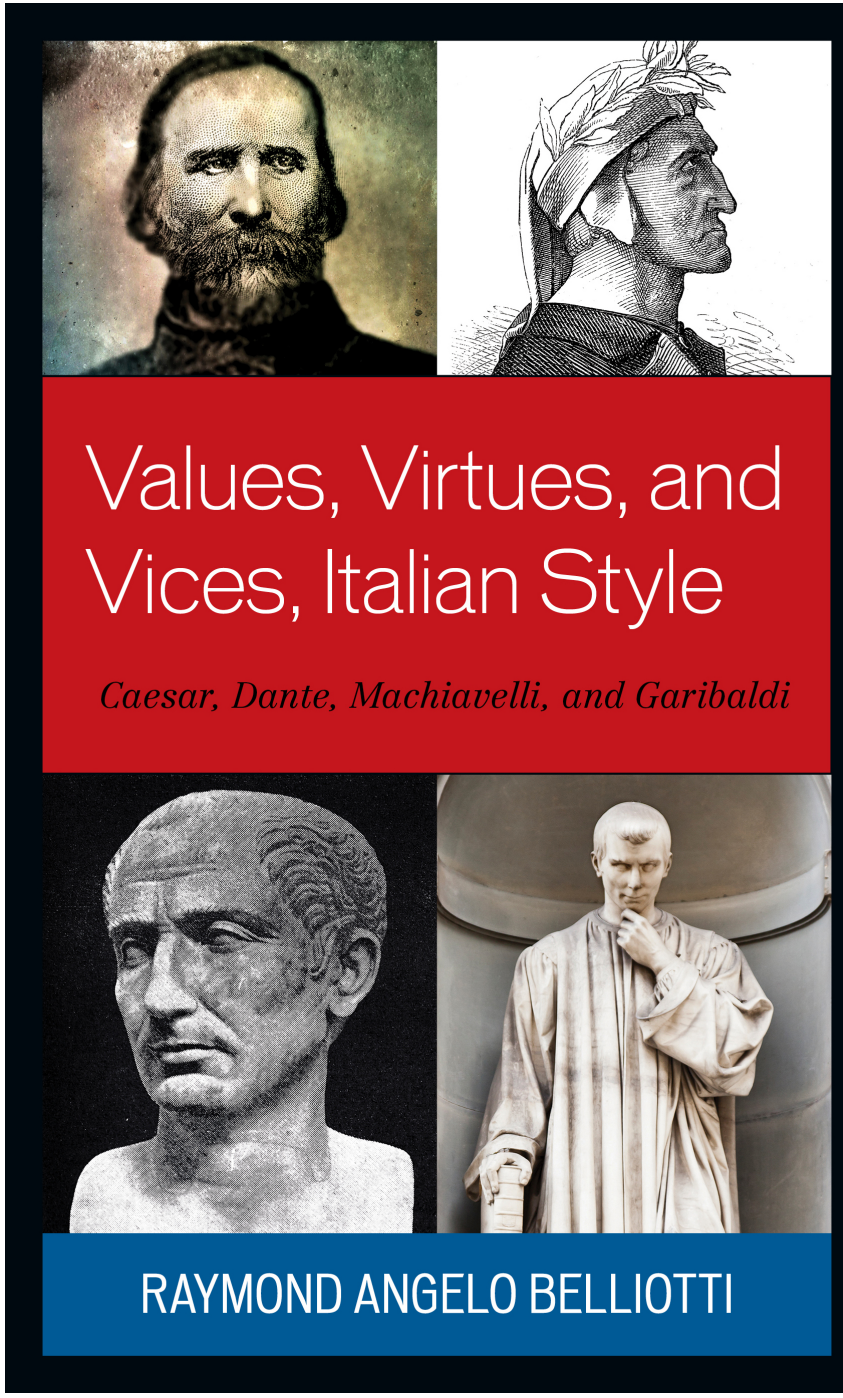

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Values, Virtues, and Vices, Italian Style

Caesar, Dante, Machiavelli, and Garibaldi

Raymond Angelo Belliotti

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To Angelo

Voglio bene al mio figlio

"La victoria trova cento padri, a nessuno vuole riconoscere l'insuccesso"

Contents

Preface

"Who are you?" The interviewer who posed this question was not asking for my name, residence, and identifying characteristics. She was probing for something deeper, foraging for my more profound self-understanding. She also relished placing a typically overly confident philosopher on the spot, hoping I would squirm uncomfortably then bumble, stumble, and finally mumble a platitude whose vacuity would expose me as the sophist she suspected I might well be.

I responded, "I am part of a wider subjectivity, a link in a generational chain that extends from Sicily to the United States. My purpose on earth is to live such that I honor the legacy bestowed on me by my ancestors and bequeath my descendants glowing prospects for leading robustly meaningful, valuable, significant, even important lives." The interviewer was understandably stunned. My answer, a peculiar metaphor wrapped in pretension shielded by a patina of faith, ended our conversation. We thanked each other and departed amicably, one of us more confused than the other. Mercifully, I was spared her follow-up question, which I was certain would be, "Can you justify your existence?" (Yes, I have an even more convoluted answer to that old saw.)

Our discussion, however, stimulated broader introspection. Major constituents of personal identity are the values and dispositions we embody and the virtues and vices they spawn. To understand a person's biographical life we must, among other things, examine that person's values, virtues, and vices. The idea of biographical life revolves around human life as a narrative, a story. We are a series of stories in that we understand and identify ourselves through a sequence of events, choices, actions, thoughts, and relationships. Our biographical lives, including value and meaning connected to our death and events thereafter, extend beyond our biological lives (and, more contest-

ably, may precede our biological lives). In general, a person's biographical life consists of a sequence of events or set of facts in which the person is a subject. These events include, among other things, states of affairs in which the person has interests but maybe not experience.

If I am to take my metaphor of the generational chain seriously, to understand myself and my place and purpose within it, then I must examine the development of Italian values, virtues, and vices. The most enjoyable way to do this, I supposed, was through interdisciplinary analyses of a few prominent figures in Italian history. But which luminaries?

I selected Julius Caesar because of his complexity. So talented but flawed was Caesar that even today no firm consensus obtains regarding the moral propriety of his assassination. Caesar's writings were also the subject of my Latin study as a high school sophomore under the tender mercies of the aptly named Miss Anita F. Cross, and my freshman English dissection of Shakespeare's play. As the ultimate scion of Roman values, Caesar was a must inclusion.

In 1997, a cousin in Sicily sent me a copy of a genealogy of the Belliotti family, a fifty-page narrative composed in Italian by a professional genealogy firm more than forty years earlier. Surprisingly, in the thirteenth century our distant Belliotti ancestors were Florentines who held some prominent political positions. Also, by the end of that century, these enterprising Belliotti progenitors were *guelfi bianchi* (White Guelfs). Around 1301, when the *guelfi neri* (Black Guelfs), supported by Pope Boniface VIII and his French allies, overwhelmed the *guelfi bianchi* and assumed control of Florence, the victors exiled an abundant contingent of the vanquished. Among the exiled *guelfi bianchi* were Dante Alighieri and a cluster of Belliottis. Dante, under the protection of several lords and noblemen, bounced around northern and central Italy for the rest of his years. The Belliottis, under the protection of only the sun, moon, and stars, headed south with alacrity. My distant ancestors eventually settled in Sicily. Why? I can only speculate that given the danger of remaining in Tuscany for those branded as enemies of the state they put as much distance as practicable between themselves and their accusers.

Accordingly, I suspected or intuited or manufactured a visceral connection with Dante Alighieri. Perhaps Dante and my distant forbearers hardly knew one another. But maybe Dante and some of my remote ancestors collaborated on salutary Florentine social policies or partied or gambled together or connived against their political opponents. In any case, that connection, imagined or genuine, punched Dante's ticket into the book.

I have studied Machiavelli closely for decades. Whereas most philosophers can be safely left at the office, Machiavelli always followed me home. Every serious student of Machiavelli concludes that conventional interpretations and popular understandings have misconstrued his meanings and mis-

read his purposes, but still no harmony reigns among scholars as to what the Florentine really intended. He remains the prince of paradox and thus an uncommonly profuse character study.

Finally, in an age of movies, action figures, and video games centered on superheroes, how could I exclude Giuseppe Garibaldi? How could someone lionized as "The only wholly admirable figure in modern history," be real? How could the man approximate the myths and legends? Was it not time to debunk all that good press with some hard-nosed investigative journalism? Was not Garibaldi a relic of another century, a self-anointed man of honor skulking arrogantly through toxically macho societies? Or was Garibaldi something else, perhaps a genuine "hero of two worlds?" Maybe a person whose virtues and values have much to teach us today?

Such is the genesis of this work. I shudder when contemplating what project I might have felt compelled to undertake had the interviewer pursued her questioning and asked me to justify my existence.

Acknowledgments

Giuseppe Leonardo and Grazia Giordano Leonardo immigrated to this country from Valguarnera Caropepe, Sicily in 1912. Angelo Belliotti, Gaetana Zaso Belliotti, and Rosario Belliotti arrived from Cerda, Sicily, in 1896. Rosario met and married Agnese ("Daisy") Rizzo, an immigrant from Alia, Sicily, in the United States and together they raised five children, one of whom was my father, Angelo Belliotti. Giuseppe and Grazia raised nine children, one of whom was my mother, Luisa Leonardo Belliotti. These are my immediate predecessors in the generational chain that stretches from Sicily to the United States of America. I owe them everything. I would be nothing but for their unwavering courage, familial pride, grueling labors, fierce determination, and inexhaustible love. I aspire only to emblazon my link in the chain as honorably as they did.

Numerous people contributed to this work directly or indirectly. As always, my family comes first. Thanks to Marcia, Vittoria, Angelo, and Alicia for their ongoing support, enthusiasm, and love. My greatest accomplishment in life is to be a member of a family whose talents and virtues far exceed my own. Thanks also to Anthony J. Tamburri for his initial enthusiasm for and faith in my project. Also, thanks to Alice Hodge, an expert of book formatting, who corrected my numerous errors and prepared the final manuscript with peerless efficiency and grace.

Finally, I thank the following publishers for their permission to adapt material and reprint short excerpts from my previously published books:

Machiavelli's Secret: The Soul of the Statesman by Raymond A. Belliotti (Albany, NY: The State University of New York Press, 2015).

Roman Philosophy and the Good Life by Raymond A. Belliotti (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009).

Seeking Identity: Individualism versus Community in an Ethnic Context by Raymond A. Belliotti, published by the University Press of Kansas, © 1995. www.kansaspress.ku.edu.

Dante's Deadly Sins: Moral Philosophy in Hell by Raymond A. Belliotti, © 2011, John Wiley and Sons (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell Publishers, 2011).

Introduction

We cannot understand fully the values, virtues, and vices of a person or society unless we explore the history from which they arose and the context in which they were exerted. Julius Caesar is the ultimate Roman in the sense that he is the highest exemplar, the foreseeable evolutionary product, of a culture that celebrated remorseless zero-sum political and military competition. The most capable Romans yearned to earn deserved, enduring glory from their military and political triumphs. Chapter 1 sketches the glories and tragedies of Caesar's life; philosophically analyzes the concept of will to power; argues that Caesar's distinctive virtue was his robust will to power; asks and answers whether Caesar wanted to die just prior to his assassination and whether that slaying was morally justified; and concludes that Caesar's values and virtues, like those of the Roman system as a whole, contained within themselves the seeds of their own destruction. These explorations and conclusions are informed by a host of historical evaluations of Caesar that continue to this day. The chapter highlights the connection between how Caesar is assessed and the values of the cultures from which the evaluations arise. The glories of Rome, during both its republic and its empire, are the springboard that animates future Italian hopes and fears, as well as Italian visions for future civic innovations and salutary international relations. Roman values, virtues, and vices even today seem weightier than those of ordinary human beings, and their influence persists.

Widely regarded as one of the greatest literary works composed in the Italian language and one of the foremost books of world literature, Dante Alighieri's *Commedia* was anointed "*Divina*" by Giovanni Boccaccio. Dante Alighieri's major purpose in writing the *Commedia* was practical, redemptive, and moral: "to remove those living in this life from the state of misery, and to bring them to a state of happiness." Dante does not define "happiness"

as merely a pleasant state of mind, however that might be achieved. Instead, his understanding of human well-being tracks most closely those of Greco-Roman philosophers and Christian theologians who align happiness with an objective condition of the soul, mind, or psyche, which attains and reflects the human telos. As such, the *Commedia* purportedly guides human beings to earthly fulfillment and eternal bliss. Having been led astray by their susceptibility to the seven capital vices, the wrongful examples set by false spiritual leaders, and the corruption endemic within political and social structures, Dante's contemporaries require explicit counsel that is more than pedagogic. Accordingly, in a quasi-autobiographical context, Dante employs his breathtaking mastery of poetry, aesthetics, theology, and philosophy to illustrate, not merely narrate, truths about the nature of the human telos and the proper recipe for realizing it.

Chapter 2 outlines the highlights of Dante's life; summarizes the moral messages contained in his major works; reveals and evaluates the fundamental principles that guided Dante's work and life; argues that his highest values were love and its proper diffusion in healthy communities; philosophically analyzes the concepts of warranted and unwarranted pride; identifies Dante's most paralyzing vice as excessive pride; illustrates how and why a person's most debilitating vices often arise from the amplification of that person's most cherished virtues; and argues that Dante's understanding and appreciation of human life emanates not only from his embrace of Christian metaphysics but also his reaction to Roman values, virtues, and vices.

That Niccolò Machiavelli was one of the first major political thinkers to describe the problem of dirty hands is well recognized. The paradox of dirty hands seemingly rests on two convictions: categorical moral prohibitions are sometimes appropriately transgressed or overridden in political and in everyday contexts; and a good person will feel and be guilty from having broken those prohibitions, while a politician embodying the excellences of his office will understand the necessity of sometimes doing so. Military and political leaders, acting on our behalf and in our name, sometimes act in ways that are incontestably condemned by the imperatives of impersonal morality, but under certain circumstances such acts prevent great harms or achieve great goods for limited constituencies to whom these agents owe special duties. In politics and elsewhere, we sense at times that a particular action is the best course to pursue, but that the efforts of our leaders nevertheless involve using means that are typically wrong, perhaps even horrifying. Statesmen must often transgress clear, paramount moral principles and are rightly required to do so by the demands of their positions. The paradox of being *morally required* by the special duties grounded in personal relationships and community roles to *violate moral standards* arising from impersonal morality seems irresolvable and deeply unsatisfying.

Chapter 3 summarizes Machiavelli's life and his oscillating assessments of the international politics of his time; philosophically analyzes the concepts of justification, excuse, and Machiavelli's paradoxically deontological understanding of morality; and how he regarded Italian regionalism and factionalism. The chapter also explains and analyzes Machiavelli's highest value: patriotism. Machiavelli was convinced that patriotism was both intrinsically and instrumentally valuable. Love of and service to country vivified the human spirit, nurtured civic *virtù*, sustained a robust personal identity, and permitted human beings to pursue a deserved glory that generated a trace of immortality. Machiavelli insists that statesmen must "learn how not to be good"; that the best of them "love their countries more than their souls"; and that they "must risk their souls" in the course of executing their duties to constituents. Still, a patriotism grounded so selflessly inflates easily into a nationalism spawning international and domestic abominations. Although Machiavelli revives the Roman quest for deserved enduring glory emanating from political and military enterprises, implicit in his exposition is that even the greatest human beings must fail in the end.

Giuseppe Garibaldi was the glowing symbol of Italian liberation and unification for which Dante and Machiavelli fervently craved. A figure so encased in legend and myth that scholars are hard pressed to chisel out the human being, Garibaldi's ferocious thirst for freedom extended beyond the regional and national. He took his vocation seriously, perhaps overly so: "Wherever an oppressed people struggles against its oppressors, whenever an enslaved people combats for its liberty, my place is in their midst." Far more adept militarily than politically, Garibaldi earned international plaudits that few people can even fantasize, much less attain.

Chapter 4 traces the highlights of Garibaldi's life; explains and dissects his romantic-heroic image and the role it assumed in the Italian *Risorgimento*; sketches his relationships with Mazzini and Cavour; provides examples of his inspiring oratory and writing; depicts his greatest military triumphs and most devastating defeats; probes how the *Risorgimento* initially energized but later deflated the aspirations of southern Italian peasants, particularly those in Sicily; deals specifically with the nature of the Sicilian family order and *Risorgimento* ideals; invokes the political theory of Antonio Gramsci to demonstrate the difference between passive and active revolutions; details how the *Risorgimento*, beginning with the highest aspirations of active revolution, evolved sadly into a passive revolution; philosophically analyzes the concept of honor and why honor codes persist; delineates Garibaldi's code of honor and the influences that forged it; argues that Garibaldi highest value and virtue was as a man of honor; and concludes that in the end Garibaldi unwittingly affirms Machiavelli's conviction that ultimately we all must fail.

The story of the evolution of Italian values, virtues, and vices is a narrative of human longing, exhilaration, and devastation, a journey of the spirit

that all human beings necessarily undertake but navigate with varying degrees of success. The ambition of this work is nothing more, nothing less, than entangling a host of overlapping but distinct concepts that frame human existence through a careful examination of the values, virtues, and vices of four famous historical figures. My objective is that in so doing we might better position ourselves to craft our characters within the limitations enjoined by our cosmic circumstances.

The lives of Caesar, Dante, Machiavelli, and Garibaldi demonstrate how human beings can lead staunchly meaningful lives even within an inherently meaningless universe. As always, however, we must deliberate, choose, and act under conditions of inescapable uncertainty; assume responsibility for the people we are becoming; and, hopefully, depart from the planet with honor and merited pride. Along the way, we might even magnify our link in the generational chain that defines our identity.

Chapter One

Gaius Julius Caesar (100–44 BC)

The Ultimate Roman

Julius Caesar is the predictable consequence of the Roman value system of his time. Had Caesar not materialized, someone much like him would have emerged, sooner rather than later. He was a grand, passionate striver, relentlessly pursuing deserved, enduring glory. He could neither acquire nor welcome abiding serenity. Ruthlessly absorbed in advancing personal and national objectives, Caesar embodied more than an unquenchable obsession to peer beyond the horizon; he lusted to transcend existing vistas and invent new fields of vision. Caesar did not simply yearn for distinction and pride of place; preeminence and renown were indispensable to his self-understanding and his amenity. In the end, he failed as all human beings must. Caesar ferally intensified his grandest virtues and unfettered by reason and prudence they degenerated into grotesque vices. The value system that spawned Caesar animated both his aggrandizement and his demise. As such, Gaius Julius Caesar glistens as the personification of human greatness and human fatuity.

BIOGRAPHICAL HIGHLIGHTS

Caesar was relatively tall, serious, and physically hardy despite occasional bouts of epilepsy.[1] He trained himself to endure strenuous activity and overcome adversities that would shatter most human beings. He was mentally and physically unbreakable. Fastidious about his appearance, he was a spiffy dresser given the sartorial limitations of his day. Caesar often fussed with his hair, combing it forward in his later years to conceal the early onset of baldness. Although married several times, Caesar seduced a passel of women

and was suspected of being bisexual. An aristocrat by birth, he was universally regarded as ambitious, intelligent, accessible, cunning, gifted, charismatic, opportunistic, generous, promiscuous, ruthlessly competitive, impatient, and psychologically insightful. Caesar could seemingly peer into the psyches of other people and discern their intentions and motives. He was not given to sybaritic excess; in fact, Caesar was marked socially as a rare aristocrat who ate parsimoniously and drank alcohol sparingly. He was eager to assume high risks, often exhibited exquisite timing in executing his designs, and could be uncommonly merciful or excruciatingly cruel as the occasion demanded. Caesar was also astonishingly lucky. *Fortuna* bestowed upon him benefits denied to the rest of humanity.

Roman Values and their Social Context

To understand Caesar, even superficially, we must first discuss the predominant Roman value system and the social context into which Caesar was born, reared, and which he extended, refined, and eventually dominated.

For aristocratic Romans, the stability of the state and the flourishing of the entire Romanized world depended upon the "best men" successfully pursuing and attaining traditional Roman values: engaging in ruthless, zero-sum, competition in military and political settings; striving for deserved, enduring glory, as well as fame, honor, and *dignitas*, by advancing the goals of the state; and emulating and amplifying the magnificent deeds of past Roman icons.

The critical normative concepts were *gravitas*, self-control, especially when confronted with adversity, accompanied by a calm demeanor; *disciplina*, self-mastery and self-restraint facilitating education and political and military training; *virtus*, demonstrated excellence arising from the proper application of knowledge in various domains; *dignitas*, merited reputation, deserved honor, and social stature arising from effective service to the Roman state; *auctoritas*, prestige and extraordinary respect accorded to the greatest Romans; *pietas*, inner commitment to maintenance of proper relations to all strata of society—including the gods—a value constitutive of the self; and *fides*, faithfulness and reliability, especially regarding contracts and promises. Instrumentally valuable to attaining and demonstrating these virtues were the Roman social structures of *amicitia* and *clientele*, systems of friendships, acquaintances, and patronages that fostered mutual advantage.

Roman life, then, was grounded in *mos maiorum* (ancestral customs), military supremacy, and political power. The chronicle of the struggle of the noblest Romans to make sense of a universe not of their making, to find meaning and purpose beyond the brute struggle to survive, and to leave a worthwhile legacy—perhaps even to serve as exemplars for future generations—is a resplendent chapter in the enduring human story.

Around the time of Caesar, almost one million people (of whom more than three hundred thousand were slaves) populated the city of Rome; Italy contained six million inhabitants (two million of whom were slaves); and the total population of the entire Roman Empire was almost fifty million (almost 20 percent of the world's population).[2] Italy remained mostly a rural society with around 70 percent of the population residing in rustic locales, engaged mainly in agriculture. The provinces outside of Italy were even more densely inhabited by peasants. Combining the statistics in Italy with those of the provinces brings the total population engaged in agriculture to more than 80 percent of the total population of about fifty million. Thus, as described by Neal Wood:

> Agricultural land remained the foundation of the economy and agricultural wealth derived from the exertions of independent and dependent peasants and agrarian slaves was the foundation of power and prestige. A very small, leisured, aristocratic class, whose members were of varying degrees of wealth and influence, owned or controlled the productive land of Roman Italy and had succeeded in dominating state and society.[3]

The ruling political and social class in Rome, the aristocracy, consisted of three strata of the "best men" and their families. At the pinnacle of the aristocratic hierarchy were the six hundred senators, whose *dignitas* was grounded in their genealogy, wealth, education, and public accomplishments. Their massive "collective wealth came from inheritance, rents, the exploitation of slave labor on large landed estates, commercial investment at home and abroad, and the enormous profits reaped from holding posts in the provinces."[4] A significant measure of the "profits" garnered from administering the provinces arose from taxing provincials exorbitantly, confiscating their property, and lending money at usurious rates.

The second aristocratic rung, one enjoying far less prestige and influence than the senatorial fraternity, consisted of about two thousand equestrians. Some were quite wealthy, but they lacked the noble lineage and higher political connections defining senators: "Most equestrians were country squires, living on their estates and perhaps owning a townhouse in Rome. . . . [T]he richest . . . made large fortunes by being public contractors, engaging for private profit in numerous state enterprises and services: provisioning, building, mining, banking, operating the postal system; and collecting taxes, custom duties, and rents from public lands. Yet their wealth was firmly rooted in landed property."[5] Other members of this category engaged in private banking and commercial trading.

The third stratum on the aristocratic hierarchy was the decurion class (not to be confused with Roman cavalry officers designated by the same title). The decurions were "the one hundred leading proprietors in each of the 434 municipalities [of Italy] who sat in the local councils."[6] The decurions were

the most powerful local politicians who oversaw public contracts, public entertainment, religious rituals and festivals, and tax collection within their city.

Beneath the aristocratic strata were the seemingly boundless swarms of peasants, urban poor (consisting of freeborn, mostly displaced peasants, and more recently freedmen), and slaves. Within the city of Rome, more than 90 percent of the population consisted of urban poor and slaves. Outside of Rome, around 60 percent of the inhabitants were peasants. Their lives anticipated Thomas Hobbes's imaginings of life within a state of nature: nasty, brutish, and, too often, short. Engaged overwhelmingly in a bestial struggle to survive, peasants worked the land of the leisured rich and allowed these "best men" to vie for eternal, deserved glory. They labored without expectation of upward mobility along with considerable anxiety about retaining their meager status quo: "For all his labors in the service of the ruling class, the peasant . . . was rewarded with [economic] displacement by the increasing use of agrarian slaves; dispossession of his land, often through forcible seizure and confiscation, and of his rights to common land; indebtedness; and ever greater hardship and poverty."[7]

The urban poor, especially those inhabiting the horrifying slums of Rome, were menial laborers, construction workers, tradesmen, and professionals. They were the butchers, bakers, candlestick-makers, dock workers, carters, builders, metal workers, teachers, painters, household agents, and most everything else. Even the more fortunate of these sons did not rise to middle-class status. Only a precious few gained the resources and connections to ascend the social hierarchy.

