 398) reinforces the connection between the two cantos by noting that both mention Frederick II.

51. *Inf.* 10.13–15, 23.61–66. Dante likens the cloaks to those which Frederick II had melted on traitors. The religious, and particularly Christian, undertones of the friars' canto are underscored by the inclusion in their ditch of Caiaphas and other New Testament Jews responsible for judging and delivering up Jesus: they lie "crucified on the ground with three stakes" and must "feel the weight of every load" that passes over them, a punishment over which the pagan Virgil "marvels" (109–26).

52. *Inf.* 23. 115–26; 108.

53. Machiavelli (*Dial.* 44–45) mentions Farinata by name and correctly quotes his passage, but he garbles his account of the friars by having Dante hear Catalano rather than the reverse.

54. Dante is a self-described "native" of Tuscany and "citizen" of Florence. Machiavelli likens him to a *parracida* for turning upon Florence and, in the course of the *Dialogue* loses any sense of Tuscan and Tuscany. Cf. *Vulg. Eloq.* I.vi.3, *Dial.* 2, Peterman, "Machiavelli versus Dante," 215–19.

55. *Dial.* 13, *Inf.* 33.79–80, 10.49–51, 91–93.

56. *Dial.* 46–49. The quotations from Pulci and Virgil are the only ones in the dialogue that do not arise in the *Comedy*. The passage from Pulci is the only quotation from a contemporary poet, Dante excepted, in the *Dialogue*.

57. *Dial.* 46–48.

58. We may also speculate that by having Dante recall the *Comedy*'s beginning, Machiavelli reminds him that his innovativeness, which is comparable to Machiavelli's own, stands in the way of his attempts to promote traditional viewpoints: Machiavelli earlier signifies the unsatisfactory nature of such viewpoints by remarking on the incredibility of the *Comedy*'s accounts of Brutus, the five Florentine thieves, and Cacciaguida (*Dial.* 26). On the other hand, Dante, who acknowledges that he is innovative but still warns about innovation's dangers, may remind Machiavelli through the *Morgante* that being new does not assure reward. Cf. *Conv.* I.x.1–3, *Pol.* 1268b25ff.

59. Strauss, *Thoughts*, 297.

60. *Inf.* 1.1–12.

61. At *Conv.* I.x.2–4, Dante announces that he intends to take a “new path” whose end is “not certain” and then bids his audience not to “marvel” at the direction his apology will take—he does not tell them not to wonder. Cf. *Prince* XV [1.48].

62. On Dante and Machiavelli and certitude, see Larry Peterman, “Dante and the Setting for Machiavellianism,” *American Political Science Review*, 76, No.3(1982), 632–35.

63. Other references and quotations in the dialogue (*Dial.* 39–42) suggest that Dante and Machiavelli agree about their worlds being dominated by the Church, and that there is a connection between that and Ugolino’s fate.