At the bottom of Roman society were, of course, slaves, who amounted to more than 30 percent of the population of the city of Rome. They performed functions like those sustained by peasants and the urban poor but endured lower legal and social standing. In sum, peasants, the urban poor, and slaves were the productive forces that fueled the economy of Rome and the entire Empire. To label these the exploited classes is to describe too daintily the obvious.

Accordingly, a crest of 2,600 senators and equestrians together with about 43,000 decurions constituted a miniscule portion of the population but comprised a ruling class that directed nearly 50,000,000 people under Roman control.[8]

The ruling class operated from a system of values that contained within it the seeds of its own destruction: the veneration of freedom, abhorrence of dependence and oppression, zest for territorial expansion, devotion to zero-sum competition, quest for enduring glory, and obeisance to rigid aristocratism coalesced uneasily.

Rejection of a Tyrant's Officious Intermeddling

Around the age of seventeen, Caesar married Cornelia, daughter of Lucius Cornelius Cinna. Cinna, gleaming with noble lineage, served as a consul of Rome for four consecutive terms. Roman marriages, at least those involving the upper classes, were typically forged from political motives. A family aspired to extend its influence, wealth, and standing by linking its offspring suitably.

Caesar, too, embodied an ancestral destiny. His uncle by marriage was the fabled Gaius Marius (157–86 BC), honored general and seven-time consul, leader of the *populares*, a political affiliation supposedly aligned with the interests of the common people, the plebeians, in their battle against the tyrannical Lucius Cornelius Sulla (138–78 BC). Sulla identified with the *optimates*, the conservative aristocrats. Caesar's first father-in-law, Cinna, was Marius's loyal ally. Although from a patrician family, Julius Caesar cast his allegiance with the *populares* and he, too, responded to the siren call of family history. During Sulla's reign of terror in 82 BC, young Caesar was a prime candidate for the tyrant's fondest weapon, proscription, which typically condemned citizens to death and confiscated their property.

The office of dictator in the Roman republic was typically limited to the duration of time required to remedy a crisis, at most six months. Sulla held the position for almost three years prior to resigning but was granted the extraordinary powers of dictator indefinitely. The senate's willingness to do this marks for some commentators the beginning of the unraveling of the republic.[9]

Sulla, uncharacteristically flexible, offered Caesar an accommodation: if Caesar would join his number, his life would be spared; to seal the deal, Caesar would divorce his wife and marry someone chosen by Sulla. Caesar perceived this as an offer he could refuse. He declined to toss aside his wife, Cornelia Cinna, who would bear him his only legitimate child, Julia. Sulla was persuaded not to murder so young an opponent as Caesar. The tyrant was satisfied, instead, to confiscate Cornelia's dowry and Caesar's inheritance. Sulla noted that anyone who "did not see more than one Marius" in Caesar knew little.[10] Caesar was forced to leave Rome.

If Caesar was merely crusading for political advancement by any means necessary, Sulla offered an attractive opportunity. But the young Caesar never hesitated in declining that invitation even though doing so put him at serious risk. Anyone viewing Caesar's alliance with the *populares* as merely a cynical ploy to seize personal power is either uncharitable or unaware of his background. He was viscerally repelled by the self-indulgence, infatuation with luxury, and self-satisfaction of the *optimates*: they talked a fine game but inclined too easily to political complacency and appeals to tradition. Caesar was also temperamentally suited to the reformist zeal of Marius

and Cinna. In his deepest recesses, Caesar was convinced that most conservative aristocrats were pretentious, self-righteous jabberers who inherited more than they earned.

The moral of this incident: Caesar, even as a teenager, was willing to risk much in the short term to pursue long-range advantage. He demonstrated a perspicacity and resoluteness rare in adolescents, then or now.

The Prosecution of Dolabella

Favorable personal connections, uncommon wealth, and profound knowledge in the appropriate spheres were insufficient to attain high military and political success in Rome. The most glorious rungs of the *cursus honorum*, the course of honors or the political ladder that a Roman statesman ascended, and the military commands most sought by ambitious officers also required rhetorical flair and refined arts of persuasion.

Caesar understood keenly that he would need to demonstrate and develop his oratorical panache. During his exile from Rome, Caesar had earned the *corona civica* for his military service during the siege of Mytilene and had distinguished himself as a legate to the King of Bithynia. Sulla died in 78 BC. Caesar returned to Rome and undertook a daunting task: to gain a measure of revenge against Sulla's henchmen while also advertising his intellectual acumen and oratorical verve.

Pursuant to that design, Caesar, at age twenty-three or twenty-four, filed accusations against Gnaeus Cornelius Dolabella, former commander of Sulla's fleet, former consul of Rome, and proconsul of Macedonia. Caesar, as always, swung hard and aimed to score long once he stepped to the plate. A man of Dolabella's stature was sure to attract a zealous, competent advocate. None other than Quintus Hortensius, the most fabled spokesperson in Rome, represented the defendant. Hortensius was, roughly, the antecedent of Clarence Darrow, John Adams, and fictional Perry Mason. He remained preeminent in Rome until surpassed by Marcus Tullius Cicero. Not a man to leave his destiny to chance, Dolabella also hired Lucius Aurelius Cotta, another of Rome's great advocates, to assist Hortensius.

Caesar charged Dolabella with extortion while he served as proconsul in Macedonia. Given common practices engaged in by proconsuls in Roman provinces, Caesar's allegations sparkled with plausibility. Still, Caesar's prospects for prevailing were slim to none, and slim was choking on the courthouse steps. Not only was Dolabella defended by the best and most experienced jurist in Rome, but Sulla's influence had not evaporated with his death, while Dolabella's personal authority remained evident.

Yet we should step back and marvel at Caesar's strategy. Should he prevail at trial, his celebrity and, more important, his *gravitas* and *dignitas* would soar: If Caesar wins, he earns a transcendent victory. Should Dolabella

go free, Caesar still stands to gain: he publicly affirms his resolve and manifests his rhetorical and argumentative talents in the face of overwhelming disadvantage. What seemed initially a fool's undertaking is genuinely a sound, percentage stratagem. Caesar could lose on balance only if his courtroom performance were feeble and underscored his legal inexperience and oratorical shortcomings, or if Dolabella and other vestiges of the tyranny sought direct vengeance against him.

As Caesar had anticipated, Dolabella was acquitted because of the stirring defense summoned by his counselors, but Caesar earned enormous public acclaim for his inspiring prosecutorial speech, judged exemplary in both composition and delivery. Caesar had etched his mark in a critical area of Roman competition.

To reinforce his legal stature, Caesar thereafter prosecuted Gaius Antonius Hybrida, uncle of Marc Antony. Hybrida, another remnant from Sulla's regime, allegedly exacted unreasonable tributes from Greeks during Sulla's rule and mishandled the property of the provincials. Again, Caesar earned nearly universal acclaim for his effective arguments and prosecutorial presentations. Desperate, Hybrida appealed directly to the tribunes, claiming that he had been treated unfairly, procedurally, in court. History has not recorded the substantive outcome of Hybrida's case—although he was most likely acquitted—but the additional respect accorded to Caesar for his magnificent performance is not disputed.

Caesar's skills as a writer, rhetorician, and orator would decades later be confirmed by none other than the master of these arts in this era, Cicero, who remarked on Caesar's *Gallic War*:

> [T]o the purest elegance of expression . . . [Caesar] has added all the various ornaments of Elocution; so that he seems to exhibit the finest painting in the most advantageous point of view. . . . [H]is manner of speaking, both as to his voice and gesture, is splendid and noble, without the least appearance of artifice or affectation: and there is dignity in his very presence, which bespeaks a great and elevated mind. . . . [*Gallic Wars*] merit the highest approbation: for they are plain, correct, and graceful, and divested of all the ornaments of language.[11]

Plutarch aptly describes how Caesar's rhetorical skills complemented his attractive demeanor and temperament, and lavish spending on diversions to enthrall the Roman people and advance his political interests.

> In his pleadings at Rome, his eloquence soon obtained him great credit and favor, and he won no less upon the affections of the people by the affability of his manners and address, in which he showed a tact and consideration beyond what could have been expected at his age; and the open house he kept, the entertainments he gave, and the general splendor of his manner contributed little by little to create and increase his political influence.[12]

The lesson of this narrative: Caesar invariably recognized the requirements of gaining the enduring glory and the enhanced earthly *dignitas* he so adamantly pursued. He always conceived and acted upon what he perceived to be his best long-term interests. And he often maneuvered himself into positions that at first blush seemed disadvantageous, misguided, and reckless, but at a deeper level were brilliant, calculated risks, bearing higher probability of benefits than likelihood of costs.

Retribution for Presumptuous Pirates

After these judicial tussles and shortly after his twenty-fifth birthday, Julius Caesar journeyed to Rhodes to advance his education, especially in the areas of rhetoric and philosophy. He was captured by pirates. Although not in a strong bargaining position, Caesar purportedly charmed, taunted, and threatened his captors, in turn. Ultimately, he openly pledged to the enterprising buccaneers that he would track them down and crucify them once he was freed from their clutches. He scorned the amount of their initial ransom demand and suggested they more than double it in recognition of the stature of their captive. After being ransomed, Caesar fulfilled his oath. This tale captures the character of Caesar as well as does any battlefield account of his destruction of the Gauls, any story of political maneuvering with Pompey and Crassus, or any rendition of his numerous stirring speeches.

Either the legend of Caesar's insolence in the face of his captors is true or it is false. If true, we enjoy the vision of a relentless warrior, confident and defiant even when seemingly confronting hopeless odds and a resolute enemy. If false, we chuckle at the shameless self-promotion of a youth turning desperate adversity into practical, political advantage by retrospectively fabricating a self-serving fable. In either case, Caesar did hunt and slay the offending pirates. The moral of the episode: even as a youthful seeker of philosophical wisdom in a foreign land, Caesar refused to be subject to the nefarious designs and enterprises of other opportunistic men. If disrespected and treated reprehensibly, Caesar would ensure that certain, swift, and disproportionately harsh retribution would follow.

Defending Principle during the Cataline Conspiracy

In 63 BC, Cicero's year as consul, most noteworthy was his role in extinguishing the Catilinian conspiracy. Lucius Sergius Catilina (Catiline) (108–62 BC), unsuccessful candidate for consul and profligate noble, allegedly plotted to seize authority through force. In a series of orations, Cicero unmasked the plot and exposed Catiline, who fled from Rome to Etruria to regroup his forces. Several of Catiline's coconspirators, though, were arrested. After they were forced to confess their crimes in front of the senate—

and, yes, these were coerced confessions—deliberations began about their proper punishment. Julius Caesar, struggling mightily to quell the growing sentiment for execution, argued that the prisoners should have their estates confiscated and then be imprisoned for life in various Italian towns. After all, executions of Roman citizens without trial were illegal and would set a pernicious precedent. Here Caesar seemingly seized the high moral ground, at least in terms of procedural justice.

But Marcus Porcius Cato (95–46 BC), the recognized moral compass of the senate, advocated forcefully for the death penalty. Cato, impudent and accusatory as ever, also levied his firm suspicion that Caesar, given his fervent compassion for the evildoers, was also a member of the conspiracy. For the inflexible, vindictive Cato, any appeal for clemency, even if muted, implied complicity.

Moreover, the senate had passed a *senatus consultum ultimum* ("the senate's ultimate decree") that suspended constitutional protections and granted consuls emergency powers. In effect, such a decree gave senatorial endorsement to whatever actions consuls devised to protect the republic during extraordinarily dangerous times. Still, although it was found that Catiline had taken up arms against the republic, the coconspirators had not been apprehended in the act of rebellion. A type of *res ipsa loquitor* notion prevailed: their storehouse of arms, connections to Catiline, and coerced confessions spoke for themselves. The senate, swayed by Cato and Cicero, soon passed a decree for the execution of the conspirators. Cicero, accordingly, escorted the prisoners to the most notorious prison in Rome, where they were strangled. For him, the conspirators, as enemies of the state, had forfeited their rights as citizens. Lacking support in Rome, Catiline mounted a revolutionary offensive and was slain at the battle of Pistoia. The Catilinian conspiracy had met its predictable end.[13]

Although Caesar and his cohorts remained dissatisfied, Cato, who was a tribune at the time, extolled Cicero's consulship. Cicero was lavished with public honors typically reserved for military heroes. However, as time passed and the felt danger of revolution evaporated, Cicero's role in the Catilinian conspiracy would bring more than just unambiguous praise. His political enemies would be quick to remind the public that Cicero wholeheartedly transgressed a sacred Roman law that prohibited political executions of citizens without trial. That the *senatus consultum ultimum* permitted the suspension of due process did not entail that in the instant case authorities should invoke that decree to execute Roman citizens absent due process.

After Caesar argued for lesser punishments than death for the conspirators before the senate, he had seemingly won the day. Characteristically, Caesar advanced a concise, compelling, persuasive argument. However, Cato's impassioned denunciation of the alleged evildoers, combined with his reckless

allegation that Caesar's limited defense of them demonstrated he was in league with the miscreants, turned sentiment against Caesar's position.

As a side note: These hearings provided one of the few occasions when Caesar was able to embarrass Cato. Or more precisely, when Cato's inveterate aggressiveness and accusatory stance turned against him. A messenger brought a communication to Caesar during the senate deliberations. Cato, convinced as only a true zealot could be, that the letter was from the Catilinian conspirators, demanded that the contents of the message be revealed. Caesar demurred. Cato, characteristically, refused to be placated. The communication was a graphic love note to Caesar from Servilia, Cato's half-sister. Cato fumed and fussed. Caesar grinned slyly.

Deriving clear lessons for this vignette is difficult. Cato the intractable senator was also a fervent guardian of republicanism, as well as an unrepentant champion of aristocratic privilege. Cicero the philosophical consul was also a courageous proponent of traditional Roman values, as well as the master of the doctrine of proportionate, not absolute, equality. Proportionate equality recognizes and implements existing, significant factual differences in quality, merit, and desert as crucial requirements of justice. Proportionate equality is attained when citizens are ranked by *dignitas* (worth, merit, reputation) from the lowest to the highest into a scale of political and legal orders. Each citizen occupies a station in this rank order. Neither Cato nor Cicero identified or empathized with the unbearable travails of common people. Caesar the grand striver was also a sincere patron of the masses, as well as an opportunistic exploiter of political advantage.

Caesar was politically aligned with the *populares*, the reformist, aristocratic-military faction in Rome committed to strengthening the power of the plebeians; to mitigating the influence of the senate; to distributing food and land to the poor; to relocating some Roman citizens to the provinces; to expanding Roman citizenship; to lavishing generous economic rewards on victorious military forces; and to nurturing greater concentration of executive authority as the most effective, efficient means to progressive change. Cicero and Cato were politically aligned with the *optimates*, the conservative, aristocratic faction in Rome committed to limiting the power of the popular assemblies and the plebeian tribunes; to extending the influence of the senate; to curtailing the extension of Roman citizenship; to preserving traditional ways; and, ironically in Cicero's case, to restricting the ascension to political power of new men (*novi homines*).

Unsurprisingly, the *optimates* were replete with senators obsessed with retaining their own prerogatives and privileges, under cover of venerating Roman tradition and established glory, while the *populares* harbored no shortage of green-eyed power-hounds, lusting after their own political preeminence cloaked in the slogan "power to the people."

Winston Churchill famously observed that Russia was "a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma." In that spirit, the Roman paragons of this era were self-promoting egotists wrapped in disparate excellences imprisoned by national tradition and ancestral memory. The greatest men of the Roman era resist facile evaluation, glib categorization, and effortless description. To call them complex understates the shadings and undertones of their characters.

Expunging the Appearance of Impropriety

In 62 BC, Caesar was serving as *pontifex maximus*, an office that required, among other things, hosting the annual rites of *Bona Dea*. These mysteries excluded the participation of men. A quaestor, Publius Clodius Pulcher (92–52 BC), apparently fueled by a romantic interest in Pompeia, Caesar's wife, attempted to crash the religious ceremony by impersonating a female musician. Unable to perpetrate his cross-dressing caper successfully, Clodius escaped but was soon apprehended and indicted for blasphemy of the holy rites. The resulting scandal lingered for months. Caesar's mother, Aurelia, and sister testified against Clodius. During the trial, senators offered evidence that Clodius, among other atrocities, had engaged in incest with his sister. Caesar avowed ignorance of everything, yet he had promptly divorced Pompeia, while observing that Caesar's wife must be above suspicion. Clodius concocted an alibi involving his whereabouts on the evening of the *Bona Dea*, but Cicero eventually demolished that fable in court. Through the timeless intrigues of force and fraud, in this case, intimidation and bribery of the jurors, Clodius escaped punishment to connive another day. And conspire he did**.**

By 58 BC, Clodius sought the office of tribune, a post for which only plebeians were eligible. Clodius was an aristocrat and thus ineligible. Never a worshipper of bright-line rules, Clodius cadged his adoption into a plebeian house, a dishonorable stratagem warmly endorsed by the members of the first triumvirate, one of whom was Caesar. This odd political coupling was, unsurprisingly, generated from a shared interest: the exile of Cicero from Rome. Clodius and Cicero were unwavering antagonists, while Cicero and Caesar had an oscillating, complex relationship that included conflicts of interests, mutual respect, genuine appreciation for the talents of the other, and intractable disagreements regarding ultimate political ends. Around and at 58 BC, the last of these elements gained privilege of place.

This brief narrative demonstrates two lessons of Roman history: the republic could not keep an enterprising reprobate restrained forever; and in the republic, today's public enemy number one might well become tomorrow's citizen of the year.

A Revealing Observation

In 61 BC, while passing through a poor Alpine village on his way to Spain, Caesar's companions jokingly asked whether there were electoral battles or feuds among great men in this insignificant burg. Caesar earnestly replied, "I would rather be the first man among these barbarians, than the second man in Rome."[14] Never has a more telling self-analysis been recorded. The Ultimate Roman, an avaricious consumer of military and political honor, and enduring glory, would not assume a subordinate role for anybody. Caesar provided self-incriminating evidence to those who identified him as a man pursuing with deranged avidity the prerogatives of absolute preeminence. To accept second place was to concede defeat and consign oneself to terminal mediocrity.

The First Triumvirate

Caesar's cavalier attitude toward money, except as an instrumental good facilitating his larger military and political designs, consigned him to serious short-term debt but advanced his long-range mission. Plutarch describes both aspects of the conundrum:

> [Caesar] was so profuse in his expenses that, before he had any public employment, he was in debt thirteen hundred talents . . . by his great liberality and magnificence in theatrical shows, in processions, and public feastings, he threw into the shade all the attempts that had been made before him, and gained so much upon the people, that everyone was eager to find out new offices and honors for him in return for his munificence.[15]

The public would soon act upon its gratitude, regardless of whether it desired to do so, and Caesar would concoct a way to extinguish his financial shortcomings dramatically.

In the summer of 60 BC, Caesar returned from a successful military campaign and ran successfully for the consulship. After his term, the senate refused to assign him an important governorship. Thereafter, Caesar entered a covenant known as the first triumvirate with Crassus, the wealthiest man in Rome, and Pompey the Great, who with Caesar was fast tiring of the senate's opposition. Pompey also married Caesar's daughter, Julia. Cicero was asked to join these merry swashbucklers and considered the offer carefully, but his loyalty to the republican constitution won out over his personal ambition. Cicero had been linked with Pompey; he thrived on Caesar's cunning flattery; and as a *novus homo* (a person lacking Roman birth as well as aristocratic Roman pedigree) was never completely accepted by the Roman aristocracy. He was tempted, but the better angels of his nature prevailed.

Because of his intransigence and political extremism, Cato was an unwitting collaborator in the formation of the first triumvirate. By his unwavering opposition to even reasonable reforms, Cato managed to bring together three natural rivals.

In 62 BC, Pompey was still in the east with his troops during the Catilinian rebellion. A tribune, undoubtedly prompted by Pompey, proposed that Pompey be recalled with his army to restore order in Italy. Passage of the bill would have permitted Pompey to return to Italy legally under arms. Cato vetoed the bill, physically confronted its proposer, and disorder ensued. This act, along with his role in thwarting the Catilinian conspiracy, cemented Cato's influential role in the senate. Pompey returned to Rome as a military hero, but only as a private citizen. When Cato soon thereafter filibustered against Pompey's bill to ratify his eastern arrangements and provide land for his military veterans, he and his fellow *optimates* were becoming too much to bear. Thereafter, Caesar was returning from Spain and wanted to celebrate a military triumph and stand for a consulship. The *optimates*, led by Cato, blocked both requests. Generals anticipating a triumph were expected to wait with their armies outside the city until called. Nominees for a consulship were required to declare their candidacy in person. Unable to occupy two places at once, Caesar could either enjoy his triumph and forgo his candidacy or pursue the consulship and surrender his triumph. Stewing at Cato's inflexibility, Caesar, rarely impressed by appeals to tradition, chose to run for consul. The effect of these and other hard-line maneuvers by Cato and his political cronies was to drive Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus together. The senate and Caesar could not act harmoniously. As a result, three men obsessed with their *dignitas*, who were natural foes, became surprising allies, united in their common opposition to Cato's rigidity. His older, more experienced partners assumed they could use Caesar for their own purposes, then discard him when convenient. They were dialing a radically wrong number.

The three members of the first triumvirate shared a critical aspiration: they perceived the aristocratic senators as unwarranted impediments to their personal ambitions; they acquiesced to set aside their numerous conflicting cravings in service of mutual advantage. Pompey's marriage to Julia, much younger than the graying militarist, manifested and cemented the triumvirate's good faith. Caesar needed access to some of Crassus's wealth and sought a patina of legitimacy and tradition harvested from Pompey. Crassus's coffers overflowed with pelf, but he lusted after military glory. Who better to connect him to that objective than the supreme general of his time, Pompey the Great, and his likely successor, Caesar the Rising Star? Pompey fancied an enduring legacy enhanced by a few more major scores, which in turn required money and energy flowing from his colleagues in the triumvirate. All three collaborators needed to soften the senate's opposition to their enterprises.

However, savvy observers did not expect the syndicate to endure. Caesar's unbridled zest for preeminence and refusal to relinquish pride of place, Pompey's inflated sense of entitlement grounded in past accomplishment and service, and Crassus's determination to add military glory to his résumé, which consisted mainly of the fruits of unshackled material greed, could not coalesce easily. The first triumvirate was at once an irresistible confederacy and a smoldering tinderbox.

First Consulship

Through the connivance of the triumvirate, Caesar was elected as a consul in 59 BC. He proved to be a gifted politician who was able to enact the triumvirate's political program despite strong opposition in the senate. For example, Caesar called a meeting of the senate and proposed a land bill favoring Pompey's veterans. The bill was reasonable and in line with past Roman practice. Cato, of course, rose in opposition. After a few hours of Cato's harangue, Caesar ordered him arrested, a right he possessed as consul. Other senators rallied in Cato's support. Caesar, convinced that working with Cato was impossible, bypassed the senate for the rest of the year. He appealed, instead, to the tribal assembly and the plebeian council, bodies to which consuls had the right to propose legislation. For the rest of his term, Caesar did not summon the senate again. This maneuver gravely transgressed tradition. Numerous bills favoring the interest of Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus were passed. Caesar's co-consul, Marcus Calpurnius Bibulus, Cato's son-in-law, was bullied and reduced to withdrawing to his home for most of the year. Bibulus had tried to block numerous governmental actions under the theory that the auspices or omens were unfavorable. Caesar considered such superstitious appeals to be nonsense on stilts. The prerogatives of tradition and the privileges of the senate were rapidly dissolving. Caesar had defined political strategy for the *populares*: circumvent the aristocratic senate and go straight to the people—not primarily as an exercise in democracy, but as a technique for effecting one's will. The earlier intuitions of those, such as Cicero and Cato as well as the deceased Sulla, who had perceived Caesar's limitless competitive designs, were confirmed.

The Gallic Wars

After his term as consul expired, Caesar launched a ten-year campaign in Gaul. He served as his own military propagandist, composing *Gallic War* in a lean, crisp, rhetorical style. Cicero, the self-proclaimed and widely recognized master of oratory, lavished his "highest approbation" upon Caesar's writing for its "plain, correct, graceful" unadorned eloquence.[16] Caesar's

early courtroom exercises reaped enduring benefits and soldered his reputation as a proficient wordsmith and virtuoso of persuasion.

As always, Caesar's writings sparkle with self-promotion. He indirectly praises his own ingenuity by lauding commanders who lead their forces as he did or would have under comparable circumstances. When military failures occur, he is quick to blame others and exonerate himself. For example, after one of his planned surprise attacks fizzles, he casts his disapprobation upon the cowardice of one of his officers, but while noting that the spotless reputation and vast experience of the man had motivated his appointment. Thus, Caesar's initial selection of this soldier was unimpeachable and the subsequent failures of the military enterprise rest entirely upon that officer. In his own appraisal, Caesar emerges from the debacle impeccably.[17]

Likewise, after Caesar's defeat at Gergovia, he indicts his troops for their recklessness, arrogance, and lack of discipline.[18] If only they had heeded his counsel the result might have been different. Astutely, Caesar never dwells on occasional defeats, but advises his combatants to recall past and prepare for future victories. After all, Caesar is their commander.

His fathomless self-confidence, typically an asset but sometimes a blemish, invariably induces Caesar to cast his gaze elsewhere when assessing liability for disappointing outcomes.

Most conservative aristocrats, however, were more concerned with Caesar's shocking ambition and disdain for senate military guidelines than they were interested in acting as literary evaluators. Critics in the senate objected that the Gallic war was conducted more to satisfy Caesar's boundless quest for glory and riches than for definable Roman purposes. They were convinced that this was Caesar's launching pad for his major aspiration: to become absolute ruler of the Roman republic. With added wealth, military reputation, and a loyal, expanding army, Caesar laid the foundations to attain that goal.

He proved during the Gallic campaigns that he was Rome's greatest general. Even the past victories and martial passions of Pompey the Great palled when compared to Caesar's maniacal avidity. Nevertheless, few could contest Caesar's iron resolve, unshakable self-conviction, and sense of personal destiny.

> The hallmarks of Caesar's military style were great daring and speed. He had the mixed fortune of encountering repeated sizable rebellions against Roman authority, which, again and again, he successfully suppressed, often at unfavorable odds, by moving in quickly and exploiting the element of surprise. The glory of successive victories, his ability to rally the troops through battlefield rhetoric, and his willingness to share in their labors and deprivations, made more impressive by his own somewhat fragile physical constitution, endeared him to his men and inspired in them an intense personal loyalty.[19]

In truth, Caesar's Gallic campaign was brutal, nasty, and long. He extended war on the flimsiest rationales, treated his enemies harshly, and lusted after victories with deranged cupidity. Caesar also proved he was a peerless general in attaining those military successes. In the Gallic campaign, Caesar had allegedly fought thirty battles, captured more than eight hundred towns, and engaged three or four million enemies, of whom he captured one million and killed more than a million more.[20]

> [Caesar] had the ability to change [battle plans] at short notice. This ability Caesar possessed to an extraordinary degree, and he combined it with exceptionally skillful timing of his lethal blows, that natural capacity to read the battlefield. . . . Caesar repeatedly staked everything on a single throw. This was his famous luck. . . . [H]e was instinctively a gambler who never paused to tremble at the odds but relied on his capacity to force them to his will . . . shrewdness was an element that appeared in almost everything he did . . . [he had] a startling capacity to work his will upon others.[21]

Most notable is Caesar's victory over the greatest general of the region, Vercingetorix. After several successes, Vercingetorix's forces suffered an ignominious end. Tom Holland describes the finale:

> The slaughter was terrible; the Roman triumph total. Vercingetorix's men, hearing the death screams of their countrymen, withdrew back into Alesia [a stronghold never captured]. Outnumbered by the army he was besieging, and vastly outnumbered by the army that had been besieging him in turn, Caesar had defeated both. It was the greatest, the most astonishing, victory of his career. The next morning Vercingetorix rode out from Alesia in glittering armor and knelt at his conqueror's feet. Caesar, in no mood to be merciful, had him loaded with chains and thrown into prison.[22]

Caesar's conquest of Gaul was unprecedented in the scope of its mayhem. It was awesome in its zeal, effects, and impact on the Roman consciousness. The internal tensions within the Roman value system were now too apparent to ignore.

> [T]he conquest of Gaul had cost a million dead, a million more enslaved, eight hundred cities taken by storm. . . . These are near-genocidal figures. . . . [T]hey reflected a perception among Caesar's contemporaries that his war against the Gauls had been something exceptional, at once terrible and splendid beyond compare. To the Romans, no truer measure of a man could be found than his capacity to withstand grim ordeals of exhaustion and blood. By such a reckoning, Caesar had proved himself the foremost man in the Republic. He had held firm to the sternest duty of a citizen: never to surrender, never to back down. If the cost of doing so had been warfare on a scale and of a terror rarely before experienced, then so much more the honor, for both himself and Rome.[23]

Caesar's astounding struggle against overwhelming opposition, unrepentant defiance of impending catastrophe, and breathtaking subjugation of entire peoples established him as the Ultimate Roman. He could expect both amplified glory from the republic and concentrated resistance from senate aristocrats to his ascending cachet—for they, too, were Romans pursuing *dignitas* and *auctoritas*. If so, he would not be disappointed.

His enemies in the senate, especially Cato the Stoic, always the uncompromising advocate of traditional Roman republican values, issued an ultimatum as early as 57 BC: Caesar must resign as proconsul of Gaul, yield his army, and return to Rome. Upon his return, it was understood by everyone that his opponents would levy charges against him, destroy him politically, and call for his exile. Pompey, Caesar's presumed ally, was less than vigorous in Caesar's support. The first triumvirate was unraveling, and opportunistic senators were nibbling on the thread.

But Caesar had not ridden into Rome starry-eyed and guileless. He acted, as always, decisively. He met Crassus and Pompey in Lucca and repaired their alliance. Caesar's command in Gaul was extended for five more years; Pompey was given a command in Spain and Libya; and Crassus, who never saw a penny he could not turn into a dollar, was given a command in Syria with the expectation that he would attack Parthia. Crassus was greedy for military success as he approached sixty, having only the suppression of the rebellion of Spartacus on his résumé, a victory Pompey had marred by a late, dramatic appearance. Pompey and Crassus were also to be elected consuls in 55 BC. By 53 BC, Crassus's hunger for glory, along with his life, was extinguished in the disastrous Battle of Carrhae. Crassus's appetite for military glory had exceeded his soldierly acumen. The first triumvirate was no longer.

Civil War

In 52 BC, street fighting between the rival gangs of Clodius and Milo devastated the city and paralyzed government. The senate appointed Pompey sole consul with a mandate to restore civil order. Employing the usual measures of violence and intimidation, Pompey's troops were successful. Pompey was now cozying up to the senate and even married Cornelia, a daughter of Quintus Caecilius Metellus Scipio (100–46 BC), one of Caesar's greatest enemies. Pompey had been married to Caesar's daughter, Julia, who died in childbirth in 54 BC.

As Pompey and the senate explored common ground, the demands for Caesar's recall from Gaul and for his prosecution for his excesses as consul in 59 BC and for his alleged war crimes thereafter grew increasingly acrimonious. The senate was regaining its pluck. Pompey was reluctant to join either side of the controversy. He was Caesar's ally, but senators were cater-

ing to his vanity and lauding him as the defender of traditional Roman values. Caesar, meanwhile, was prepared to return from his conquest of Gaul and slide right back into another term as consul. Negotiations between the two factions broke down. Caesar, in late 50 BC, proposed that he and Pompey should both disarm. The senate overwhelmingly endorsed the proposal. Only twenty-two out of almost four hundred voters dissented. Unsurprisingly, Cato, never one to yield Caesar even an inch, led the opposition by exploiting a false rumor that Caesar had already crossed the Alps and was marching on Rome. Cato and the *optimates* implored Pompey not to disarm.

From Caesar's vantage point to return to Rome without troops while Pompey was armed was to rush into the throes of disaster. To return to Rome with troops would trigger a civil war. He was Gaius Julius Caesar. His *dignitas* required he could not back down and skulk timidly from the pages of history. Having failed in his attempts to negotiate his way out of the impasse, on January 10, 49 BC, Caesar, proclaiming "the die is cast" or "throw the dice high," with his army crossed the Rubicon River, the boundary of his province, and marched on Rome. Civil war ensued.

Prior to his decision, Pompey and the senate aristocrats were convinced that Caesar would not remain outside Rome; he would transverse the Rubicon. They were also certain that prior to doing so he would wait for his entire army or, at least, the bulk of his most proficient combatants. They were half right. Never one to wait for tomorrow for what could be accomplished today, Caesar in effect declared war on Rome accompanied by only one legion. His remaining forces could join him later. Passion, swiftness, and boldness must win the occasion.

Pompey led the troops of Caesar's senate enemies. Caesar marched through Italy into Rome, meeting weak resistance. Although badly outnumbered, Caesar's characteristic speed, decisiveness, and bravery won the day. Pompey fled Rome, allowing Caesar to march through Italy to Rome. During the siege at Dyrrhachium, on the eastern Asiatic shore, Caesar's supply lines were weak and he might have lost the war but for Pompey's refusal to follow up his advantage. Caesar remarked that "The victory today had been on the enemies' side if they had had a general who knew how to gain it."[24] At the battle of Pharsalus in 48 BC, Caesar's forces, although numbering less than half of his enemy's, routed Pompey's army. Plutarch clocks the disparity in numbers boldly: Pompey enjoyed a 5-1 advantage in cavalry (five thousand against one thousand) and a 2-1 in infantry (forty-five thousand against twenty-two thousand).[25]

Here Caesar demonstrated yet again his military genius. Nathan Rosenstein summarizes the events:

> [O]nce combat was in the offing Caesar could display an inventiveness and extraordinary sureness of touch that set him apart from his peers . . . his ability

> not simply to grasp what the enemy intended but to improvise a brilliant counter-stroke to meet it. Pompey's tactic at Pharsalus is often termed "hammer and anvil," in that the infantry, the "anvil," holds the enemy infantry in place, while the "hammer," the cavalry, swings around the rear and strikes it from behind. It had never, to our knowledge, been effectively countered—until Pharsalus. And Caesar's achievement in doing so [by forming a fourth line of cohorts at an oblique angle to be held in reserve to attack Pompey's cavalry] is all the more impressive because it went against the grain of almost the entire history of Roman tactical doctrine to that point.[26]

At the first sign of adversity, Pompey left the battlefield and retreated to his camp. His troops, unsurprisingly, grew irresolute. Caesar showed mercy at the end of the battle, insisting on no unnecessary killings or reprisals. In his *Civil War*, Caesar derides Pompey's understanding of the psychology of warriors.

> But to me Pompey [in ordering his troops to remain in their positions and wait for Caesar's attack] seems to have acted without sufficient reason: for there is a certain impetuosity of spirit and an alacrity implanted by nature in the hearts of all men, which is inflamed by a desire to meet the foe. This a general should endeavor not to repress, but to increase; nor was it a vain institution of our ancestors, that the trumpets should sound on all sides, and a general shout be raised; by which they imagined that the enemy were struck with terror, and their own army inspired with courage.[27]

As always, Caesar's indefatigable confidence in himself—the quality that made him "one of the greatest of fighting [in contrast to strategic] generals of the Classical age"[28] —had won the day. He remarked dryly, "This is the way they would have it; they brought me to this necessity."[29] Following Pompey to Egypt, he installed Cleopatra, who bore him a son, as queen.

After campaigns in Africa, Asia, and Spain, Caesar had eliminated all serious senate opposition. In 46 BC, at the Battle of Thapsus he thrashed the forces commanded by Cato and Quintus Caecillius Metellus Scipio. He continued to Cato's camp in Utica, where he discovered that the Stoic had committed suicide. After a meandering series of campaigns in Asia, he defeated remaining Pompeians in Spain. Caesar had achieved his loftiest goal: he was absolute master of Rome. In 45 BC, he celebrated a four-day triumph for his numerous military victories, including a quick destruction of the king of Pontus memorialized by his unforgettable dispatch: "*Veni, Vidi, Vici*" ("I came, I saw, I conquered). No one ever accused Caesar of lacking style or ego.

The historian Sallust outlined Caesar's projected policies in an epistle that summarized his conversations with the conqueror:

> [Sallust] exposed the general lines of Caesar's policy: clemency for the defeated, curbs on the adventurers among his own partisans, avoidance of radical reforms, restraint of profligacy and political corruption and the inauguration of an imperial rather than a city-state approach to problems. In proclaiming the utter dependence of the commonwealth upon the actions and statesmanship of a single man, [Sallust] . . . was expressing a general belief of a population weary of civil war and of domestic dissensions and seeing no faction or other leadership capable of establishing lasting peace, achieving reconstruction and instituting belated, essential reforms.[30]

Caesar refused to order purges or proscriptions. By 44 BC, Caesar was declared Dictator for Life. He dressed in the fashion of the ancient Roman kings but rejected that title. Caesar did not embark on any radical reforms, content, instead, to enjoy the trappings of power and privilege while reigning pragmatically.

Sole Power and Impending Treachery

Caesar extended Roman citizenship to include many of the provinces; he crafted a compromise between debtors and creditors; tried to reduce unemployment; settled numerous military veterans outside Italy; reduced inflation; moderated the grain supply problem; established a public library; and reformed the calendar. He also increased the size of the senate from six hundred to nine hundred, while doubling the ranks of quaestors and praetors. He filled the posts with men congenial to his interests, many of whom were foreign equestrians, centurions, soldiers, scribes, and even a few sons of freed slaves. He consulted the senate only as a formality; his position of dictator entitled him to fill offices by nomination, not election. Caesar, moreover, organized public entertainments, outlined a plan to prevent the Tiber river from flooding the city, and instituted new traffic and road maintenance regulations; he decreed that at least one-third of the labor force of large landowners be freedmen instead of slaves; he replenished the state treasury with confiscations from defeated enemies; he imposed limits on interest rates charged by lenders; he granted the Jewish population the right to practice its religion; and he granted citizenship to all foreign medical personnel and teachers practicing in Rome. Such reforms—most of which were incremental changes and marginal adjustments—eased the worst burdens of the downtrodden while not significantly depriving the wealthy. While all such measures were imposed autocratically, although endorsed by the tribal assembly, their intent was not oppression. Caesar, upon becoming consul, acted to publicly post the proceedings of the senate and assembly daily.[31]

Caesar was not a thoroughly committed egalitarian, but he did soften the worst abuses inflicted on the most destitute. He had strong populist roots that were more than simply a cover for tyranny. His relations with the *optimates* had been thoroughly adversarial. The privileges and political influence—and thus the collective *dignitas*—of the aristocracy were severely compromised. The Roman masses, under Caesar, enjoyed measurable gains, although they lost the right to elect certain public officials.

The *optimates* in the senate, including Cicero, were repulsed by Caesar's social reforms, construction projects, and administrative vision: "They aspired to a restoration of the old leadership of the Senate with its rivalries, intrigues, corruption, social and political myopia and proclivity to violent repression of opponents."[32]

However, the senate lavished Caesar with every available honor, and then it invented new awards. Some members favored this approach as a strategy to undermine Caesar; others did so because they were thoroughly cowed by Caesar's power; and some did so out of good faith admiration for the dictator. For his part, Caesar had never confronted or conjured an honor after which he did not lust. The senate gave him, among other kudos, the right to sit on a golden throne; to wear the purple vestments of a triumphing general always; to brandish the title "Father of his Country." It renamed a month of the year in his honor. Early in 44 BC, Caesar's profile graced Roman coinage, an unprecedented occurrence for a living person. Finally, the senate authorized a temple for worship of Caesar as a god. Delicious irony, that, given Caesar's lifelong casual attitude toward religion.

Cicero, although vacillating more rapidly than a pendulum in his alternating praise and caution about Caesar, was firm in distancing himself from the dictator's Epicurean view of divinity and human mortality. Cicero was always prepared to use religion as an instrument to preserve property rights and forestall social reform. Caesar had never placed stock in divine providence or the master design of the universe. He was trying to understand and mold a world in flux: progress and re-creation, not reversion to a sentimentalized past or validation of entrenched privilege, were the order of the day. For Caesar, that death meant annihilation suggested we should live intensely and maximize our capabilities while on the planet.[33]

On February 15, 44 BC, at the religious feast of the *Lupercalia*, Caesar's chief bobo, Marc Antony, then a consul, offered him a *diadem* (crown). Caesar, smugly ensconced on a golden throne while bedecked in purple robes, refused the gesture. The crowd, on cue, roared appreciatively. Antony made a second overture. Caesar gushed a dramatic response, "My name is Caesar, not Rex."[34] (This was a play on words: Rex was also a Roman surname.) The crowd, again, cried out in relief. Caesar and Antony probably designed this dog-and-pony show to elicit the reaction of the Roman people

to his official elevation as a monarch. At least, this is how most perceptive bystanders interpreted the theatrical performance.

The republic was still officially in place, but only in form, not substance. Caesar had absolute power for life. As ever, he was not infatuated with tradition, the ways of the old Roman fathers, or the prerogatives of the senate. Unquestionably, for as long as Caesar lived, the republic would suffocate. Worse, Caesar had squired Cleopatra and their infant son, Caesarion, to Rome in 46 BC. Could the balding, womanizing, epileptic be laying the foundation for a hereditary monarchy?

> Caesar did not know, or did not care, how deeply people felt for the traditional politics of the Republic. To him, they were a sham. He said so, and was also reported as observing that people must take his word as law. His personal magic and charm, his tactful courtesy and amusing high spirits were still sometimes in evidence, but rather more fitfully than hitherto. The hand was of iron.[35]

A circle of treachery was closing in on Caesar. He was widely viewed among the nobility as the tyrant who had slain the republic and eviscerated traditional Roman values. He had lavished mercy on many former enemies who now plotted vengeance. Proud men do not easily accept the largesse of a victor who, through clemency, underscores his superiority. He was also the inexorable target of lesser men who seethed with jealousy and envy. Even nobles who were not ex-Pompeians chafed under Caesar's authority.

The Ides of March

Always restless and in search of new conquests, Caesar strategized a war against and beyond Parthia. Prior to his embarking, a conspiracy, led by Marcus Junius Brutus, Cassius Longinus, Decimus Junius Brutus (85–43 BC), Gaius Trebonius, and a host of others, was hatched. Brutus and Cassius were praetors, Decimus was consul designee for 42 BC, and Trebonius had been consul in 45 BC. They seriously considered extending their project beyond Caesar to kill Antony and possibly other major players loyal to the dictator in perpetuity. However, Brutus argued forcefully against any larger enterprise. Presenting the assassination only as a defense of the republic was crucial. Any larger action might suggest that the conspirators were seeking their own gain or lusting after political power akin to that held by their victims. No, Brutus insisted, only Caesar should be slaughtered. This was the first of several major errors in judgment plaguing the conspirators.

The plan was not a closely guarded secret. Foreboding omens and soothsayer's predictions abounded. However, Caesar had always spurned the superstitions of Roman religion, unless temporarily subscribing to them held political or military advantage. Although his physical health was declining—

stress and more frequent epileptic seizures were taking their toll—Caesar was secure in his robust invincibility and inveterate good fortune. He also understood that his death would spark wholesale chaos and civil disorder. Surely any rational person, even one enamored of republican traditions, could see this clearly. Only an idiot, madman, or self-destructive loon would even *think* of killing Caesar, much less orchestrate a serious plot: "Caesar was regarded as great for his kindness and munificence. . . . [He] achieved distinction for his mercy and pity. . . . Caesar acquired glory by giving, by supporting, by forgiving. . . . [In him] the wretched found their refuge. . . . [H]e would neglect his own and refused nothing that was worth giving; what he desired for himself was a great command, an army, and a new war where his prowess could shine."[36]

Some of Caesar's associates speculated that he was either intentionally courting death or levying an implicit challenge to potential murderers in accord with the Epicurean Lucretius's injunction: "Wherefore it is more fitting to watch a man in doubt and danger, and to learn of what manner he is in adversity; for then at last a real cry is wrung from the bottom of his heart: The mask is torn off, and the truth remains behind.[37]

Historians dispute the precise details of events leading to and culminating with the assassination of Caesar. The prevailing view: On the night prior to the Ides of March, Calpurnia, Caesar's fourth wife, had premonitions of her husband's doom. She convinced Caesar to cancel his trip to the senate on March 15. Besides, Caesar was ill and no pressing political business remained prior to his expedition to thrash the Parthians. The conspirators, though, conjured a sweet little artifice. Decimus went to Caesar and urged him to appear at the senate. Decimus suggested that the senate was preparing to offer Caesar a *diadem*, a kingly crown to be worn in the eastern provinces and elsewhere, but not in Italy. The ruse was well conceived. Had Decimus claimed that the senate was going to declare Caesar a king as such, the wily dictator would have whiffed the odor of treachery. The Roman aversion to monarchs was deep and wide. But the eastern provinces were accustomed to and enamored of kings. The additional title would play well in the regions to which Caesar was planning to journey and conquer. Caesar, never one to forgo a major honor on the flimsy basis of dreams and sniffles, agreed to appear: *dignitas* must always trump superstition and the flu.

> Caesar's ambition soared so high because he was conscious of his power to become the master of the Empire. He had never believed in the ideologies of the *optimates* and *populares* which he had encountered on his entry into political life. A born enemy of the *optimates*, he regarded demagogy [of the *populares*] as no more than the means to an end. On the way to power he did not meet men who could impress him. He only saw selfishness and envy, and eventually emerged from a life of continuous and bitter conflict as a cynic who assessed all relationships only according to their political value and, judging

> the others by himself, could not believe that their *res publica* could still be to them something other than "a mere name without body and form."[38]

Caesar assumed his seat in the senate. Trebonius detained Marc Antony in an anteroom. The assassins surrounded Caesar while making a few minor personal requests. Publius Servilius Casca struck the first blow. Undoubtedly nervous, he was a poor choice to initiate the murder. Caesar grabbed Casca's dagger and cried out in surprise and outrage. Casca screeched for help. The murderers convened on Caesar with full purpose. He struggled and battled, until he saw the sword of Brutus drawn. He covered his face with his toga, submitted to Brutus's stab in the groin, and fell. His last words may have been, "What is this? Violence against Caesar?" or they may have been directed at Brutus, "You, too, my son," or Caesar may have perished in silence. Even at the end, Caesar was utterly amazed that mere mortals would presume to attack their superior.

> The proceeds of empire were shared unevenly. This led to fierce rivalry among the aristocracy and simmering resentment among the Roman poor who doubled as her soldiery. . . . Caesar died because he failed to win, or to retain, the loyalty of that inner circle of the Roman elite, for all that he spared their lives, gave them magistracies and promised them rich provinces.[39]

The assassins slew Caesar by brutally stabbing him repeatedly, twenty-three times, at the feet of a statue of Pompey. Many of the murderers had been wounded by each other's flailing blows. Raging against the gelid insolence of his betrayers, his will to power denied a grand final adventure by disgruntled aristocrats tormented by the delusions of self-serving paramnesia, oozing, possibly, a farrago of caustic fury and sweet deliverance, his spirit levitating delicately skyward, Gaius Julius Caesar, the Ultimate Roman, abandoned this planet and infiltrated the celestial castle of sublimity. The Ides of March has never been the same.

CAESAR'S WILL TO POWER

Caesar's distinctive excellence and highest virtue was his voracious will to power, understood as a prodigious will to life.[40] I do not take will to power in this sense as necessarily a proclivity to oppress, dominate, or subjugate other people, although exercises of wills to power, including Caesar's, can assume that form. I take will to power in its generic sense to include an affirmative attitude toward life and vigorous pursuit of ongoing activities; will to power describes a general, fundamental desire about desires. The precise activities undertaken pursuant to will to power do not arise from will to power itself but from the desires an agent adopts and embarks upon.

My view, then, is that generic will to power or will to power as such can be described only vaguely: it is a second-order desire (a general, fundamental desire about particular desires) to have, pursue, and fulfill first-order (particular) desires; it bears a relationship to confronting and overcoming resistances and obstacles; and it is related to the pursuit of excellence and personal transformation, as well as to experiences of feeling power and strength and enhanced capabilities. In that vein, will to power manifests and is a measure of an agent's attitude toward and visceral connection to life.[41]

Understood in this spirit, every human being[42] embodies will to power and an attitude toward and visceral connection to life. But will to power admits of countless differences in degree. The generic rendering, indeed no specific rendering, can describe accurately the level, intensity, and strength of every human being's will to power. In my judgment, Julius Caesar's will to power demonstrates a maximally affirmative attitude toward life.

To illustrate this conclusion, I will sketch three versions of will to power: staunch, moderate, and attenuated. This does not constitute an exhaustive catalog of types of will to power. Numerous intermediary versions can be concocted to bridge the gaps between the three types that I identify here.

Staunch will to power requires ever-increasing challenges and confrontation with greater resistance if it is to grow. Staunch will to power cannot be satisfied by recurrently confronting and overcoming the *same* level of resistance or reiterations of power that renege on relentless self-overcoming, the pursuit of excellence, and insatiable growth. Second, staunch will to power pursues an impossible dream: self-perfection, an ideal that cannot be attained but can be approximated through indefatigable strivings. In this respect, self-overcoming is understood as an ongoing process of constructing, reimagining, and re-creating one's self, informed by a standard of excellence. Third, staunch will to power implies the struggle for preeminence, which invokes aspiring for distinction and establishing domination of a sort. Fourth, the activity of staunch will to power results in an increase in power and strength and capability. Understood as an increase in the capability of an agent to affect outcomes—power intensifies only when ever-increasing (or at least different) challenges and confrontations with greater resistances take place. Fifth, staunch will to power reveals and accentuates an affirmative attitude toward life. Staunch will to power invokes the dimensions of self-overcoming, pursuit of excellence, the struggle for preeminence, establishing the foundations for distinction and domination, increasing power and strength and capability, and persistent growth. The activity of staunch will to power so conceived will almost certainly reflect and sustain a maximally affirmative attitude toward life.

Accordingly, *staunch will to power* is

1. a *strong* second-order desire to have and pursue first-order desires; and
2. a *strong* second-order desire to confront and overcome significant resistance and obstacles, and thereby feel power and strength and increasing capability while satisfying those first-order desires;
3. in service of recurrent self-overcoming and the pursuit of excellence;
4. a process that itself manifests and sustains a maximally affirmative attitude toward and visceral connection to life.

"Satisfying" will to power is thoroughly paradoxical. More specifically, it is transitory, a moment of deserved fulfillment immediately followed by dissatisfaction that spawns ongoing activity. Satisfaction of staunch will to power is not a relatively stable or lingering state of affairs; instead, it amounts to a temporary moment or experience that must be immediately followed by additional striving. Although effete forms of will to power may well aspire for lingering contentment or more enduring (and pleasurable) satisfaction, staunch will to power—the version brandished by Caesar—harbors no such illusions. Value, as always, glistens most strikingly in the process and recurrent activity of staunch will to power.

On this model, a person's first-order desires are not derived from will to power. First-order desires typically arise from fundamental biological needs (for example, food, clothing, shelter, intimacy, expression), socially situated goals (for example, individual glory, communal benefits, victory in competition, providing succor to the disenfranchised, seeking eternal salvation through religion, serving political parties), and personal aspirations hatched within a social context (for example, striving to become a renowned musician, yearning to become a worthy parent, craving to bowl a perfect game). The point is that will to power, in any of its manifestations, requires but does not produce first-order desires. A person may exercise his or her will to power in countless ways and in pursuit of a myriad of first-order desires. Accordingly, will to power is not inherently a second-order drive to oppress, tyrannize, or destroy other people or things. Will to power can be harnessed to serve, educate, or advance the interests of other people or things, but, again, is not inherently such. Thus, to evaluate both Julius Caesar and Mother Teresa as evincing staunch will to power is reasonable.

On this rendering, how might staunch will to power not attain (transitory) satisfaction? The possibilities are numerous. Lacking or being unable to pursue first-order desires would stymie the activity of staunch will to power and thereby deny satisfaction. The failure to confront or to overcome resistance while pursuing first-order desires would also chill satisfaction. Thus, if one agent established a monopoly of domination in his or her domain of activity,

that agent would not have suitable "enemies" to overcome. The agent's monopoly would be self-defeating to the aspirations of staunch will to power. Therefore preeminence, distinction, and domination should not imply the elimination of worthy competition. Likewise, if the competition is too daunting the agent will be unlikely to overcome it and staunch will to power will be frustrated. Another source of frustration arises from overcoming only moderate resistance that does not produce the feelings of power or promote the increase of power. Any of these ways of frustrating staunch will to power is also likely to thwart self-overcoming, the pursuit of excellence, and growth. On this rendering, reflecting and sustaining a maximally affirmative attitude toward life requires ongoing activities and a recurrent, dynamic process, not a final resting point of complacent satiation.

I propose describing various levels of will to power in terms of the intensity of their desire to overcome serious resistance that directly affects the possibilities for self-overcoming, the pursuit of excellence, and experiencing feelings of power. All human beings embody will to power to some extent. As a fundamental instinct of life, will to power cannot be forfeited or waived by living beings. *Staunch* will to power, among other things, *seeks explicitly* to confront and overcome *serious* resistance. But less intense versions of will to power, among other things, deflate that aspiration.

Following this train of thought, *moderate will to power* is

1. a *measured* second-order desire to have, pursue, and satisfy first-order desires; and
2. a *measured* second order-desire *to be prepared* to overcome (but not seek out) serious resistance and obstacles, and thereby feel some power and strength and increasing capability in satisfying those first-order desires;
3. in service of steady self-overcoming and the pursuit of improvement;
4. a process that itself manifests and sustains an affirmative attitude toward and visceral connection to life.

That is, those embodying moderate will to power will accept and strive to overcome serious resistance if it presents itself but prefer to attain their goals without that challenge. As such, those embodying moderate will to power will experience the feelings of power less frequently and less intensely than those exercising staunch will to power; they will self-overcome and approximate excellence less often and more tepidly. Those exercising moderate will to power embody an affirmative attitude toward and visceral connection to life that is genuine but not maximal.

Finally, we must account for an attenuated will to power embodied by those who exert themselves minimally and avoid suffering religiously. They

instinctively pursue pleasures that invariably extinguish their possibilities for intense love, creation, longing, striving, and excellence. Their highest ambitions may be comfort and security. In their value system, habit, custom, indolence, self-preservation, and muted will to power prevail. They embody none of the inner tensions and conflicts that spur transformative action: they take no risks, lack convictions, avoid experimentation, and seek only bland survival.

To continue the caricature: those bearing attenuated will to power often fail to take responsibility for the persons they are becoming; offer facile excuses for their shortcomings; seek only the blandest hedonistic comforts; and conform abjectly to dominant social ideas to highlight their nonthreatening nature and to satisfy their compulsion for external validation. As such, they represent the path of least resistance: easy accommodations and effete aspirations replace the arduous task of self-realization. They are rarely agents of evil. Their attitude toward and visceral connection to life is fragile and tenuous.

Accordingly, *attenuated will to power* is

1. an *enfeebled* second-order desire to have, pursue, and satisfy first-order desires; and
2. a *considerable* second-order desire to avoid confronting serious resistance and obstacles in satisfying those first-order desires;
3. in service of establishing, maintaining, or increasing tepid pleasure, comfort, and communal peace;
4. a process that itself manifests and sustains a fragile, tenuous, marginally affirmative attitude toward and visceral connection to life.

Those harboring attenuated will to power will often abandon the pursuit of their first-order desires if the process of satisfying them is too arduous. Instead, they will conjure and pursue new first-order desires that appear more easily fulfilled. Attenuated will to power still implies the ongoing second-order desire to have, pursue, and fulfill first-order desires, but aspires to avoid facing serious resistance and does not explicitly seek recurrent self-overcoming and excellence. Accordingly, those embodying attenuated will to power experience the feelings of power and strength and increasing capability rarely and fortuitously.

Again, Julius Caesar's distinctive excellence and grandest virtue is his staunch will to power. His maximally affirmative attitude toward and visceral connection to life are indisputable. Caesar attains, quite properly, the Roman goals of meriting enduring glory and serving as an exemplar for future generations *in this regard*. Scoffing at commonly held superstitions, embracing an Epicurean materialism that precluded beliefs in human immortality

and a blissful afterlife, and striving grandly without hope of ultimate redemption or aspiration for a felicitous climax to his existence, Gaius Julius Caesar remains an existential hero.

In fairness, Caesar's first-order desires were too often unworthy. He was frequently cruel, typically manipulative and self-serving, often vicious in personal relationships, and in the end radically susceptible to flattery and self-deception. As is too often the narrative in human affairs, he torqued his most glorious gifts—rhetorical flair, personal charisma, implacable fortitude, unshakable self-confidence, acute intelligence, adamant sense of destiny, boundless zeal, and steely determination—too tightly and they degenerated into Caesar's most glaring shortcomings and vices as he pursued first-order desires that too often transgressed the common good.

Did Caesar Want to Die?

Elsewhere I have argued that the assassination of Julius Caesar was morally unjustified.[43] The murder did not bring about worthy consequences, and this is true from the vantage points of Caesarians and republicans alike. Moreover, civil war was the actual and foreseeable result of the assassination. Accordingly, the assassins were and remain morally culpable for their delusional conviction that the republic would arise spontaneously from the ashes of Caesar's body.

The conspirators, stunningly naïve, were convinced that the death of Caesar would automatically resuscitate the Roman republic. They considered, but rejected, the possibility of including Antony and other high-level Caesarians in their design. They did nothing to pacify Caesar's troops or lay a foundation for mollifying the common people. They had gathered no armed forces about them. They gave no consideration to the possibility Caesar would name an heir.

The assassins were so tone deaf to social reality that they never considered the prospect that the political liberties of the Roman *aristocracy* did not define liberty *as such*. They did not reject the view that middle class, poor, and disenfranchised people might embody interests other than their own; they never even entertained the possibility. The freedom of Roman nobles to compete for public office, honors, and enduring glory *constituted* traditional republican liberty in their view.

The Roman aristocracy had hijacked the common good: What was good for the *optimates* and their fellow travelers was good for Rome. This theft was not contrived cynically and self-consciously. Instead, three ideological dimensions converged to design the result. First, the romance of civil socialization: the grand parables and heroic epics of how brave Romans and founding fathers had resisted kingly oppression both internal and external in forging centuries of world supremacy. Second, isolation from the core of Roman

life: the aristocracy willingly profited from slave labor and poorly paid free labor but had little or no understanding of the legitimate grievances less fortunate people embodied. Third, the universalizing of their own class interests as the common good of the entire polity: the aristocracy deluded itself that the privileges and prerogatives its members enjoyed were the natural outcome of the rule of law neutrally applied.

Accordingly, the reason that the assassins did not more carefully plan the aftermath of Caesar's death was that they were sincerely convinced that all right-thinking Romans desired precisely what motivated them. The conspirators harbored a good faith, but deluded, belief that once their deed was understood to be spawned from lofty aspirations, the Roman citizenry would scurry to join their cause. No plan to reestablish the republic was necessary because no serious opposition would be encountered. After all, the machinery of the republic was already in place. Aristocratic fantasies insisted that Caesar had not destroyed the republican structure; he had merely ransacked its substance. Their mindless refusal to plan for political transition was morally blameworthy. They bear responsibility for much of the carnage that ensued.

Brush aside for the moment the question of whether the assassination of Caesar was morally justified. Let us ponder, instead, a complicated empirical question of that period: Did Caesar want to die? Or, at least, was he not adverse to dying around the time of his murder? Why were his actions and failures to act to safeguard his well-being so imprudent prior to and during March 15, 44 BC?

The historian and biographer Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus ("Suetonius") (69–126) observes, "Caesar left some of those close to him with the suspicion that he had no wish to live much longer and had taken no precautions [against assassination]. . . . Nearly all authorities agree that his death was of just the kind of which he approved. . . . [H]e expressed contempt for slow mode of death, preferring a sudden and rapid end."[44]

That Caesar was unaware of the opposition coagulating against his reign, that he was oblivious to the intense loathing of monarchy or extended dictatorship embodied by aristocratic conservatives is preposterous. In Rome, even the most tightly knit conspiracies sprung leaks. Even among the chosen few, some participants could be expected to share their secrets if only to hedge their bets. One can never be too careful when evaluating the likely outcome of treachery. Suppose the conspiracy dissolved or failed to secure its aims? An assiduous defector might well secure his safety by simultaneously currying a bond with a Caesarian loyalist.

Beyond that possibility, any dictator worthy of the title would foster intelligence gathering. Caesar surely cultivated sources of information to maintain an ongoing link with the dispositions and sentiments of the wider community, especially with respect to conniving senators stewing invidious-

ly at the usurpation of many of their former privileges and prerogatives. Plutarch, for example, reports that Caesar shared with friends suspicions of Cassius and Brutus, "pale, lean fellows" harboring clandestine purposes.[45]

Moreover, Artemidorus, a Greek logician, had learned of the plot and tried to warn Caesar. A former tutor and acquaintance of Brutus, he handed Caesar a note identifying the conspirators and revealing their treachery. He beseeched Caesar to open and read the message at once. Caesar was either unwilling to attend to the missive as he approached the senate or he was prevented by the bustle of the surrounding crowd.

As is famously reported, the soothsayer Spurinna had warned Caesar earlier of impending danger on the Ides of March. Crossing paths with the same oracle as he hustled to the senate, Caesar gloated that March 15 had arrived with the obvious addendum that Rome's ruler had suffered no calamity. Not missing a beat, the diviner rejoined that the day was still in progress.

If any more evidence is required to conclude that Caesar's assassination was not a scrupulously held secret, consider the desperate cheerleading of senator Popilius Laenas. Confronting Brutus and Cassius minutes prior to the deed, he offers encouragement that their enterprise might succeed and cautions them that they should proceed with alacrity because others knew of their plans.

As the chronicled information about the assassination piles along and the intuitive speculation about Caesar's intelligence sources and general Roman proclivities for loose lips is added, one wonders why some impresario was not advertising and hawking tickets to the event. Was there any public figure in Rome who was not aware that on the Ides of March a bad sun was rising for Caesar and he was unlikely to frolic with a redemptive moon?

How did Caesar respond? He failed to arm himself as he strode to the senate on that day, wore no body plate for protection, and dismissed the bodyguard who typically accompanied him on such missions. Coincidentally, on the eve of his murder, Caesar was dining outside Rome at the military training camp of Marcus Aemilius Lepidus. During the conversation with longtime associates and military colleagues, someone mused about the best sort of death. Caesar piped up, "A sudden one." Perhaps Caesar had pondered the matter in the past. Or was he preparing for the next day?

The evidence expands. Caesar's enthusiasm for granting defeated Romans clemency inadvertently promoted his death. Could Caesar have not been aware of this? His motives were characteristically mixed. In victory, he enjoyed sparing his enemies as an expression of genuine compassion and out of respect for valiant competitors whose talents could generate future, praiseworthy service. But he also reveled in the enhanced status the extension of mercy entailed. Bequeathing such a high gratuity as sparing the life of a defeated foe clearly amplifies Caesar's *dignita*s, *auctoritas*, and *virtus* and marks his superiority over the recipient. For his part, under the Roman value

system, the recipient must recognize, at least implicitly, an immense obligation to Caesar. Where the recipients are Roman aristocrats, as deeply steeped in Roman values as was Caesar, the likelihood of seething resentment, invidious treachery, and vindictive retaliation is higher than obsequious gratitude for Caesar's largesse. As the Ultimate Roman, Caesar surely knew this. Why did he seemingly ignore it and take inadequate measures against it?

Consider Cassius. He was elected tribune of the plebeians in 49 BC. Cassius cast his lot with the *optimates* and commanded Pompey's fleet during the civil war. After Pompey's defeat and his own capture by Caesar, Cassius accepted Caesar's clemency. He served as Caesar's legate in Egypt but declined to join Caesar's fight against Cato and Metellus Scipio in Africa. Instead, he spent two years in Rome without political or military office. He examined the nuances of Epicurean philosophical doctrine and cozied up to Cicero. Caesar appointed him a praetor in 44 BC, but elevated Brutus to a more prestigious praetorship even though Caesar recognized Cassius's superior credentials for the post.

Although Cassius was also promised the governorship of Syria at the expiration of his term, he was not a man to suffer slights gladly. He already resented his obligation to Caesar for sparing his life; he loathed his own willingness to recognize Caesar's superiority by accepting dishonor instead of death; and he soothed his weakened *dignitas* with fantasies of revenge. Cassius knew that Caesar did not trust him and that his own political fortunes were thereby limited. The charade played by Caesar and Marc Antony at the *Lupercalia* deepened his resolve. He began gathering confederates, most of whom insisted that Brutus assume a leadership role. These were not common thugs or professional hit men. The conspirators would number among the most respected *optimates* in Rome. They yearned for legitimacy and Brutus, with his high reputation for moral rectitude and a profoundly philosophical temperament, exuded the *gravitas* required to justify tyrannicide.

During the Roman civil war, Brutus also had sided with Pompey. Although Pompey had ruthlessly and fraudulently slain his father, Brutus was tightly aligned with the *optimates* who had won Pompey to their cause. At the Battle of Pharsalus, Caesar ordered his men not to harm Brutus and to take him prisoner. After routing Pompey, Caesar was thrilled to accept Brutus's plea for mercy. Plutarch reports that Brutus tipped off Caesar that Pompey was headed for Egypt,[46] but this speculation may be false.[47]

> Brutus's motives as a collaborator [with Caesar after Pompey was defeated at Pharsalus] defy interpretation. Up to this point in his life his actions appear to have been governed by self-interest. It may be that his reputation for high-mindedness and probity derived from his somewhat un-Roman bookishness and his addiction to literature and philosophy rather than from his actual behavior. Possibly, he felt that he had done enough for his family enemy [Pom-

> pey who had executed Brutus's father] and was now within his rights to switch to Caesar.[48]

Clearly, however, Brutus insinuated himself further into Caesar's warm graces. Caesar named him governor of Cisalpine Gaul in 46 BC, even though Brutus had held no political office above that of quaestor. He proved to be an excellent administrator whose lack of avarice and resort to violence won him and Caesar great acclaim.

Caesar appointed him as senior praetor in 44 BC. Caesar even alluded to the possibility that Brutus might one day succeed him: "When some maligned Brutus to him, and advised him to beware of him, taking hold of his flesh with his hand, 'What,' [Caesar] said, 'do you think that Brutus will not wait out the time of [my] little body?' as if he thought none so fit to succeed him in his power as Brutus."[49]

As forces against Caesar converged, they looked to Brutus to spearhead the assassination plot. Caesar had often favored Brutus, probably in deference to the dictator's long-standing intimate relationship with Servilia. Brutus must have felt strong gratitude. Each man, though, bore deep ambivalences about the other.[50]

What is true of Cassius and Brutus pertained also to several other of the conspirators. Opposed to Caesar during the civil war, they petitioned for or at least joyously accepted Caesar's clemency upon Pompey's defeat. They were now obligated to Caesar and stigmatized as his abject inferiors. Adhering to the Roman value system had aided Caesar's ascension to power and was now facilitating his betrayal.

Finally, we must not neglect the omens that purportedly forecast Caesar's imminent death. To cite a few: Months earlier, some of Caesar's military veterans were splitting ancient tombstones to collect stones to erect their farmhouses near Capua. One of the tombstones was that of the legendary founder of Capua and included a bronze tablet that cautioned in Greek that if the tomb was disrupted a man of Trojan stock would be murdered by his kinfolk and then avenged at great calamity to Italy. Caesar was convinced he was a descendent of Aeneas, the Trojan prince who fled to Italy. A few days prior to Caesar's murder, a herd of horses he had freed after crossing the Rubicon were purportedly weeping and showing abhorrence for their pastures. On the Ides of March, prior to Caesar's appearance, a small bird dubbed a king wren flew into the building carrying a sprig of laurel. A flock of predator fowl pursued the wren and tore it to pieces. A few days prior to his murder, Caesar presided over a religious sacrifice during which the animal's heart was missing. On the eve of Caesar's death, Calpurnia endured nightmares of his slaughter. They were also both startled when all the doors and windows of their residence burst open at the same time.

From our vantage point, these omens seem coincidental at best and fabrications at worst. To the dominant Roman mindset, however, they could not be dismissed. Whether we judge them as *ex post facto* rationalizations or flimsy evidence of the collective Roman subconscious or projections of extant gossip, rumor, and speculation, they add to the evidence that danger was stalking Caesar and taking extra precautions would have been a wise response. Yet Caesar seemingly intensified his disdain for safety, prudence, and rational calculation.

That numerous contemporaries and countless future observers would conclude that Caesar welcomed his own death registers no surprise. Furthermore, Rome faced a triangulated obstacle (calling it a "challenge" does not ease the problem; calling it an "opportunity" mocks its dangers): the traditional value system, exalting so highly victory in military and political competitions and embracing so enthusiastically zero-sum reasoning, had degenerated into a "might makes right" culture. Three social vectors coalesced uneasily: a strong military was essential for Roman preservation and expansion; the loyalty of those forces was connected inextricably to their leader, who fought with them and guided their successes, and who conferred wealth and land upon them after victorious expeditions; but the republic required that prime military fidelity should vest in the senate, whose aristocrats too often stymied the magnanimity of generals such as Pompey and Caesar to their soldiers in deference to their own socioeconomic privileges and prerogatives. Meanwhile, campaigning for and attaining political office relied too heavily and explicitly on gang violence, bribery, and corrupt electoral accounting. The form and pretensions of the Roman republic resonated only faintly in its substance.

The solution, however partial, was the emergence of a preeminent figure who could consolidate power, secure order, continue to expand the nation, but maintain at least the façade of republicanism. That man was Gaius Julius Caesar. But foundational traditions do not perish easily. Caesar understood keenly Rome was not prepared to accept passively a monarch. Yet he was convinced that such a person was required to juggle and mollify the tensions of the polity and he was the only qualified candidate.

Perhaps conventional wisdom is correct. Maybe Caesar's robust will to power was waning and his attitude toward and visceral connection to life was evanescent. After all, even the stoutest will to power must succumb when accosted by that undefeated tag-team, Father Time and the Grim Reaper. Possibly he was overwhelmed by Rome's vexing conundrum and could not perceive an antidote. However, my romantic inclinations refuse to accept such a dreary conclusion without examining evidence to the contrary.

Conceivably, Caesar retained staunch will to power and when confronted by seemingly insoluble Roman obstacles, instinctively called upon his most reliable excellence: military ambition. In support of this position, a priest in

charge of the Sibylline Books, a collection of oracular utterances consulted at momentous crises through the history of Rome, announced that the Books declared that the Parthians could be conquered only by a king. This was taken to mean either that the senate should confer that title upon Caesar prior to his military expedition to the east or that Caesar's anticipated military victory over the Parthians would prove to everyone that he was destined for the throne.[51] Could either anticipatory glory or reward for military victory convince traditional Romans to swallow their disdain of monarchy in capitulation to religious interpretation?

Plutarch reports that Caesar was about to embark on a monumental military campaign that transcended well beyond the defeat of the Parthians.

> [Caesar] resolved to make war upon the Parthians, and when he had subdued them, to pass through Hyrcania; thence to march along by the Caspian Sea to Mount Caucasus, and so on about Pontus until he came into Scythia; then to overrun all the countries bordering upon Germany, and Germany itself; and so to return through Gaul into Italy, after completing the whole circle of his intended empire, and bounding it on every side by the ocean.[52]

In modern terms, Caesar aspired to subjugate Iran, parts of Russia, Germany, and surrounding regions. This military offensive would render his Gallic conquests paltry by comparison. Is this the conjuring of will to power negotiating terms of retirement or preparing to die? Probably, had Caesar lived to initiate this crusade he would either have been successful and Roman monarchy would have been likely or he would have perished in the process. Typically, even the grandest striver must fail in the end. Caesar, brandishing robust will to power, personifies the grand striver.

Plutarch reliably describes the essence of the grand striver when he speaks of Caesar:

> Caesar was born to do great things, and had a passion after honor, and the many noble exploits he had done did not now serve as an inducement to him to sit still and reap the fruit of his past labors, but were incentives and encouragement to go on, and raised in him ideas of still greater actions, and a desire of new glory, as if the present were all spent. It was in fact a sort of emulous struggle with himself, as it had been with another, how he might outdo his past actions by his future.[53]

That Caesar, anticipating the literary techniques of Henry Adams and Norman Mailer, referred to himself in the third person in his *Gallic War*, is no accident. He was engaged in "a sort of emulous struggle with himself, as it had been with another."

Plutarch's insightful depiction of Caesar as a grand striver reaffirms the Ultimate Roman's staunch will to power. The themes of overcoming obsta-

cles, engaging in epic struggles, continuously pursuing new goals, relishing recurrent novelty, and transcending existing patterns define the grand striver. Instead of being entrapped in a Sisyphus-like eternal rut, the grand striver relishes a recurrent process of constructing, deconstructing, reimagining, and re-creating the self, personal relations, and social arrangements. Profound questions, though, persist: Is relentless striving merely a sign of discontentment? Is the grand striver merely a chameleon who changes color because of an inadequate sense of self? Is the forced activity of the grand striver merely a way to forget the pain of human life and the tragedy of existence? Is there any difference between the grand striver and the greedy materialist who is never satisfied and who accumulates more and more wealth as an end in itself?

Beyond underscoring robust will to power, the process of the grand striver is committed to progress. The process is not viewed as a pendulum that swings back and forth, occupying the same space repeatedly. The grand striver, if successful, develops and creates. Caesar, for example, did not merely occupy the same psychological and existential space repeatedly. His undertakings did not seek a final termination of the original goal and did not implicitly embrace permanence as a high value. Instead, Caesar found deep meaning and value in the process itself as activity, creation, and continuing development ensued. Finally, the attitude of the grand striver toward life is enthusiastically positive.

While I doubt that the image of the grand striver captures the entire deep truth about human personality and that it shows the only way to a meaningful life, it highlights important insights. Human beings are not static creatures. We flourish most vividly through ongoing creative development. Regardless of the view from afar, the process of this creative development furnishes the meaning of our lives. Even if the cosmos is inherently meaningless, pessimism need not result.

The image of the grand striver attracts us because it speaks to our sense of adventure, our individualism, our need to experience intensely. As exemplified by Caesar, the grand striver also manifests robust will to power. But we are much more than grand strivers. Our sense of community, our need for peace and respite, and our yearning for narrative structure are also part of human personality. We need to be distinct individuals, but if this impulse is exaggerated we become isolated and alienated. We need to be connected intimately to others; we need to achieve intimacy and realize communal bonding. But if this communal yearning is unchallenged we become suffocated and overly dependent. The trick is to achieve the best measure of each impulse; to synthesize the grand striver with the communal citizen. Each image speaks to only part of the human condition. We need to transcend grandly but we also need internal unity and integrated identities.

My point in the side discussion of the grand striver is to cast suspicion on the conventional view that just prior to his assassination Caesar was winding down, relinquishing his glistening visceral connection to life, and anticipating or even welcoming death. Advocates of the contrary conclusion would advance his history as a grand striver, so ably summarized by Plutarch, and his planned ambitious military campaign which, if successful, might well have cemented his monarchical designs.

Other evidence that Caesar retained staunch will to power right to the end is available. Regarding the numerous omens and auguries, Caesar placed little or no stock in their efficacy. Whether he was drawn to Epicurean materialism or driven by other impulses, Caesar did not subscribe to the mountain of superstitions, religious portents, and animal harbingers nested within the Roman collective consciousness. He often used and even fabricated such forecasts when they served his purposes, for example as favorable signs of impending military victory or political success. Caesar did so only as a version of placebo effect—to elevate his soldiers' resolve or rationalize a political maneuver. He recognized that favorable auguries and omens could serve as self-fulfilling prophecies for those of profound conviction. But Caesar's resort to such stratagems was, characteristically, opportunistic and executed without illusion. Whether we take the reports of unfavorable omens and auguries preceding Caesar's death as accurate historical accounts or as mere metaphorical *ex post facto* fables, concluding that Caesar's indifference to them provides strong evidence that he had lost the will to live is wildly unreasonable.

Caesar's dismissal of rumors of assassination intrigues also provides scant evidence that he subconsciously welcomed his death. Always uncommonly prideful, Caesar exuded arrogance throughout his final days. What mere mortal would presume to murder the Ultimate Roman? Why, even simple fools could perceive that Caesar's death would invite, nay necessitate, a civil war vastly more destructive to the republic than the one just concluded. (Here Caesar may have overestimated the perspicacity of senate aristocrats or underestimated their distinctively Roman need to assert and avenge themselves or exaggerated the narcotic effects of his own charismatic presence.) Of course, Caesar understood aristocratic opposition to his designs and the traditional Roman antipathy to monarchy. However, he was soon to undertake the greatest military campaign of all time, underwritten by a glowing prophesy from the Sibylline Books. Sure, there were boisterous, swaggering blowhards, who, when fueled with drink or energized by mutual reinforcement, would bray their pathetic schemes of treachery, revenge, and recrimination. These bad boys were merely feckless, aristocratic peacocks—what we might now call reifiers of "alligators' mouths and hummingbirds' asses." Caesar was too important for salutary Roman well-being to take rumors and speculation of conspiracy seriously.

Furthermore, Caesar's developed nature resisted the seductions of safety, caution, and meek vigilance. Why should he, could he even, upon reaching the pinnacle of Roman power, now degenerate into a frightened rabbit, skulking around corners and venturing from his residence only when protected by a cohort of armed men? He was Caesar for Jove's sake! His military and political reputation was grounded in demonstrated foresight, exquisite timing, reading the opposition, aggressiveness, confounding expectations, assuming extraordinary risk, and seizing the moment. Caesar's settled dispositions, cultivated over decades of highly contested zero-sum ventures, coalesced uncomfortably with timidity and even additional prudence.

Yes, he had granted clemency to men of robust will to power whose first-order desires were not dissimilar to his own. Stalwarts such as Cassius, Brutus, and, a cluster of others, unlike the obstreperous Cato, who committed suicide rather than heel under Caesar's boot, had accepted his largesse and benefited subsequently. Surely, they now recognized, under basic principles of *clientela*, that their well-being and that of Caesar's were intertwined. To murder Caesar was to undermine themselves and to jeopardize Rome. Were they prepared to engage in another civil war, one more devastating to the republic than the one recently consummated?

(Here Caesar underestimated the narrowness of the aristocratic vision. The conservatives in the senate equated their class interests with the well-being of Rome. They empathized little or not at all with the well-being of the overwhelming number of slaves and peasants in Rome and assumed obtusely that the lower classes somehow identified with aristocratic prerogatives.)

In sum, such plausible, even formidable, arguments counter those advanced in support of the conclusion that Caesar's will to power whimpered toward the end and he was prepared to die compliantly. Given our distance in time from the events at issue and the intrusion of our biases, conclusive proof on this matter is unavailable. Again, my romantic proclivities lure me into portraying Caesar, the Ultimate Roman, as flaunting staunch will to power right to his earthly end. Although he failed as all human beings must, he died as he lived. We will be fortunate to do as well.

Evaluations of Caesar

As he was an archetype of both the diabolical and the sublime, we could anticipate divergent historical evaluations of Caesar. Following are a few examples of the assessments of prominent thinkers, two of whom are subjects of this work, who have carefully reviewed the events surrounding Caesar's murder.

In his *Commedia*, Dante Alighieri (1265–1321) places Brutus and Cassius in the lowest rung of hell, where their torsos are munched on eternally by two of Satan's mouths (I 34.61–69). The third mouth is devoted to chewing on

Judas Iscariot, betrayer of Christ. Dante places Caesar among the virtuous pagans. Dante's evaluation typifies the approach in medieval writings.

Why, though, does Dante consign Brutus and Cassius to the lowest rung in hell? Even if we grant that the assassination of Caesar was morally unjustified, placing these Romans together with the ignoble Judas seems unwarranted.

For Dante, the establishment of a universal political monarchy, under the aegis of Rome, was crucial for human flourishing. He came to adopt what I call the Principle of Dual Governance: the Church, with the pope as its head, embodies absolute spiritual authority but should refrain from interfering with or aspiring to control the secular, temporal order, while rightful temporal authority requires an emperor invested with absolute political power, a ruler who resists the allure of meddling into spiritual matters. Each of these rulers, then, should attend only to his own legitimate sphere of influence and each is, according to Dante, divinely confirmed.[54]

Dante bristles violently at human sins that jeopardize temporal and religious communities: such transgressions set back the entire human race. A universal human community under a single emperor is required for peace; world peace is required for the human species to attain its highest knowledge; and attaining the highest knowledge is required for earthly and eternal fulfillment. Rightly or wrongly, Dante saw Julius Caesar as the inaugurator of the requisite polity and thus flushed with divine imprimatur.

Judas, after accepting gratuities from his Lord, betrayed his patron in the most compatible fashion. For his part, Judas destroyed the spiritual monarch. Brutus and Cassius, after petitioning for, and receiving, Caesar's clemency and subsequently currying his favors, assassinated their benefactor. For their part, Brutus and Cassius destroyed the secular monarch. The magnitude of their offenses against human and spiritual communities, their shocking ingratitude toward their benefactors, and the callousness of their fraudulent betrayals cannot be denied. Accordingly, for Dante, the three merit their lowly designation in the sinners' hall of shame.

Later, with the growing influence of Plutarch and Shakespeare, and a rethinking of regicide, Brutus was no longer viewed as an ungrateful traitor who had betrayed his benefactor. He became the noble Roman who abrogated personal allegiance and risked everything for honor and country.[55] But even Plutarch, who was generally favorably disposed to Brutus, understood that monarchy was the inevitable development in Rome and that Caesar was a relatively mild autocrat when compared to historical tyrants and those of his day.[56]

One the most important political and cultural leaders of Renaissance Florence, Coluccio Salutati (1331–1406), in his *De Tyranno*, echoed Dante's conclusion. Caesar was not a tyrant because the defective way he rose to power was cleansed by the people's acceptance of his rule and by his reason-

able reforms. Salutati insists that Caesar's assailants, "not lawfully, but by abuse of law, laid accursed hands upon the father of their country. [They] sinned against the state in the most serious and damnable way possible by kindling the rage and fury of civil war in a peaceful community."[57]

Not everyone agreed with Dante and Salutati. Consider the summary of Robert Miola:

> Caesar evoked the full spectrum of Renaissance opinion and so did his assassination. Salutati, for example, praised Caesar as "the father of his country and benignant ruler of the world" and justified Dante's consignment of the traitors Brutus and Cassius to the lowest circle of hell. Suarez, however, condemned Caesar as a usurper of sovereign power "through violence and tyranny," lauded the assassination, and seconded Cicero's praise of Brutus and Cassius's courage. The medieval John of Salisbury and the late Renaissance John Milton, like many others, took a position between the extremes: both recognized that Caesar unlawfully assumed power and in so doing acted the part of a tyrant; but both expressed regret about the assassination, respecting Caesar's virtues and showing ambivalence toward Brutus and Cassius.[58]

Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) is remarkably contemptuous of Caesar. With other members on his list of failed statesmen, he typically mentions the brutal effectiveness of their efforts or their military *virtù* (understood as excellence) even though his overall evaluation is decidedly negative. With Caesar, Machiavelli is unsparingly critical. The only positive remark about Caesar, despite his undeniable prowess as a warrior and military strategist, in *The Prince* and *The Discourses* is that he used the money of others wisely—Caesar plundered and pillaged his military victims and used that money prodigally instead of squandering his own wealth or that of the Romans (P 16). In fairness, Machiavelli does examine Caesar's military *virtù* in *The Art of War* and remarks favorably on his capability of enduring hardships and willingness to lead his men into battle and fight with them (AW I 34; II 55–56; III 96; IV 111, 120, 123–24; V 146–47; VI 175–76, 178–79; VII 201, 211).

Machiavelli contrasts the tyrannical Caesar with the civic-minded Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus; he chastises those who have been mesmerized by Caesar's power and apparent success; he sneers at Caesar as an evildoer; as the destroyer of Rome; as the man who placed the yoke of slavery on the necks of Romans, while blinding the people to that reality; he labels Caesar a tyrant who exploited the corruption of the people for his own benefit; he depicts Caesar as a man who greedily abused the office of dictator by extending the term of that office without authorization from the people (D I 10; D I 17; D I 29; D I 34; AW I 17). In contrast to warriors and politicians who channel their personal ambition to found or reform states in the long-term interests of the common good, Machiavelli concludes that Caesar was a rabid

opportunist who drove the final nail of tyranny into a corrupt republic and was the precipitating cause of the excesses of the subsequent Roman Empire. Although I am convinced that his indictment is distorted and misleading, Machiavelli derides Caesar mercilessly as a paradigmatic tyrant.[59]

Thomas Gordon (1692–1750), a Scot, published, along with John Trenchard (1662–1723), *The Independent Whig*, a weekly periodical. From 1720 to 1723, Trenchard and Gordon wrote a series of 144 essays titled *Cato's Letters*, excoriating the corruption and the lack of values within the British political system, and warning against tyranny. Gordon championed Brutus as "perhaps the most amiable character, the most accomplished man, that ever the world saw." He gushed that Brutus was "animated by a most sublime and glorious spirit of value and liberty, while Caesar was "one of the greatest robbers and murderers that ever lived."[60] Eighteenth-century America and France, both engaged in casting off monarchies, also looked to Brutus for inspiration. The past two centuries continued the debate with Brutus depicted as everything from the eternal paradigm of patriot and freedom-fighter to a feckless romantic whose self-absorption brought calamity upon his people, and Caesar portrayed as everything from the symbol of progressive democracy to an avaricious power monger obsessed with his own glory at all costs.

What accounts for such radically divergent assessments of Caesar? Most important are the fears and hopes of evaluators at the time of their assessments. In a society pervaded or threatened by political authoritarianism the seductions of republican virtues resonate loudly. *Cognoscenti* are unlikely to view Caesar's avaricious crusade for military and political glory favorably. The sirens of freedom will dull Caesar's luster. In a society comfortable in its freedom and secure in its democratic traditions, mixed reviews are likely to follow. Some will judge Caesar deficient on the usual grounds, while others will appreciate, even if begrudgingly, his animating spirit, his will to power.

Another critical factor is how closely critics attend to the reality, not merely the rhetoric, of the Roman republic. Cleansed by the soothing vapors of retrospective falsification, the Roman republic unfolds as a resplendent blossom of political checks and balances, a foreshadowing of exemplary shared governance realized centuries later. In fact, the grandiosity of the Roman republic of Caesar's time withers when challenged by immanent critique: its practice cascaded dismally beneath its rhetoric. Supported by immense numbers of slaves, exploited provincials, and impoverished peasants, the beneficiaries of the republic were a carefully circumscribed breed.

Once Caesar seized power, the senate aristocrats correctly perceived Caesar as a threat to their political prerogatives. He had squashed the authority of the senate while advancing to a limited but discernible degree the interests of small farmers, debtors, and urban workers. The *optimates* were convinced that such reforms came at their expense. The call for republican liberty, which resonates so sweetly in our ears today, was in the practices of the late

Roman republic a euphemism for aristocratic privilege. Under cover of lofty appeals to the "common good" and "traditions of our fathers," the *optimates* and their cohorts luxuriated in class advantage. Michael Parenti captures the reality of the late republic incisively:

> These same "constitutionalists" [such as Cicero] swindled public lands from small farmers (in violation of the law), plundered the provinces like pirates, taxed colonized peoples into penury, imposed back-breaking rents on rural and urban tenants, lacerated debtors with usurious interest rates, expanded the use of slave labor at the expense of free labor, manipulated auspices to stymie popular decisions, resisted even the most modest reforms, bought elections, undermined courts and officeholders with endless bribery, and repeatedly suspended the constitution in order to engage in criminal acts.[61]

The care with which appraisers scrutinize the social and political realities of the late republic will greatly influence their conclusions about the main agents of that day. So, too, will their understanding of tyranny direct their perceptions of Caesar's reign.

What are the benchmarks of tyranny? Show-trials, random executions, death squads, systematic torture of political opponents, abuse of human rights, strict censorship, restrictions on emigration and travel, no or sham elections of public officials, complete and unlawful power vested in one ruler, dynastic aspirations, and careful seclusion of the tyrant from citizens—these are the lesions of tyranny.[62] Philosophy recognizes rulers who are tyrannical in how they attained power and those who are tyrannical in how they wield power, and those who are defective in both respects. Was Caesar a tyrant? Or do we entertain that notion because he was slain in the name, if not the substance, of liberty?

Salutati argues that although Caesar's title to rule was defective because its source was unconstitutional violence, his administration brought order and stability to Rome. Events had conspired against continued republican government: the rule of one man was inevitable; even Cicero acknowledged that in his more reflective moments. The senate and the people lavished numerous and continual honors upon Caesar, underscoring both their explicit and implicit acceptance of his authority. More strikingly, the precise people who conspired against and murdered Caesar were happily disposed to accept his favors: Junius Brutus, Cassius, Decimus Brutus, and most of the other assassins had petitioned for and had received clemency after military defeat or significant political office or public honors without worry that their benefits were tainted by the soiled hands of tyranny. Decimus gained the rule of Cisalpine Gaul; Gaius Trebonius was assigned Asia; Tillius Cimber was assigned Bithynia; Marcus Brutus and Cassius were appointed senior and junior praetors, respectively. Conspirators all, they gobbled up their privi-

leged positions without even a murmur of protest about the authority of their benefactor.

Also, after the assassination, all of Caesar's decrees and every plan he had committed to writing were confirmed by the senate. If Caesar was so manifestly a tyrant would such an endorsement follow his death? Would so much public mourning have accompanied his passing? Would the conspirators have encountered so much resistance after their supposedly liberating deed?[63]

> What did [Cicero] find lacking in the perpetual dictatorship of Caesar which the conquered could ask for? Was it not a protection to the defeated and a bridle upon the victors? His dictatorship ruined no one, but on the contrary preserved the lives and the fortunes of many. It was a protection to the timid, a restraint upon the cruel, safety for all and a glory to the chief. The public welfare increased daily, and already the conquerors and the conquered were being set upon an equal level of honor and service.[64]

Salutati's description of Caesar's administration is overly sanguine and one-sided, but he makes some reasonable points. Yes, Caesar came to power without constitutional warrant: he defeated Pompey's forces and seized political command. Contrary to Salutati's conclusion, whatever honors and offices the senate conferred upon him were tainted by the implicit threat of force and Caesar's expansion of the senate with loyalists. Upon his military triumph, Caesar, in theory, might have had himself declared dictator for six months, restored social order, then relinquished all political power. But he was convinced that the former political arrangements—which rested so tediously upon sentimental appeals to tradition, delusions that strong senatorial power benefited everyone, and manipulations of religious superstitions—had exhausted themselves. Caesar would have also undoubtedly believed that social order in Rome could not have been restored within six months. The senate was feckless and self-serving; the masses spewed forth a gaggle of conflicting claims and counterclaims; and the relatively small middle class was preoccupied with commerce. In his mind, Caesar was merely fulfilling his destiny. True, this was conveniently self-validating, but not unreasonable.

Yes, Caesar also wielded power in a few respects reminiscent of tyranny: he appointed numerous public officials; elections were either skirted or pro forma; and he controlled political power in Rome. He indisputably functioned as sole sovereign; he was certainly an autocrat. But he avoided the worst abuses that characterize tyrannies. The masses of Romans were somewhat better off economically under Caesar, although they lost the genuine right to vote for most public officials. The aristocracy in Rome was somewhat worse off economically under Caesar, but still prospered. They were, though, significantly worse off politically as Caesar eviscerated the privileges of the senate. The small middle class was somewhat better off econom-

ically under Caesar but had greater opportunity to attain public office even though elections were limited. At his death, Caesar's generosity to citizens was manifest and contrasted starkly to the avarice that most unadulterated tyrants embodied. Can we imagine Josef Stalin or Idi Amin, upon death, dispersing a large part of their fortunes to all their citizens equally? Would villains of their stature have ever shown mercy to vanquished foes in a civil war? Would they have ever eschewed proscriptions and purges for the sake of reconciliation?

Moreover, Caesar felt no need to isolate himself from the people; he was not the typical tyrant, surrounded by bodyguards and justifiably suspicious and fearful of the treacheries of the masses. He was easier to murder because his precautions were faint. Caesar had not tried to instill monolithic thinking through repression; he had rejected terror as a political bludgeon; he had extended mercy to countless military opponents; he refused to cower in the wake of gossip, rumor, and speculation; and he neither used informers nor tracked down alleged subversives.[65]

In the classical philosophies of Plato, Aristotle, and Polybius, monarchy—in contrast to tyranny—was classified as one of the good political structures. Even Cicero, following his philosophical ancestors, accepted this designation. None of the theorists mentioned thought monarchy was the best form of government except for Plato: in the theoretically possible, but practically impossible, situation where one person is overwhelmingly superior to all others in moral virtue and philosophical insight, then that person should rule supremely.

Caesar had seized power unconstitutionally. To call him a tyrant in arrival is fair. To call him a tyrant in political practice is contestable. In terms of truncating or limiting the elections of public officials, in claiming full political power, and in governing with the form but not substance of law, he begins with the common indicia of all tyrants. But considering the counter-indicators sketched above, he falls far short of the paradigm. Whether his actions, on balance, deflated the common good is also highly disputable. A strong case can be made that the alleged common good that preexisted Caesar benefited only (or stunningly disproportionately) the aristocrats. Caesar's reforms benefited in substance more people than did the preexisting "common good," although some political rights of all people withered away under Caesar.

Cicero's evaluation of the dead Caesar in his *Second Philippic*, although taking him to task for dismantling the republic, cites numerous examples of his excellences:

> In him, there was genius, calculation, memory, letters, industry, thought, diligence; he had done in war things, however calamitous to the State, yet at least great; having for many years aimed at a throne, he had by great labour, great

> dangers, achieved his object; by shows, buildings, largesses, banquets he had conciliated the ignorant crowd; his own followers he had bound to him by rewards, his adversaries by a show of clemency; in brief, he had already brought to a free community—partly by fear, partly by endurance—a habit of servitude.[66]

Caesar's greatest failings sprung from his highest excellences. Having been weaned on traditional Roman values, Caesar's unparallel success in achieving military and political victories, often against daunting odds and always after combating frightening perils, manifested and amplified his robust will to power. Once he consolidated political authority, remained in Rome, and luxuriated in past conquest, his first-order desires degenerated and his second-order drive to fulfill them withered. He became the unwitting collaborator in his own destruction. Mere celebrity, superfluous fame, vacuous honors, and material accumulation, all unencumbered by merit, stormed unimpeded into Caesar's chamber. He became vulnerable to flatterers, grovelers, and sycophants. The trifling glitter of glory, not the value of its normative moorings, surfaced as his false idol. Ironically, his own magnificent success was turning against him. Horror of horrors, he was transmuting into a reflection of the worst specimens of the aristocratic senate: mentally flaccid, deplorably needy, wretchedly pretentious, and endlessly self-promoting. Instinctively, he reacted to his degeneration. Caesar hatched the biggest score of all, a gaudy military campaign that would free him from the debauchery of Rome and reenergize his will to power. Caesar would once again be Caesar and perhaps even more. His defiant struggle with his internal demons and insurmountable chase of perfection could continue. Caesar would once again sneer contemptuously at the murky, unconquered tandem, Father Time and the Grim Reaper. But then arrived the Ides of March and he could not.

CONCLUSION

Caesar was the Ultimate Roman because he best represents the system of traditional Roman values. Like that system, he contained within himself the seeds of his own destruction. Roman upper-class social life was grounded in *mos maiorum* celebrating freedom, personal dignity and status, and competitive victory, girded within a zero-sum psychology, all within an unrepentant, rigid aristocratism. Earlier in Rome's history, these values resonated in motivating the overthrow of tyrants, the defense of the city from invading opportunists, and the extension of civil liberties.

As Rome conquered other regions it at once amplified the prerogatives of its upper classes while denying several benefits of robust human life to its vanquished foes, as well as its own underclasses: precisely that freedom, independence, and status it sought for itself. As such, the success of the

Roman republic as it expanded its sphere of influence both validated and scorned its own values. More precisely, the results of that success simmered the internal tensions within the Roman value system. How could Rome venerate freedom, independence, and human dignity while oppressing provincials and domestic underclasses? How could Rome moderate the power of military generals whose victories energized the expansion that brought it higher glory? Is not the logical and empirical outcome of *mos maiorum* the emergence of a greatest victor who must then claim supremacy? Was not even domestic tranquility grounded in military supremacy, not the authority of the senate? Had not the race for glory also promoted violence, corruption, and class warfare within Rome itself?

For decades, Rome, and Caesar on the micro-level, could juggle the internal contradictions of this value system. But ongoing expansion of its sphere of influence could only delay the inevitable explosion of civil war. When Caesar's grandnephew, Octavian, emerged supreme after the civil war that arose at Caesar's murder, the hardy republic had expired. Octavian cleverly anointed himself *Princeps Civitatis* ("First Citizen"), not dictator for life and certainly not king. Octavian reigned as sole sovereign but permitted the ersatz trappings of the republic. Unlike Julius Caesar, he relished administrative activities and wisely avoided gratuitously humiliating the aristocratic conservatives. Territorial expansion continued, and the first phase of the Roman Empire prospered.

Why did so many people and cultures peer back at Rome when founding, preserving, or reimagining their polities? The glories of Rome, real and imagined, flowing from the incandescent fires of the republic and the empire, would serve as the towering benchmark by which future Italians, especially, would be measured. Dante, Machiavelli, Garibaldi, and all the rest, exasperated by intractable factionalism within and between city-states, ineffectual intermeddling by the Church, unscrupulous intrusions by foreign nations, and ephemeral alliances, would invariably soften their fears and invigorate their aspirations by recalling the excellences of Rome. If once we were Romans so, too, can we be again. Yes, paramnesia would too frequently cloud their historical reconstructions. But Rome was an eternal archetype of preeminence. And as probably first articulated by the Roman historian and senator Tacitus in the first century and popularized almost two millennia later by Count Galeazzo Ciano and John F. Kennedy, "Victory has one hundred fathers, and defeat is an orphan." The Romans strike many as the abiding hallmark of political and military distinction. Caesar, his contemporaries, forebearers, and immediate successors—sometimes for better and sometimes for worse—continue to escort visionaries as they craft civic innovations and administer international affairs. Roman values, virtues, and vices, weightier than those of ordinary human beings, endure.

NOTES

1. To construct the vignettes of Caesar's life I consulted the following: Plutarch, *The Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans*, trans. John Dryden; ed. and rev. Arthur Hugh Clough, vol. 2 (New York: Modern Library, 1992); Luciano Canfora, *Julius Caesar* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Adrian Goldsworthy, *Caesar* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); Michael Parenti, *The Assassination of Julius Caesar* (New York: New Press, 2004); Michael Grant, *Julius Caesar* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1969); J. F. C. Fuller, *Julius Caesar* (New Brunswick, NJ: Da Capo Press, 1965); Matthias Gelzer, *Caesar: Politician and Statesman* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); Arthur D. Kahn, *The Education of Julius Caesar* (Lincoln: iUniverse.com.Inc., 2000); and Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, trans. Catharine Edwards (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
2. Neal Wood, *Cicero's Social & Political Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 16–17.
3. Ibid., 16.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., 16–17.
6. Ibid., 17.
7. Ibid., 18.
8. Ibid., 17.
9. Jules Gleicher, "On Plutarch's Life of Caesar," *Interpretation* 29 (2002): 266.
10. Plutarch, *Lives*, 199.
11. Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Brutus: History of Famous Orators*, trans. Hubert M. Poteat; introduction Richard McKeon (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950), sec. 260–62.
12. Plutarch, *Lives*, 201.
13. Historians critical of Cicero's role in the Cataline conspiracy are less sanguine: "Modern and ancient interpretations have been heavily influenced by Cicero's own versions of events, which sought first to demonize and exaggerate the threat, then to sing his own praises and sometimes to justify summary executions which later returned to haunt him and even drove him briefly into exile." Greg Woolf, *Et tu, Brute?* (London: Profile Books, Ltd., 2006), 28. See also Parenti, *Assassination*, 85–111.
14. Plutarch, *Lives*, 206.
15. Ibid., 202.
16. Cicero, *Brutus*, sec. 260–62.
17. Keith Fairbank, "Caesar's Portrait of 'Caesar,'" in *The Landmark Julius Caesar: The Complete Works, Web Essays*, ed. and trans. Kurt A. Raaflaub (New York: Pantheon Books, 2017), 218.
18. Ibid.
19. Gleicher, "On Plutarch's Life," 272.
20. Grant, *Julius Caesar*, 82.
21. Ibid., 84, 85, xi, xii.
22. Tom Holland, *Rubicon* (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 271.
23. Ibid., 272.
24. Plutarch, *Lives*, 226.
25. Ibid., 227.
26. Nathan Rosenstein, "General and Imperialist," in *A Companion to Julius Caesar*, ed. Miriam T. Griffin (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell Publishers, 2015), 94–95.
27. Gaius Julius Caesar, "Civil War," in *The Landmark Julius Caesar: The Complete Works*, ed. and trans. Kurt A. Raaflaub (New York: Pantheon Books, 2017), 3.92.
28. Fuller, *Julius Caesar*, 324.
29. Plutarch, *Lives*, 230.
30. Kahn, *Education*, 404.
31. Parenti, *Assassination*, 149–54; Mary T. Boatwright, Daniel J. Gagola, and Richard J. A. Talbert, *The Romans: From Village to Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 236–37, 254–61.
32. Kahn, *Education*, 416.

33. Ibid., 430.
34. Boatwright, Gagola, and Talbert, *Romans*, 264.
35. Grant, *Julius Caesar*, 150.
36. Sallust, *Catiline's War, The Jugurthine War, Histories*, trans. with an introduction by A. J. Woodman (London: Penguin Books, 2007), 54.2–54.5.
37. Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, trans. Rolfe Humphries (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), 3.55–58; Kahn, *Education*, 441–42.
38. Gelzer, *Caesar*, 333.
39. Woolf, *Et tu, Brute*, xiv–xv, 49.
40. Friedrich Nietzsche, of course, is the thinker most closely identified with invoking will to power as the fundamental drive of life. Precisely what he intended by advancing, or at least by entertaining, that position has been and remains an issue of scholarly dispute. See, for example, Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 4th ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974); Maudemarie Clark, *Nietzsche: On Truth and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Bernard Reginster, *The Affirmation of Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Ivan Soll, "Nietzsche's Will to Power as a Psychological Thesis," *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 43, no. 1 (2012): 118–29; Raymond Angelo Belliotti, *Nietzsche's Will to Power: Eagles, Lions, and Serpents* (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishers, 2017). I would argue that Nietzsche's description of his overman in his unpublished notebooks as "A Roman Caesar with Christ's soul" is instructive. *The Will to Power* (from unpublished notebooks, 1883–1888), ed. Walter Kaufmann; trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Random House, 1967), 983.
41. Belliotti, *Nietzsche's Will to Power*, 163–66.
42. Although Nietzsche suggests that all living entities have will to power, my purposes do not require addressing that issue. My analysis is restricted to only human will to power.
43. Raymond Angelo Belliotti, *Roman Philosophy and the Good Life* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 160–77.
44. Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, trans. Catharine Edwards (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 86, 87.
45. Plutarch, *Lives*, 239.
46. Ibid., 575.
47. M. L. Clarke, *The Noblest Roman* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), 21.
48. Anthony Everitt, *Cicero* (New York: Random House, 2001), 220–21.
49. Plutarch, *Lives*, 577.
50. Clarke, *Noblest Roman*, 56.
51. Fuller, *Julius Caesar*, 302–3.
52. Plutarch, *Lives*, 236.
53. Ibid.
54. See, for example, Raymond Angelo Belliotti, *Dante's Inferno: Moral Lessons from Hell* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).
55. Woolf, *Et tu, Brute*, 169–70.
56. Clarke, *Noblest Roman*, 81.
57. Coluccio Salutati, "De Tyranno," in *Humanism and Tyranny*, ed. Ephraim Emerton (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1925), 101, 110.
58. Robert S. Miola, "Julius Caesar and the Tyrannicide Debate," *Renaissance Quarterly* 38 (Summer 1985): 272.
59. Raymond Angelo Belliotti, *Machiavelli's Secret: The Soul of the Statesman* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015), 124–25.
60. Clarke, *Noblest Roman*, 98.
61. Parenti, *Assassination*, 193–94.
62. Woolf, *Et tu, Brute*, 54.
63. Salutati, "De Tyranno," 93–105.
64. Ibid., 106.
65. Kahn, *Education*, 452.
66. Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Philippics*, trans. Walter C. A. Ker (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1938), 2.116.

Chapter Two

Dante Alighieri (1265–1321)

The Florentine Visionary

Although born about thirteen centuries after Caesar's death, Dante Alighieri was deeply influenced by ancient Roman values in the context of Florentine aspirations. The Roman enjoinder to earn deserved, enduring glory as a way of attaining secular immortality resonated within Dante. The Roman quest for glorious self-affirmation fueled much of his earthly labor and consolidated effortlessly with the predominate Florentine pursuit of honors, offices, and recognition. However, the Christian admonitions in Jesus's Sermon on the Mount, where love, humility, and earning eternal salvation obliterate the values of earthly power, mastery, and reputation, subverted pagan Rome's veneration of and prescription for making oneself immortal: "*m'insegnavate come l'uom s'etterna*" (I 15.85). These conflicting values constitute much of the inner tumult that define Dante's earthly struggle. Ultimately, the Florentine embraced the way of the Lord passionately. Perhaps cunningly or at least therapeutically, Dante mollified his internal unrest by producing great art wherein he chronicled his spiritual transformation, thereby meriting both secular immortality and divine salvation. Maybe a Christian-Platonic apprehension of love and a secular understanding of honor could be mutually sustaining after all. On this possibility, Dante Alighieri staked his existence.

BIOGRAPHICAL HIGHLIGHTS

Dante was possessed of large eyes, a long face, extended jaw, protruding underlip, curved nose, and dark complexion. Average in height, he strode with a bent, serious, but easy gait. Dante had black, curly hair that framed his

contemplative, sorrowful expression. Sartorially, he donned conservative yet distinctive vestments. Orderly, courteous, polished, taciturn, and abstemious, Dante was well acquainted with solitude.[1]

In reading the accounts of near contemporaries and later historians, Dante emerges as a serious person, not given to tomfoolery or to suffering nitwits amicably. For example, the historian Giovanni Villani (1276–1328), after extolling Dante's talents, also identifies his dispositional shortcomings, which he connects to generic infirmities besetting poets and philosophers.

> It is true that [Dante] in this *Commedia* delighted to denounce and to cry out after the manner of poets, perhaps in certain places more than was fitting; but maybe his exile was the cause of this. . . . Dante, because of his knowledge, was somewhat haughty and reserved and disdainful, and after the fashion of a philosopher, careless of graces and not easy in his converse with laymen.[2]

The adage that upon reaching middle age people earn the face they tote does not apply to Dante. His apparently dour, forbidding countenance belies the passion that burned within. Dante had an exalted sense of destiny; he was a self-anointed prophet who was often convinced that his words were divinely consecrated. He recognized arrogance and lust as his most grievous shortcomings but struggled mightily with each. He encased a heightened vulnerability that was at once his greatest gift and cause of his most profound torment. Thus, Marco Santagata explains:

> [Dante] had a strong feeling of being different, [he] interpreted illnesses and personal events over the years as signs that marked out his uniqueness, [he] felt the hand of destiny in the death of a woman he loved, [he] claimed to have visionary powers . . . and conceived a poem whose structure, from the outset, included a strong prophetic component . . . a feeling of inadequacy was transformed into an overwhelming need for self-affirmation: egocentricity is an indelible characteristic of Dante's writing.[3]

After gushing about Dante's fortitude, intelligence, and learnedness, among numerous other excellences, Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–1375) notes Dante's shortcomings:

> He longed most ardently for honor and glory, perhaps more than befitted his illustrious virtue. . . . [Dante] was of a very lofty and proud disposition . . . as people of his day report, he did not consider himself of lesser worth than he truly was. . . . [He spoke as] though he alone among all the others [who might serve as legates to Pope Boniface VIII] had any worth, or gave any worth to the rest. . . . [L]ust found an ample place not only in the years of his youth but also of his maturity.[4]

Dante was, indisputably, a genius. His poetry exudes a breathtaking array of learning: biblical allusions, philosophical exegeses, theological analyses, classical mythology, historical references, biographical vignettes of ancient, contemporary, and fictional figures all intermingle cozily. As a scion of Roman values seasoned by Florentine cynicism and sectarianism, Dante burned with a quest for glory and honor, a boundless appetite to earn iconic status in the human pantheon. Yet, he accepted that the meek would inherit the earth. Two polarities, then, defined his earthly skirmishes and hectored his internal life: the arrogance of a gifted intellectual versus the humility of a servant of God; the lustful wayfarer of sensuality and merited recognition versus the pilgrim aspiring for eternal life. Unsurprisingly, his was not a life of serenity.

Birth, Education, and Family

Dante Alighieri was born in 1265 in Florence. Florence was among the wealthiest and most populous European cities, comprised of around one hundred thousand citizens. A center of commerce revolving around a thriving banking industry, as well as the manufacture of leather, wool, fur, and silk, Florence also promoted the arts and intellectualism. Beset by recurring social and political strife, along with an unbecoming scramble for material aggrandizement, Florence was vibrant, dangerous, and contentious.

His mother died when Dante was a child. His father remarried and died when Dante was about eighteen years old. The Alighieri family was noble in terms of titles, lineage, and tradition. For example, Dante's great-great-grandfather, Cacciaguida, was presumably knighted by Emperor Conrad III. However, by the time of Dante's arrival, the family's fortunes had regressed. Dante's father bore a somewhat questionable reputation; he apparently profited from land rentals in the areas surrounding Florence and dabbled in usury.

The Alighieri family was politically identified with the *guelfo* (Guelf Party), who were composed of artisans and lesser nobility and aligned with the Papacy. Their major opponents were the *ghibellino* (Ghibelline Party), composed of feudal aristocrats aligned with the Holy Roman Emperor. As time and events proceeded, these compositions and alignments were less distinguishable. Local loyalties, rivalries, and private maneuvering loomed larger than party platforms and traditional ideologies.

Dante enjoyed a pleasant family life and an apparently solid education. Dante suffered from bouts of fever and fainting, possibly due to epilepsy, although this is a matter of scholarly dispute. Dante likely studied in Franciscan elementary schools and later in that order's schools of philosophy.

Dante also probably studied with or was a protégé of the renowned scholar and statesman, Brunetto Latini (1220–1294), who energized Dante's thirst for knowledge (I 15). Brunetto was a Florentine paradigm, a staunch advo-

cate of republican independence, who served as a notary; as a prime agent for over a decade in the *Primo Popolo* (the party of "the common people," that had seized control of Florence at the Battle of Figline in 1250); as a foreign ambassador; and as a scribe, judge, teacher, diplomat, poet, and philosopher.[5]

In 1260, Florentine Ghibellines, led by Farinata degli Uberti, defeated the Florentine Guelphs at the Battle of Montaperti. The social and political climate in Latini's beloved homeland was no longer suitable for passionate Guelphs. Brunetto remained in exile for almost six years in France, during which time he composed most of the literary works that comprise his historical legacy—what would earn him enduring posthumous glory. Among these are *Li Livres dou Trésor* (*The Books of the Treasure*), an encyclopedic summary and commentary of classical learning, written in French; *Il Tesoretto* (*The Little Treasure*), an allegorical poem composed in Italian that anticipates much of the setting and context of Dante's *Commedia*, and *La Rettorica* (*Rhetoric*), an Italian translation and exposition of Cicero's *De Inventione* (a handbook for orators).

Dante attributed to Brunetto several crucial dimensions of his education: that riches and lineage are poor substitutes for individual achievement and virtuous living; that effective rhetoric, robust ethical thinking, and progressive government are connected; that teaching and learning have critical practical effects; and that human beings are finite, but can attain a measure of earthly immortality through spiritual nobility and the creation of enduring works. The notion that the most distinguished human beings would earn enduring glory through the ongoing celebration of their achievements and good deeds on earth was deeply influential in ancient Rome. Whether a senator and philosopher, such as Cicero, or a militarist and powerful statesman, such as Julius Caesar, the Romans were convinced that grand achievement on behalf of the community earned a person a glorious legacy that defined earthly immortality. Brunetto learned this from assiduously studying the writings of Cicero and he passed on the lessons to Dante.

Dante would come to view the wisdom of the leader of a healthy, universal commonwealth as the greatest guide to attaining earthly happiness in analogy to how the word of God is the supreme guide to attaining eternal bliss in paradise. Despite or perhaps because of their intense relationship, Brunetto Latini, his glorious accomplishments notwithstanding, tarries restlessly forever among the sodomists in the third ring of the seventh circle of Dante's *Inferno*.[6]

When he was about eighteen, Dante married Gemma di Manetto Donati. The Donati were powerful Guelf aristocrats. As was typical during these times, the marriage arose from political, social, and financial motives. The pairing had been arranged by Dante's father at least six years earlier. The couple produced two sons and a daughter (and, possibly, a fourth child).

In 1287, Dante traveled to the prestigious University of Bologna to study rhetoric and the techniques of style. Dante was drawn to poetry, art, learning, and the nature of love. His friendship with Guido Cavalcanti (1255–1300), an aristocratic poet, animated his early verse writing. The two focused on images of inner human perfection and the nature of love. In the words of Boccaccio, Guido Cavalcanti was

> an exceedingly elegant and rich man of great intelligence who better than any other of our fellow citizens knew how to behave in a courtly manner . . . he was considered in his time to be an excellent logician and a clever philosopher. He was [Dante's] closest friend . . . and a talented poet as well . . . because he esteemed philosophy much more highly than poetry (and rightly so), he held Virgil and other poets in disdain.[7]

Guido gained renown as a poet, logician, and philosopher. He tinkered with arguments designed to prove that God did not exist and gained a reputation as a hedonist.[8] He was an important proponent of *dolce stil novo*, love poetry in Italian vernacular that expanded on the style of French troubadours. Amplifying and refining the techniques of the Sicilian school of poetry, Guido Guinizelli (1230–1276), Cavalcanti, Dante, and to a lesser extent Cino da Pistoia (1270–1336) celebrated idealized, spiritual love and elevated the virtues of women lyrically and delicately.

Described by Dante as his best friend in his *Vita Nuova*, and as an important poetic influence, Guido, a *guelfo bianchi*, married Beatrice degli Uberti in a political alliance facilitating the mutual interests of Guelphs and Ghibellines. In 1300, Guido was, however, exiled from Florence, along with numerous other prominent *bianchi* and *neri*, amid intramural Guelf conflict while Dante was a prior. Guido violently opposed the Donati-led Black Guelfs. Shortly after his exile to Sarzana, Guido died while planning his return to Florence. Santagata observes, "If Guido had played the role of John the Baptist in philosophy in the same way as he had already done in poetry, then Dante was the Messiah he heralded."[9]

As he composed *Inferno*, Dante must have harbored deep guilt about his role in Guido's exile from Florence. Dante and Guido, of course, differed radically on the ultimate end of human beings. Guido was a philosophical Averroist, who denied the immortality of the soul. He defined love in terms of conflict, chaos, disorder, and unbridled passion. Dante viewed love as a way of understanding God to the extent humanly possible.

Colpito dal Fulmine

A greater influence on Dante's life and work was his connection to Beatrice ("Bice") Portinari. She was a Florentine woman of remarkable beauty and goodness. Dante first met her when he was nine and was immediately *colpito*

dal fulmine (struck by lightning). She remained the love of his life, at least in his fantasies. About nine years later, Dante reports that they met again, and they greeted each other in the street; perhaps their paths had crossed at other times; but they apparently enjoyed no serious personal contact. Their shadow relationship was an example of quaint, courtly love, or perhaps Beatrice's attributes were merely figments of Dante's imagination. As years passed, Dante placed Beatrice on higher and higher pedestals, fantasizing her as the ideal of human perfection in virtue, beauty, and grace. Indeed, the youthful Dante took Beatrice to be God's gift to humanity. Dante's idealization of Beatrice brightly supports the proposition that the most powerful erogenous zone is the human brain.

To fulfill his military service, at the age of twenty-four, Dante enlisted in the cavalry. In 1289, he took part in the battle of Campaldino, where Florence and its Guelf allies defeated the forces of the town of Arezzo. The victory gave rise to reformation of the Florentine constitution. Later that year, Dante participated in the successful siege of the Pisan fortress of Caprona. (Both events are chronicled in Dante's *Commedia*: the pilgrim meets Buonconte da Montefeltro, who bravely died at Campaldino, in the fifth canto of *Purgatorio*; in the twenty-first canto of *Inferno*, he recalls the surrender of the fortress of Caprona.)

At some point, perhaps around 1287, Beatrice married Simone dei Bardi, scion of an aristocratic banking family. In 1290, Beatrice died. This event only deepened Dante's idealized love for her. He followed his mourning by compiling numerous poems—some written in her honor, all inspired by her—added commentaries, and called the collection *Vita Nuova* ("New Life"). Dante reports that upon seeing Beatrice nine years after their childhood introduction, his passion deepened. This second encounter is followed by a dream in which the god of love announces his power over Dante (Shades of Francesca in *Inferno*, canto five!).

His passion for Beatrice was not merely erotic desire but pointed him to higher truths inaccessible to reason alone.[10] Reminiscent of Plato's depiction of the ladder of love in his *Symposium*, Dante understood love to have a transformative mission. Among the ancient poets, those highlighted in the fourth canto of the *Inferno*—Homer, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan—were great influences upon Dante. However, Virgil, the master of the *Aeneid*, stands above all others. Dante was enamored of the age of Augustus and Virgil represented the pinnacle of human reason expressed aesthetically through poetry.

Public Service

Florence was a center of political intrigue, treachery, and instability. Serenity, peace, and goodwill toward fellow creatures were unwelcome intrusions

to the established traditions and collective character of Florentines. For the greater part of the thirteenth century, the Guelfs and Ghibellines had jockeyed for power. The temporary victors unleashed stern reprisals against the vanquished. Constant conspiracies, political schemes, and unsteady alliances defined Florentine social life. The Guelfs were in control by 1266 and ruled relatively peacefully for three decades.

In 1293, the effects of wars against Arezzo and Pisa beleaguered Florence. Officials had mismanaged the city's finances and political corruption had become embarrassing, even by Florence's low bar of governmental propriety. A prosperous merchant with noble lineage and deep sympathies for the *popolo* emerged. Giano della Bella promised reform and, unlike the clear majority of those espousing such platforms, he delivered. Giano shepherded ordinances through the political process that (a) precluded from the priorate all those who did not exercise a trade or profession within a guild and (b) established a new post charged with controlling the behavior of the *magnati*.

As is well known, zealous reform can turn easily to wholesale political oppressions. Soon any member of the *magnati* who killed a member of the *popolo* was sentenced to death automatically, forfeited all property claims, and had his home razed. Leeway for mercy and consideration of extenuating circumstances were dismissed. Later, Giano successfully urged another series of provisions that stripped the *magnati* of important political rights. He concocted a list of one hundred fifty families that he dubbed *magnati*. As such, these unfortunate clansmen were excluded from holding prominent political offices. Moreover, each designated member of the *magnati* was forced to swear an oath of obedience and offer security of two thousand lire that he would maintain the peace. Of course, we are not born into the world with member of the "*magnati*" or "*popolo*" etched in our chests. Giano affixed the terms to families and individuals based on socioeconomic station, their relationship to his own political designs, and their perceived usefulness to Florence. Speaking practically, not all nobles could be so easily manipulated (for example, Giano did not mess with the Medici family, who were *über-magnati*).

Newton taught us that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. So, too, with the good intentions and deranged avidity of Giano della Bella. Led by Giano's growing cast of enemies, a political backlash arose: Giano was forced into exile under the wrongful accusation that he had violated his own ordinances and had supported one of the *magnati*, Corso Donati (whom Dante consigns to the terrace of gluttony in the twenty-fourth canto of *Purgatorio*); amendments that softened or invalidated Giano's ordinances were enacted; and the *magnati* were allowed to regain all political rights by merely enrolling (as opposed to actually practicing a craft or profession) in a guild.

In the mid-1290s, Dante entered public service. He first became a member of the Guild of Physicians and Apothecaries. The ancient wisdom of the thirteenth century prescribed that the study of medicine required a solid grounding in philosophy. Dante's choice of this guild was based on his conviction that true nobility flows from philosophical insight and moral understanding ("Until doctors are philosophers or philosophers are doctors."). After securing the *bona fides* of guild affiliation, Dante became a member of the People's Council of the Commune of Florence; he served on the council for the election of city priors and on the Council of the Hundred, which oversaw financial and paramount civic concerns.

But never underestimate the thirteenth-century Florentine zest for political drama. By 1300, the Guelfs, beset by intramural feuding, split into two contentious sects, the *guelfi neri* (Black Guelfs) and the *guelfi bianchi* (White Guelfs). The traditionalist Blacks were led by prosperous bankers whose influence spread over Europe. Most important among these were members of the Donati family. They were committed to Florentine imperialism, through alliance with the papacy, as an avenue to their own—and by extension Florence's—economic well-being. The Whites, who were more sympathetic to certain Ghibelline aspirations, were led by prosperous bankers, merchants, and traders. Most prominent among these were the members of the Cerchi family. They were committed to European peace and Florentine republican independence as required to facilitate trade. In general, the *guelfo neri* were comprised of older families with aristocratic lineage, while the *guelfo bianchi* included families that had only recently acquired wealth and privileged social position.

The Cerchi were wealthy but of undistinguished lineage. Their public displays of wealth were a microcosm of the zeal for material goods infecting Florence. The Donati (one of whom was Dante's wife, Gemma) allied themselves with papal bankers. However, Dante, despite his aversion to the dispositions and mindset of the Cerchi family, would find himself in league with the *guelfo bianchi*. Around June 1300, while serving as a prior, Dante participated in a decision that resulted in the expulsion of a cluster of prominent *neri* and *bianchi*, including Guido Cavalcanti and Corso Donati, a close relative of Dante's spouse.

The Papacy

Dante was fervently championing Florentine republican independence. He was constantly at odds with Pope Boniface VIII, who favored the Black Guelfs because he needed the continuing financial support of the bankers and aspired to place the entire region of Tuscany under the aegis of the Church. Indeed, Boniface was steadfastly committed to advancing the interests of his family and the influence of the Church. Characteristically, the crafty pope

hoped to turn the political instability of Florence to his practical advantage. He pledged religious and political security to all who identified with and aided his imperial aspirations. In 1300, the pope's intrigues were resisted on numerous occasions by six priors (magistrates) of Florence, including Dante. Boniface played his trump card: he excommunicated those who opposed his designs. Dante was given a pass only because his term of service would soon end. (Dante would depict Boniface as a major villain of the era and consign him in the nineteenth canto of the *Inferno* to the eighth circle of hell as a simonist.)

In 1301, Pope Boniface ratcheted up the pressure. He called upon the military forces of Charles of Valois, brother of the King of France, to aid his scheme to control Sicily and to defeat his political opposition in Florence. As the army of Charles neared Florence, Dante was one of three envoys sent to outline the treacheries of the Black Guelfs and to plead with the pope to alter his policies. After preliminary discussions, two of the Florentine envoys were excused; only Dante was detained. Meanwhile, Charles marched into Florence. The Black Guelfs took their cue to revolt and gained control of the city.

Exile and Death

Shortly thereafter, the new power brokers fined Dante in absentia and sentenced him to two years of exile from Florence, and permanent ineligibility from holding public office. Underwriting that sentence were a series of fabricated charges. Dante was declared guilty of everything from taking bribes to embezzlement to extortion to disturbing the peace (and most crimes in between). Attributing his political demise to the connivance of the pope, Dante seethed with anger.

Keenly aware that the fix was in, Dante did not bother to answer the scandalous charges levied against him by his political enemies. Nor did he bother to remit his fine. In 1302, an additional sentence was imposed: if Dante returned to Florence he would be burned alive at the stake. Dante did not immediately renounce hope. He plotted with other Florentine exiles, most of whom were White Guelfs, to return to their native city. But the conspiracy failed.

In 1310, Pope Clement V summoned Emperor Henry VII of Luxembourg and his forces. Henry stormed into Italy with plans to reunite Church and State and establish order and stability. To put it mildly, his enterprise was controversial. By this time convinced that strong secular, imperial guidance was required in Italy, Dante welcomed the overture. However, most Florentines were opposed to the militaristic venture. Despite some early success, the invasion floundered due to the scope of the opposition and because of Pope Clement's weakness and vacillation. (Dante disparages Clement as a minion of King Philip IV of France and relegates him to the eighth circle of

hell with other simonists in the nineteenth canto of the *Inferno*.) In 1313, Henry died near Siena and so did Dante's last best hope of returning to Florence honorably and triumphantly.

In 1315, Florence declared a general amnesty, conditioned on their exiled citizens admitting their guilt, paying a fine, and undergoing a public ritual of repentance, an *oblatio*. Dante, insisting on his innocence, declined the invitation. Florentine officials reaffirmed his death sentence and extended it to his sons. To the best historical knowledge, although Dante made sporadic attempts to regain favor, he would never again enter the beloved city of his birth.

Politically disenfranchised, Dante wandered about Italy accepting temporary refuge from the generosity of numerous prominent families, including those of Moroello Malaspina, Cangrande della Scala, and Guido Novello da Polenta. At various times, he graced, among other locales, Arezzo, Verona, the University of Bologna, Padua, Lunigiana, Casentino, and Ravenna. His political experiences honed his appreciation of community, both religious and political. Heresy destroyed the fabric of religious communities while factionalism shattered political communities. (Dante highlights these themes in the tenth canto of the *Inferno*.) Dante wrote most of his more important works while in exile, carried out a few diplomatic missions on behalf of his patrons, and frequently petitioned for political change through letters to Florentines, church officials, and the Holy Roman Emperor.

Around 1319, a prominent Bolognese professor of literature, Giovanni del Virgilio, invited Dante to return to Bologna to be crowned poet laureate. Dante declined, noting that he would accept this honor only if took place in Florence. At this point, the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* had been circulated among the literary *cognoscenti* and been warmly received, although some, including del Virgilio, wondered why Dante had not composed it in Latin. The correspondence on these matters between the two distinguished thinkers was conducted through poetry in the style of Virgil. For his part, Dante wrote two poems, the *Eclogues*, with pastoral lyrics in Latin hexameter. Giovanni initiated the communication and responded to Dante's first *Eclogue* in like fashion, while ordaining Dante as the second Virgil.

In 1321, Guido Novello da Polenta dispatched Dante to the doge of Venice to arbitrate an ongoing feud. During his return to Ravenna, Dante contracted a fever and died. He was entombed in the church of San Pier Maggiore in Ravenna. Periodically thereafter, Florence, recognizing Dante's literary stature and rising fame, requested that Ravenna return Dante's remains to his native city. Ravenna consistently refused to comply. Fearing Florentine treachery, the Franciscans of Ravenna sequestered Dante's remains in a wall, where they were rediscovered only in 1865. Although his tomb remained empty, Florence added a memorial to Dante in the basilica of Santa Croce in 1828. The inscription reads "*Onorate l'altissimo poeta*"

("Honor the loftiest poet"), a line from Dante's *Inferno*, where the pilgrim interacts with Virgil (I 4.80). In 2008, more than seven centuries after his exile, the city council of Florence passed a motion that nullified Dante's sentence of exile and death. Although many would invoke the adage "justice delayed is justice denied," Dante was finally exonerated of all wrongdoing. Dante's corpse, however, remains in Ravenna. We must assume that the great poet's spirit luxuriates in Empyrean, where Dante relishes posthumous vindication, along with reunification with the divine, eternal apprehension of the beatific vision, and the transcendent love of Beatrice.

MAJOR WORKS

Vita Nuova

In 1290, Beatrice died. This deepened Dante's idealized adoration of her. Mourning the loss of her, he compiled numerous poems, all inspired by her, some written in her honor, added commentaries, and called the collection *Vita nuova*. Dante recounts, invents, and reflects upon his experiences in this celebrated work. The relationship between love and reason is a recurring theme. Although Dante most admires Aristotle as his philosopher of choice, in this work his understanding of love is most reminiscent of Plato's articulation in his *Symposium*. Dante also reflects the influences of Guido Guinizelli, especially when equating the presence of love with a generous, noble heart, and Guido Cavalcanti, although Dante disregards Cavalcanti's references to the angst love often promotes.

Dante recalls how he became a servant of love when, as a nine-year-old, he gazed at eight-year-old Beatrice dressed in red. Granted, scarlet is alluring, but a servant of love? From the vantage point of a jaded adult, even accounting for Beatrice's youthful comeliness and Dante's uncommon sensitivity, to think that a nine-year-old boy could have even an inkling of the intricacies of romantic love strains credibility. Dante was apparently, as a child and throughout his life, a person of unparalleled imagination leavened by acute impressionability.

Throughout the *Vita nuova*, Dante celebrates Beatrice as a divine gift. In the final chapter, he confesses his own inadequacy to articulate the intricacies of love. Dante recognizes that his expansive sentimentality contrasts with the unfathomable perfection of Beatrice the beloved, whose essence transcends her earthly death. Philosophy offers much consolation to his spirit but cannot replace the author's passion for Beatrice. The glories of this world cannot supplant the apprehension of a divine gift (VN 27–42).

The death of Beatrice led Dante to immerse himself in philosophy to deepen his understanding of the nature of human beings, of their prospects for perfection, and of the connection between love and spiritual redemption.

He intellectually devoured the works of Boethius, Cicero, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, and other Christian theologians.

De Vulgari Eloquentia

The date of this work is disputed. Some scholars argue that Dante wrote this treatise in his old age; others date it around 1303 and 1304. *De vulgari eloquentia* is a scholarly analysis of the Italian vernacular composed in Latin. Dante concludes that only exalted subjects, such as love, virtue, and war, are worthy of such a glorious language. Although, as are several other of Dante's literary undertakings, unfinished, *De vulgari eloquentia* is a worthy source of Dante's philosophy of language and poetry.

Aspiring to establish the vernacular as superior to established *gramatica* such as Latin, Dante advances a conceptual analysis of language, followed by a purported history of linguistic advance, beginning from Adam and Eve through the dawn of the multilinguistic period inaugurated by the Tower of Babel to the Italy of his day (DVE 1.2.9). He later argues for the paramount material for lyric poetry: "prowess in arms, ardor in love, and control of one's own will" (DVE 2.2.7), while identifying the poets prominent in each area—Bertran de Born, Arnaut Daniel and Cino da Pistoia, and Giraut de Borneil and himself, respectively.

Steven Botterill describes the two principles informing Dante's evaluations of poetry:

> Dante's evaluation of his own and his contemporaries; poetic practice is based on . . . hierarchy and appropriateness. Some kinds of poem, or line, or style, or construction, or word are simply better (conceptually nobler, rhetorically more effective, technically more difficult) than others. . . . [T]he principle of hierarchy must coexist with that of appropriateness. A word that is right in a canzone may be wrong in a *ballata*, but the converse is also true.[11]

De vulgari eloquentia, unfinished and unpromoted, slumbered for centuries. The first printed edition sprung from the presses in 1577 and was largely ignored. Only a general revival of Dante scholarship in the late twentieth century animated interest.[12]

Convivio

Between 1304 and 1308, several years after his exile from Florence, Dante began the *Convivio*, a treatise designed to celebrate Dante's love for philosophy. In effect, Sophia or Lady Philosophy replaces Beatrice, at least temporarily, as Dante's idealized love. The author speaks autobiographically in his work and deplores the infelicity of his exile from Florence (Conv. 1.3.4; 1.2.13). The transition signals Dante's commitment to move from sensual

passion of another human being, even if an idealized one, to an elevated apprehension of truths required for proper action. Richard Lansing describes the transformation:

> Important as the political element might be, Dante is clearly more concerned with reestablishing himself in the *Convivio* as a poet of moral rectitude, as a mature man who has set aside youthful folly. His motivation now is not *passione*, by which he means amatory passion, but *virtù* ("virtue," 1.2.16). His focus is on the pursuit of philosophical wisdom, idealized in the figure of Lady Philosophy, and the goal of his acquisition of knowledge is earthly happiness.[13]

This work extols learning and the proper use of reason as requisites for attaining virtue and nurturing a proper relationship with God. In the *Convivio*, Dante sketches four dimensions of writing: the literal, the allegorical, the moral, and the anagogical. If a story or a poem is literally true, then it should be understood as an allegory of theology. If a story or poem is not literally true, then it should be understood as an allegory of poetry. The moral dimension is instructive; although not necessarily spelled out, events in a story or poem should be interpreted, much like biblical parables or Aesop's fables, as containing a message for living well. The anagogical dimension points to eternal, spiritual truths. These four dimensions of interpretation appear again in Dante's letter to Cangrande della Scala, written in 1319.

Although Dante initially conceived the *Convivio* as containing fifteen books, he completed only four. The first book argues that the vernacular is suitable for expressing philosophical truths, not merely poetic ones. The second book explains the four dimensions of writing. The third book explores the meaning of love, while the fourth book extols philosophy as the pursuit of truth. The author aspires to nothing less than to advance "a complete body of knowledge about the universe, the individual's place in it, and the means by which one can realize happiness in this life."[14]

Unlike his *Commedia* and several of his *Epistles*, Dante's *Convivio* does not disparage Florence. He also identifies closely with the philosophy of Aristotle as filtered through Latin and Arabic commentators. He strays, however, both in *Convivio* and *Commedia*, from Aristotle's conclusion that eight celestial spheres guide the cosmos, subscribing instead to Ptolemy's order of nine.

To support his conviction that Beatrice enjoys posthumous reunification with the divine, Dante offers five reasons sustaining belief in personal immortality. First, all respected philosophical and religious authorities argue that human beings are immortal. Second, human beings are the highest creation and we anticipate an afterlife; no other living creature harbors such a belief; if human beings are wrong they would be inferior to animals in that respect; thus, the human belief must be accurate. Third, if human beings are

naturally inclined to belief in an afterlife then nature's design would be counterproductive because that belief might induce some human beings to curtail their lives. Fourth, human dreams reveal our personal immortality. Fifth, Jesus has revealed the truth of personal immortality to us (Conv. 2.8).

These five reasons are woefully insufficient to establish Dante's desired conclusion. For example, the first is simply false. As was or should have been well known to Dante, the Epicureans were materialists who denied personal immortality. During the pre-Christian era, the number of subscribers to Epicureanism was second only to the congregation flocking to Stoicism. Also, the best interpretation of Aristotle's position on this issue is the Arabic, which takes "The Philosopher" to conclude that only a generic active intellect, shared by all human beings in common, survives death, a position that rejects personal immortality. Finally, even if all respected philosophical and religious authorities did advocate personal immortality, that might reflect merely a widespread human yearning, not reality. Reasons two through five encase comparable philosophical problems.

Dante reveals a notion of love in *Convivio* that informs his *Commedia.* Human beings most desire reunification with God; we are thus attracted to earthly objects that do or appear to embody the goodness of the Creator; thus, what, whom, and how we love is a measure of the quality and condition of our souls (Conv. 3.2). Ironically, the propogandist for Aristotle understands love in accord with Plato's vision. His own love for Beatrice, of course, and for philosophy itself reflects that same vision.

During this period, Dante underwent a political adjustment. After his exile, he gained more sympathy for Ghibelline politics. Prior to this time, he had endorsed the Augustinian and mainstream Guelf doctrine that the Roman Empire was based only on might, not moral right. At this point, however, Dante reassessed that position. He embraced the Ghibelline orthodoxy that the Roman Empire was grounded in justice and even willed by God. Whether his conviction that only universal peace constructed by a single ruler could ensure human flourishing generated Dante's political conversion to the imperialist doctrine is unclear. Causation may run in the opposite direction. Another factor in Dante's imperialistic turn was his rediscovery of Virgil, whom he read as glorifying the Roman Empire and its destiny of world domination in the *Aeneid*. Dante first signals his embrace of imperialism in the fourth book of his *Convivio*. The message that divine providence facilitated and underwrote the rule of the Roman Empire became a trademark in Dante's later works. Dante also invokes a heavy dose of ethnocentrism when anointing the Romans as God's ordained people fostering Jesus's arrival on earth.

In *Convivio*, Dante disparages "evil Italians" who celebrate foreign languages while undervaluing their own vernacular.

> I declare to the eternal shame of the evil Italians who extol the vernacular of other peoples and disparage their own that their action stems from five execrable causes. The first is blindness in the power of discrimination; the second is fraudulent justification; the third greed for empty glory; the fourth fault-finding prompted by envy; and, the fifth and last, baseness of mind, or pusillanimity. (Conv. 1. 2. 1-2)

Dante writes in the vernacular in the spirit of reaching not only princes, barons, and knights, but also the unlearned, including women, who lack knowledge of Latin (Conv 1.9.5). He cannot retain faith with his paramount project of nourishing the betterment of human beings by composing in a language that excludes the masses. Use of the vernacular might also bring together regional nobles for the benefit of the whole.

Dante also renounced a prevalent understanding of nobility as flowing from ancestral riches and refined manners. He argued, instead, that genuine nobility is reflected not by one's fortunes in the genetic lottery but only in the nature of one's soul: moral worth, nurtured by understanding and discipline, defines nobility. That is, the extent to which a person possesses the moral and intellectual virtues measures that person's nobility. In fact, acquisitive zeal and the proper application of human reason coalesce uncomfortably. Dante knew well that material greed was a prime engine of Florentine factionalism and corruption. Oddly, Dante also claims that nobility is necessary for virtuous action, as a precondition of virtue's possibility. Is virtue the cause of nobility? Or is nobility the cause of virtue? An affirmative answer to the former question seems to flow through most of Dante's discussion of the matter, but an affirmative response to the latter interrogatory also appears. Perhaps Dante here invokes a notion of generic nobility, the potential all human beings embody to attain virtue, although not everyone actualizes that possibility adequately. That Dante subscribes to such an idea is unclear, but if he does he muddles the clarity of the term "nobility."

In any case, *Convivio* lie dormant for almost two centuries. Dante did not publish or disseminate it during his lifetime and the first printed edition did not emerge until around 1490.[14]

Monarchia and the Principle of Dual Governance

The date of another composition, *Monarchia*, is also unclear. While several arguments have been made, the most likely possibility is that *Monarchia* was written, or at least begun, around 1312 in honor of Henry VII's invasion of Italy. Dante argued that a secular monarchy is required for international welfare (M 2.1.2). Only a single imperium with dominion over everyone can ensure world peace. A universal community, grounded in a secure peace, is required to maximize human potential for perfection, happiness, and spiritual transformation. Dante celebrates the Roman imperial age, whose authority

flowed directly from God and not from the imprimatur of a pope (M 2.2.5). The Empire flourished prior to the existence of Christian religious institutions. God endows human beings with two natural goals: happiness on earth and eternal bliss in the afterlife. Philosophy, human understanding, and exercising the moral and intellectual virtues nurture earthly happiness, while theology and spiritual learning, along with exercising faith, hope, and love, foster our ultimate end.

In *Monarchia*, Dante's ideal of a divinely endorsed, universal monarchy under a single emperor would stymie papal officious intermeddling in politics, which Dante considered the main obstacle to peace and human flourishing. Civil discord, animated by avarice for worldly goods and most strikingly illustrated in Florence, prevented citizens from realizing their highest ends. For Dante, the only way to eliminate such avarice was to imagine a universal monarch who had nothing left to covet. Moreover, such a ruler would serve as a court of final appeal in any disagreements in his realm. Accordingly, human flourishing requires universal peace that can be realized only through a divinely inspired universal monarch based in Rome. Dante championed the unification of Italy as a distinct nation but would not stop there. Only the expansion of Italy—and presumed loss of much of its distinctiveness—could augur the universal monarchy that constituted Dante's ideal.

In sum, Dante embraces strikingly what I call a Principle of Dual Governance: The Church, with the pope as its head, embodies absolute spiritual authority but should refrain from interfering with or aspiring to control the secular, temporal order, while rightful temporal authority requires an emperor invested with absolute political power, a ruler who resists the allure of meddling into spiritual matters. Each of these rulers, then, should attend only to his own legitimate sphere of influence and each is, according to Dante, divinely confirmed.

In this work, Dante separates his concern for contemporary events and speaks with the authority of an Impartial Observer, who after apprehending the divine imprimatur underwriting Roman history, derives general, enduring principles of governance. As Anthony K. Cassell observes:

> [Dante] manipulates his reader's sense of a text discarnate, striving to create the impression of a message beyond time, derived from man's divine reason and inspired by God's revelation. . . . The other characteristic of the treatise . . . is its dependence . . . not so much upon the Bible but most firmly upon the classical version of pagan history given by Roman poets and historians, between whom, curiously, he makes no distinction.[15]

Dante's despondency during his exile, his craving for robust community, and his exasperation with ongoing factionalism in Florence and the other regions of Italy undoubtedly stimulate the major conclusions of *Monarchia*: the separation of earthly and spiritual governance, both of which are required for the

proper cultivation of human flourishing; the importance of the collective human intellect in which individual peculiarities will evaporate; and the need for global solidarity. Realizing these three aspirations requires proper understanding, considerable time, and steely discipline. Throughout this work, Dante detects God's grand design and benevolent interventions into human affairs. Taking issue with theologians such as Augustine and Aquinas, who insisted that happiness was either unattainable in this world or merely an ersatz version of the genuine article realizable only in the afterlife, Dante places greater value than they on temporal, earthly flourishing.

Thus, Dante describes a human ideal—a unitary temporal order in which the emperor fulfills the role that the pope assumes in the Church—as the universal earthly community ensures mankind's ultimate goal. The perfection of human intellect, which is required for maximizing the good, can be attained only by the entire species, not by a single person. We then understand why Dante bristles so violently at human sins that jeopardize temporal and religious communities: such transgressions set back the entire human race. A universal human community under a single emperor is required for peace; world peace is required for the human species to attain its highest knowledge; and attaining the highest knowledge is required for earthly and eternal fulfillment. Extending principles set forth by Aristotle, Aquinas, and Averroes, Dante concludes that a single leader is required in political community. Dante concludes that such a leader and peace existed only once in all human history: during the reign of Augustus Caesar. Moreover, that Jesus Christ was born during the reign of the Roman Empire confirms its divine imprimatur.

Dante here confronts implicitly a paramount concern of political philosophers: the condition of scarcity. Some philosophers take this condition as unavoidable and conjure an allegedly self-sufficient republic as the localized antidote. Machiavelli would agree that material scarcity is ineliminable but concluded that the world was thus an international, zero-sum battleground where military and political excellence was crucial for national flourishing. Marx would argue to the contrary that once communist relations of production were unleashed in an advanced technological nation then a condition of material abundance would emerge and economic scarcity would evaporate. Dante argues that the condition of material scarcity fosters greed, which sparks conflict. The world cannot eliminate scarcity as such, but by installing a benevolent emperor who possesses all authority and material goods we eliminate greed because he has nothing left to covet. Moreover, the absolute monarch has no need to wage expansionist wars because he is already sovereign of everything. The motivation for war withers away because the contestants for resources have been reduced to one. Lacking the incentive for greed, the emperor evinces only sentiments of charity and compassion. The result is universal peace. Yes, the emperor may be influenced, and more

importantly, blessed by a worthy pope, but God directly vests the sovereign's authority.

Accordingly, human beings reach their final earthly end by learning and adhering to philosophical teachings regarding the intellectual and moral virtues under the conditions of universal peace and justice. We attain our final supernatural end by learning and adhering to spiritual teachings and performing deeds flowing from the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. Boldly, the separation of Church from temporal authority assumes the separation of theology from philosophy. As Etienne Gilson remarks,

> [Dante] understood, with a profundity of thought for which he must be commended, that one cannot entirely withdraw the temporal world from the jurisdiction of the spiritual world without entirely withdrawing philosophy from the jurisdiction of theology. . . . [I]f philosophic reason, by which the Emperor is guided, were to remain in the smallest degree subject to the authority of the theologians, the pope would through their agency recover the authority over the Emperor which it is desired [by Dante] to take from him. By the very fact that he controlled reason, he would control the will that is guided by reason.[16]

Monarchia remained a relatively obscure work until Ludwig of Bavaria (1282–1347) was crowned Louis IV, Holy Roman Emperor in 1328. Louis IV invoked *Monarchia* in support of his divinely authorized independence from the papacy. Unsurprisingly, the Church was less enthusiastic and soon ordered the immolation of all copies of the work. Although the Church never indicted Dante posthumously for heresy, it included *Monarchia* on his index of prohibited books, upon which docket the work remained until 1881.[17]

Although in *Monarchia*, Dante, unlike his other writings, refers neither to events in his time or autobiographical tales, his personal motives and interests glisten throughout the work. As Santagata points out:

> His reflection on the definition of nobility and who is noble runs like a thread throughout Dante's works. Dante used nobility (of mind, or by birth) as a way of probing social relationships and identifying what might be the optimal state for a well-ordered society, but there is a strong suspicion that he is motivated by personal or private interests. In other words, that his is not just an intellectual need to define nobility but also a need to define his own social standing.[18]

To contemporary thinkers, *Monarchia* may well seem a preposterous, desperate text, however well intentioned. Explicitly endorsing not merely a divine-right-of-kings thesis, but discerning a sacred justification for one master of the world, whose rectitude balances on his status as sole proprietor of everything, Dante's lust for order at any cost is unmistakable. Deflated by the soul-splitting reverberations of unwarranted individualism and tribal factionalism, he places his faith in the emergence of a monolithic, collective human will that might ameliorate wretched partisanship. Seeking historical moor-

ings for his objectives, Dante summons the narrative of Rome, as viewed through a thick lens of retrospective falsification.

Perhaps his sharpest insight in *Monarchia* arises from his frustration with papal interference in political affairs: the separation of spiritual from civic authority accompanied by a spirit of mutual respect. Dante may have sown the seeds of the modern conception of the separation of church from state.

However, his reasons supporting that sturdy conclusion, which converge to establish an absolute monarch overseeing a new world order, are unpersuasive. Furthermore, Dante seems to implicitly signal that papal excesses, of which he was all too familiar, arise only from the Church's temporal ambitions. Once the Church is precluded from the political arena, he apparently accepts, papal avarice and corruption will dissipate to the spiritual benefit of the people. To endorse or even entertain such a proposition in Dante's time, one must ignore scores of occasions where papal venality arose within the administration of religion and did not touch upon secular, temporal affairs. Interference in political events only amplified the Church's opportunities to exercise greed, arrogance, and fraud. However, if excluded from participating in secular adventures, the papacy was fully capable of conniving within the theological realm.

Epistles

Dante wrote scores of letters as a public servant, private citizen, on behalf of Florentine exiles, and as a grateful guest of Tuscan aristocrats. A dozen or so of these epistles survive, a sampling of which reveals Dante's fears and hopes, internal conflicts, and manifold personality. Composed in Latin, these letters were seemingly intended for a wider audience than their recipients.

In 1304, he wrote Cardinal Niccolò da Prato on behalf of the exiled Florentine White Guelfs. This letter may record Dante's final affiliation with the *bianchi*. He soon thereafter espouses several of the imperial positions of the Ghibellines, although he does not formally align with them. Dante's tone is measured, respectful, and hopeful. He celebrates the cardinal's vow to restore peace to Florence through papal diplomacy, promises that the exiles will not initiate armed insurrections that might undermine da Prato's efforts, and supplicates himself and the others in deference to the prelate's authority, while reaffirming fervent devotion to his homeland. Here Dante presents himself as a paradigm of reasonableness, humility, and patriotic ardor.

> We are urgently on your behalf admonished and required . . . to cease from all assault and act of war, and to commit ourselves wholly to your fatherly hands, we as sons most devoted to yourself, and as lovers of peace and justice . . . and without reservation submit ourselves to your judgment . . . for we have never been remiss in our love for our country.[19]

Later that year, writing to noblemen Oberto and Guido da Romena to express condolences on the death of their uncle and to explain why he cannot attend services for the deceased, Dante generously extols the excellences of the uncle while seasoning his eulogy with a heavy dose of self-pity. Where a simple "I regret that I will be unable to attend" would suffice, Dante rachets high drama.

> I, too lament, who, driven from my country, in undeserved exile, was wont, as I brooded over my unhappy fate with unceasing anxiety . . . to excuse myself [from attending services because of] unlooked-for poverty brought about by exile. Poverty, like a vindictive fury, has thrust me, deprived of horses and arms, into her prison den, where she has set herself relentlessly.[20]

In 1309, in a letter to one of his former hosts, Moroello Malaspina, Marquis of Lunigiana, Dante explains his failure to respond to Malaspina earlier. Love has riveted has attention. Dante, underscoring his poetic temperament and perhaps his philosophical naïveté, speaks of love as an external force that subjugates his agency. He seemingly denies any intentionality or other cognitive dimension to this virtually omnipotent emotion.

> [S]uddenly . . . like a flash of lightening from on high, a woman appeared, I know not how, in all respects answering to my inclinations. . . . [A]t the sight of the blaze of this beauty, Love, terrible and imperious, straightway laid hold on me. And he, raging like a despot expelled from his fatherland, who returns to his native soil after long exile, slew or expelled or fettered whatsoever within me was opposed to him . . . it behooves me to turn me not wither I will, but wither he wills.[21]

Dante manages to conjure a metaphor of the prodigious effects of a retributive return from exile, endorse love at first sight, invoke the romantic impulse of *colpito dal fulmine*, and recall in more extravagant terms his childhood fantasies of first gazing at Beatrice. Here Dante presents himself as a mere target of Eros's arrow. Interestingly, in *Inferno*, Francesca da Rimini's implorations that she was a victim of the irresistible force of love and thus she is not responsible for her subsequent transgressions, although initially accepted by the naïve pilgrim, are merely desperate rationalizations of her manipulative, self-indulgent, deceptive character (I 5.74–141).

His tone changes late in 1310 through 1311, when he addresses in a trilogy of letters the arrival of Emperor Henry VII into Italy. Here Dante exhorts everyone to facilitate Henry's designs in preparation for the establishment of a united monarchy that augurs peace, prosperity, and spiritual redemption. The first epistle is to the princes and peoples of Italy. Dante clearly identifies Henry as the secular savior who will destroy the minions of iniquity. Dante also describes Henry's divine imprimatur as evidenced by the

birth of Christ during the time of the Roman Empire and Octavian's transcendent, peaceful reign. God consecrated the Roman emperor as God's secular, political agent. Moreover, scripture confirms this conclusion: Jesus told Pontius Pilate that the power he exercised in the name of the Roman emperor arose from God (John 19.10–11). In messianic tones that anticipate the ebullient avidity of Savonarola's (1452–1498) religious perorations and Machiavelli's final chapter in *The Prince*, Dante rallies the Italians.

> For the Sun of peace shall appear on high. . . . Rejoice, therefore, O Italy . . . for soon shalt thou be the envy of the whole world. . . . Dry thy tears, and wipe away the stains of thy weeping . . . for he is at hand who shall bring thee forth from the prison of the ungodly, and shall smite thy workers of iniquity with the edge of the sword . . . ye that groan under oppression, lift up your hearts, for your salvation is nigh at hand.[22]

In the second letter of the trilogy, addressed to the Florentines, Dante reiterates why and how the Holy Roman Empire bears divine inspiration and is required for proper earthly governance, which itself is necessary for human fulfillment. Most strikingly, Dante lambastes the Florentine yearning for independence and its resistance to wider unification. He also invokes a genetic account of why Florentines are so obdurate: the pernicious legacy of their Fiesolean origins.

> O most foolish of the Tuscans, insensate alike by nature and by corruption, who neither consider nor understand in your ignorance how before the eyes of the full-fledged the feet of your diseased minds go astray in the darkness of night! . . . O most wretched offshoot of Fiesole! O barbarians punished now a second time! . . . for all you simulate hope in your looks and lying lips, yet you tremble in your waking hours.[23]

This genetic account of Florentine corruption and factionalism is important. In canto fifteen of *Inferno*, Dante uses Brunetto Latini, voicing the outrage of an exiled lover, to rant against Florentine excesses. The literary character Latini alludes to the myth of Florence's creation, arising from the unraveling of the Cataline conspiracy during the period of the late Roman republic, where the plotters eventually found refuge in the formerly Etruscan town of Fiesole. After the subversives had been routed, the survivors of Fiesole and the victorious Romans presumably founded Florence. Brunetto's point is that the current political and social disasters plaguing Florence flow from the "bitter berries" of the "arrogant, avaricious, envious" race of Fiesoleans. Both Guelph and Ghibelline parties are infected by, in effect, defective genetics. This makes Florence unsuitable for a "sweet fig" to bloom (I 15.61–69).

Brunetto counsels the pilgrim not to allow himself to be soiled by the waywardness of the mass of Florentines, although they will become his enemies; destiny decrees much honor for the pilgrim nevertheless; and there remains a hope of redemption within the relatively few who retain the Roman spirit and genealogy (I 15.70–78).

Strikingly, Dante's other written work invokes the founding myth of Florence to vilify the conditions infecting the city, especially his epistle to the Florentines. Either references to the Fiesolean-Roman genetic origins of Florentines are intended literally or only metaphorically.[24] Regardless of the intent in *Inferno*, trying to saddle Brunetto Latini with an ethnic explanation of political conflict within Florence misses the mark widely.

The genetic account of Florentine conflict, even if intended metaphorically, is not found in Brunetto Latini's written work. On the contrary, in his *Trésor*, composed during his exile, Brunetto directly confronts the conspiracy of Catiline, the Roman siege of Fiesole, the subsequent founding of Florence. No genetic account, literal or metaphorical, of differences between noble Romans and despicable Fiesoleans appears. Instead, Brunetto observes:

> [T]he piece of land where Florence now it was formerly called Head of Mars, that is, the House of battles, for Mars, which is one of the seven planets, is called God of Battles, and thus was he called and revered in olden times. For this reason it is not surprising if the Florentines are always at war and in discord, for that planet rules over them. (T I. 37.2–3)

Nothing Brunetto published and nothing attributed to him outside of his character in *Inferno* replicates his character's deranged avidity about genetic origins of Florentine conflict included in canto fifteen. Curiously, someone looking for such replication is best advised to read Dante's letter to the Florentines, which tracks part of the venom in canto fifteen. If anything, Dante was more likely to invoke the founding legend to lodge accusations against his native city than is the historical Brunetto. Dante most likely uses Brunetto as his mouthpiece in canto fifteen on this matter.

In any event, the final member of Dante's trilogy of letters is addressed to Emperor Henry VII. Dante celebrates Henry's enterprise, sketches the ongoing political and social problems plaguing Tuscany and Italy, alludes to Roman history for support, and harangues Florence again.

> Florence is the name of this baleful pest. She is the viper that turns against the vitals of her own mother [Rome]; she is the sick sheep that infects the flock of her lord with her contagion.[25]

That is the opening of a lengthy fulmination against Florence that indicts the city for its sedulous corruption, obstreperous independence, and fraudulent

political stratagems. Dante summons dozens of colorful metaphors, analogies, and similes to drive home his point.

A few years later, around May 1315, Dante composes a letter to a friend, important because he responds to news that Florence is granting a general amnesty to its exiled citizens, on condition that they pay a fine, submit to an *oblatio*, and publicly repent. An *oblatio* is a ceremony in which reprobates don sackcloth and a cleft-cap, and grasp a lit candle as they process to a designated sacristy where their sanctioned sponsors present them for a ritual of repentance and forgiveness. Dante refuses, preferring exile to a dishonorable return to his native soil. He regards the *oblatio* as a stigma because it admits wrongdoing, asserts repentance, and seeks forgiveness. Dante insists that Florence has wronged him; he has not perpetrated any transgression that merits repentance. He will not seek forgiveness under false pretenses. (Upon his refusal, Florentine officials soon reaffirmed his death sentence and extended it to his sons.)

> This is the reward of innocence manifest to all the world, and of the sweat and toil of unremitting study! . . . to be presented at the oblation, like a felon in bonds. . . . If some other [path] can be found . . . which does not derogate from the fame and honor of Dante, that will I tread with no lagging steps. But if by no such path Florence may be entered; then will I enter Florence never.[26]

Dante, then, appeals not only to the injustice of the terms of the Florentine initiative but also to the deleterious impact accepting such a pardon would exert on his "fame and honor." Ever prideful, Dante glowers threateningly at any event or overture that might jeopardize his standing.

The final illustration of Dante's letters is his missive to an important benefactor and host, Cangrande della Scala, captain of the Ghibellines of Lombardy. The validity of this letter or sections of it remains disputed, although most scholars accept its authenticity. In the letter composed around 1319, Dante announces that he will dedicate the final piece of his *Commedia*, the *Paradiso*, to Cangrande and expresses his profound gratitude. Dante includes copious material on the nature of rhetoric and on theological matters as they pertain to *Paradiso*. Importantly, he also explains how his work should be interpreted: "The subject, then, of the whole work, taken in the literal sense only, is the state of souls after death . . . regarded from the allegorical point of view, the subject is man according as by his merits or demerits in the exercise of his free will he is deserving of reward or punishment by justice."[27] Dante, finally, states his paramount objective in writing the *Commedia*: "[T]he aim of the whole and of the part is to remove those living in this life from a state of misery, and to bring them to a state of happiness."[28]

In this synopsis of a few of Dante's letters he reveals the dispositions of his soul. Readers are instructed by the didactic poet and philosopher; exhorted to action by the messianic prophet; petitioned by the self-pitying exile; enchanted by the captivated lover; excoriated, if Florentine, by the merciless judge; soothed by the humble servant of God; informed by the principled man of honor; and lauded by the grateful guest of Tuscany. Dante was all these things and more.

Commedia

Tormented by inexhaustible passion muzzled and discharged in turn by religious devotion, hounded by an artistic self-assurance oscillating between superciliousness and compunction, bedeviled by ineffable wretchedness and hawkish animosity simultaneously issuing from his banishment, steadfast in his conviction that preternatural vision must be formalized in verse, the greatest poet of his and, possibly, any day aspired to commune with the divine.

With Henry's death, Dante's fantasy of a benevolent universal monarchy evaporated. Sadly, the Church would seemingly control Italian politics thereafter. Dante composed his masterpiece, *Commedia*, over several years. The first of the three volumes composing the *Commedia*, the *Inferno*, was completed in 1314. The third volume, *Paradiso*, was still being refined in the year of Dante's death, 1321. Widely regarded as one of the greatest literary works composed in the Italian language and one of the great books of world literature, the *Commedia* was dubbed "*Divina*" by Giovanni Boccaccio in his *Trattatello in laude di Dante* (*In Praise of Dante's Life*).[29]

Roughly, as Dante revealed in his letter to Cangrande, the *Commedia* guides human beings to earthly happiness and eternal bliss. Although humanity has been led astray by the wrongful examples set by false spiritual leaders—Dante is unsparing in his criticisms of the popes of his day—redemption is possible once spiritual powers relinquish their aspirations for temporal authority.

The work consists of one hundred cantos divided into three sections or volumes: *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso*. The *Inferno* contains thirty-four cantos, including an introductory canto, while the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* each contain thirty-three cantos. The theme is the journey of the pilgrim as he becomes educated in the nature of sin and the potential for human perfectibility, and ascends to the beatific vision. He is guided by the great poet Virgil in the first stages of his transformation but requires divine grace—in the form of his beloved Beatrice—and loving contemplation—in the form of St. Bernard—to reach paradise. Spiritual transformation requires humility, education, right will, and divine grace. The pilgrim starts from ignorance and

wrongful dispositions. He ends with knowledge and virtuous dispositions, while basking in divine grace and the theological virtues.

The journey of Dante the pilgrim (the protagonist in *Commedia*, who resembles in critical respects but is not identical to the author) is the trip that every person seeking earthly happiness and eternal salvation must undertake. Along the way, the pilgrim participates in the sins of the reprobates he meets and identifies with their temptations and shortcomings. The pilgrim is aware that he is especially susceptible to the sins of pride and lust. Most important is the law of *contrapasso*, which involves (a) proportionate divine retribution; (b) brought about by the nature of the sin committed and the underlying dispositions of the reprobate; (c) whose application sometimes results in punishment that resembles the sin and offending disposition and sometimes is contrary to the sin and disposition; (d) whose application, for Dante, serves a corrective or remedial function in purgatory, where reprobates continue the process of repentance and reformation they began on earth (and thus punishment takes a form that is often the "opposite" of the perpetrator's sin and disposition) but not in hell (where the dispositions of sinners are fixed forever); and (e) facilitates the elimination of worldly artifice as sinners are exposed for what they have made of themselves through their exercise of agency. In this sense, penitents bring about their own destiny. They receive what they willed through their choices and actions.

For Dante, the condition of the individual's soul at death determines his or her station in the afterlife. If we die reconciled to God—by repenting our transgressions—we will not be eternally damned. Of course, the earlier we repent and return to a righteous path, the less punishment we will suffer in the afterlife. But even late repentants are spared the horrors of hell. In hell, sinners are consigned to sectors with those who committed similar moral transgressions. They forfeit all hope and cannot escape their torment. In Purgatory, sinners are sorted by the dispositions that triggered their sins and their suffering defines their rehabilitation. They serve penance to underscore their repentance and facilitate salubrious self-transformation. They are taught virtuous dispositions that redress the wrongful inclinations they exhibited on earth.

The dwellers of purgatory learn about the nature of their earthly sins by contemplating historical examples, sometimes through their suffering and through their participation in didactic artwork and religious rituals. Most strikingly, purgatory forms the ultimate support group: souls work together in pursuit of moral perfection. The communal dimension underscores the fact that purgatory, unlike hell or paradise, is a domain of personal transformation. Accordingly, the punishments of hell are strictly retributive, while the penances of purgatory are both retributive and remedial.

The pilgrim migrates from the pure facticity of hell, where character is forever frozen and fixed, and fresh possibilities are lacking, to increasing

self-awareness, freedom, and self-creation. His transformation flows from his recognitions and struggles as he confronts the shades in the afterlife and his personal demons. The pilgrim's ascension imagines and parallels Dante's own internal struggle as his quest for eternal salvation and his crusade for worldly preeminence collide.

In hell, the pilgrim encounters a recurrent theme: sinners lack self-knowledge, deny responsibility for their transgressions, and fervently indict other people or adverse circumstances for their quandaries. They obtusely perceive themselves as having been victimized by external causes and forces. They shroud themselves in flimsy excuses and self-serving narratives. However, regardless of the perceptions of other, choices and action arising from incontinence and malice shape their characters unwholesomely. Sinners in hell reap what they have sown: their punishments reveal what they made of themselves on earth. Facile rationalizations and pathetic palliations only foster and sustain moral depravity.

During his journey through hell, the pilgrim reveals his own shortcomings. The shrewd, eloquent Francesca da Rimini seduces him into misguided, naïve compassion (I 5.109–20). The pilgrim derides and cusses at the mean-spirited Florentine Filippo Argenti in the fifth circle of hell (I 8.36–63). He trades insults with the haughty aristocrat Farinata degli Uberti in the sixth circle (I 10.42–51). He gloats at the degradation of the deranged, malicious Vanni Fucci, the Beast from Pistoia, in the eighth circle (I 24.127–41). The pilgrim kicks, threatens, and pulls at the hair of Bocca degli Abati in the ninth circle (I 32.87–99). These incidents and others increase the pilgrim's knowledge and calibrate his passions in service of coming to love appropriate objects in the proper measure.

One of the noteworthy but nondistinctive values of Florence emerges in the tenth bolgia of the eighth circle of hell. The shade that is Geri del Bello degli Alighieri, a first cousin of Dante's father, makes a menacing gesture toward the pilgrim. An established agitator, Geri had been killed in a blood feud with the Sacchetti family. The pilgrim interprets Geri's signal as a reaction to the fact that his death had not yet been avenged by his kinsmen. In the day of Dante, Florentine culture permitted and even encouraged private vendettas, and extant codes of honor typically required explicit retaliation (I 29.27–36). Geri's death was eventually avenged by some nephews several decades later. The social value of private vengeance was, of course, endorsed well beyond the city of Florence.

A subtheme in the *Commedia* is Dante's relentless scolding of the Florentines for their gratuitous violence, unending political bickering, social instability, veneration of material goods, and self-defeating resistance to the divinely decreed rule of the Roman emperor. In his view, the papacy encouraged these maladies by setting a feckless example, pursuing self-aggrandizing policies, coveting worldly goods, and thereby betraying the spiritual

order. Dante underscores his convictions in the mutual independence of philosophy from theology, the temporal from the spiritual order, and the Empire from the Church. Whenever the stewards of one of these realms exceed the boundaries of their domain, typically out of pride and avarice, they rebel against divine authority and jeopardize the well-being of the relevant community. Moreover, the gravest human transgression is betraying a rightful leader. Such treachery intrudes gravely on divine authority and severs the bond of human community. We must be steadfastly faithful to the powers and bonds established by divine authority. In the *Commedia*, among other things, Dante reveals his deepest convictions and firmest loyalties.

In his masterpiece, Dante forsakes the selfishness of Florentine striving to celebrate the universalism of the Roman Empire. Indeed, to distance himself from Florence—taken as a metaphor for various human wrongful inclinations—is required for Dante's vision of human redemption and perfection. For Dante, allegiance to the narrow concerns of party and family at the expense of the broader values embodied by city and country had led Florentines astray. Florentines had sacrificed cherishing the common good to shortsighted pursuit of material interest. For Dante, the well-being of the entirety of humankind constituted the common good and only a divinely ordained Roman emperor could legitimately reign over this universal community. Accordingly, in the *Commedia*, Dante aspires to derive meaning and value from the degradation he experienced during his exile from his native city. Dante invokes both historical and mythological figures in the pilgrim's journey from hell to paradise.

Elsewhere, I have explained and analyzed *Commedia* in depth.[30] Herein I will concentrate on the principles underlying Dante's work to facilitate understanding of the paramount values, virtues, and vices that constitute his moral lessons to readers.

DANTE'S FIRST PRINCIPLES

In *Commedia*, Dante advances his convictions regarding virtue and vice, mainly through the character Virgil. Virtue is a disposition arising from habitually loving the proper things, people, and the divine in an appropriate measure. Vice is a disposition emerging from too frequently loving proper things, people, and the divine in an inappropriate measure or not at all, or too often loving improper objects. "Love" in this context should be understood broadly to connote the pursuit of the objects of human passion and desire. Several of Dante's first principles arise from this understanding of the nature of virtue and vice.

Virtue Is Its Own Reward and Vice Is Its Own Punishment

For Dante, dispositions of virtue and vice substantially constitute a person's character regardless of the vicissitudes of fortune and the evaluations of other people. We become our sins and our values in that our souls absorb and sustain the nature of our passions and our deeds. Regardless of how other people perceive us and how luck favors or disfavors us, who and what we are objectively is determined by the way we exercise our freedom, what we choose and what we do. For Dante, although a fuller dispensation of justice occurs in the afterlife, we do reap what we sow on earth. Accordingly, the punishments Dante conjures in hell and purgatory are metaphors for what sinners have already made of themselves while living. The afterlife reflects infallibly what sinners have become through their choices and acts. For Dante, then, several functions of the law of *contrapasso* operate on earth.

Here the influences of Plato and Aristotle glisten. Centuries prior to the writings of the great Christian theologians on these subjects, Plato argued that the condition of human souls, which define our underlying characters and identities, was an objective matter of paramount value independently of the judgments of our neighbors and our earthly circumstances. Of course, Plato foreshadowed Dante in linking the condition of our souls to reward and punishment at death. Well-balanced, healthy, harmonious souls would gain eternal access to the transcendent world of Forms and apprehend Absolute Truth, Beauty, and Goodness. Unhealthy, vicious souls would endure transmigration into other bodies and struggle again to attain eternal reward. From Aristotle, Dante derives the way dispositions arise, how habit and practice solidify choices and actions, and why most virtues lie within the mean between excess and deficiency.

Secular critics might rejoin that Dante's scheme, as does Plato's, relies on the existence of an afterlife wherein reward and punishment are infallibly apportioned. For those lacking faith in such possibilities, does not such a scheme amount to no more than futile hand-waving by the self-righteous? For someone who renounces personal immortality and an afterlife of perfect substantive justice, does not the Platonic-Dantean recipe for life ring hollow? Why should they not echo the thoughts of Glaucon and Adeimantus in Plato's *Republic* and prefer the life of the perfectly unjust person, a character who is often vicious yet gains tangibly and even enjoys a reputation of being virtuous, to the life of the perfectly just person, who is invariably virtuous but suffers materially and sadly acquires an appalling reputation? How could a disciple of Plato or Dante defend their positions without resorting to highly suspicious metaphysical suppositions?

Secular defenders, those who discard the metaphysical suppositions of Plato and Dante, might begin with Aristotle. The best interpretation of Aristotle's highly contested position on immortality and the afterlife may well be

the medieval Arabic view, which holds that only the active intellect, which all human beings possess in common, persists after death and the individual intellect expires; thus, personal immortality is only a myth. Hence, Aristotle eschews the metaphysical assumptions about personal immortality and a just afterlife that animated the work of Plato and Dante. Yet Aristotle was convinced that the moral and intellectual virtues were necessary, although not sufficient, for human flourishing on earth. Aristotle, accordingly, would not conclude that Plato's perfectly just person was flourishing, and he would conclude likewise about the perfectly unjust person. At least, however, the perfectly just person, should fortune take a favorable turn and society correct its erroneous evaluations, would have strong possibility of earning Aristotelian well-being. By contrast, the perfectly unjust person requires a complete dispositional makeover, an utter personality transplant to aspire to such well-being.

From this standpoint, that a human being is indifferent to the moral and intellectual virtues yet seemingly benefits tangibly as a result does not erase that person's depravity; it highlights his or her perversion. Regardless of appearances and the judgments of others, vicious people sever themselves from salutary community and genuine love. As such, they render themselves somewhat less than fully human.

In the context of Dante's seven deadly vices this lesson resonates. Arrogance distorts and amplifies the self; alienates us from robust human communities; and renders us empty and self-absorbed. Envy simmers in its own resentment; diminishes the self; and deepens our sense of inadequacy. Wrath wallows in spite; severs us from righteous elements in the community; and hardens our hearts. Sloth arises from joyless apathy and blossoms into hopelessness and muted self-concern. Avarice chains us upon a pendulum of frustration and relegates us to a quagmire of rapacious desire; we ignore the interests of others when we should not, and we become imprisoned within our own insatiability. Gluttony, understood broadly as unwarranted self-indulgence, diverts us from noble pursuits; weakens our resolve; and promotes unnecessary suffering. Lust supplants the human need for intimacy and bonding with the obsession to satisfy immediate cravings. As such, lust, as do all of the seven deadly vices, distances us from loving the proper things in the appropriate measure.

Thus, independently of the possibilities of a perfectly just afterlife and personal immortality, vicious people have crafted their souls, their characters, noxiously and corruptly. The benefits they seemingly attain during their earthly lives are at best pyrite. Accordingly, Platonic-Dantean metaphysical assumptions are not required to argue persuasively that virtue is its own reward and vice is its own punishment in the respects delineated.

Vicious Behavior Admits of Degrees: Fraud Is Worse than Force

At first glance, Dante's convictions that vicious behavior admits of degrees is far from illuminating. What strays from the obvious is his gradation of sins. He distinguishes between the evils generated by violence and those spawned by fraud, judging the latter transgressions as the more contemptible. Dante seemingly follows Cicero who advised that

> There are two ways of inflicting injustice, by force or by deceit. Deceit is the way of the humble fox, force that of the lion. Both are utterly alien to human beings, but deceit is the more odious; of all kinds of injustice none is more pernicious than that shown by people who pose as good men at the moment of greatest perfidy.[31]

That fraud is a distinctively human abuse of reason grounds this conviction. Cicero and Dante presume that nonhuman animals practice deceit instinctively; human beings calculate their fraudulent acts while explicitly defying truth. Dante's stance on this matter produces some curious hierarchies in hell and purgatory. For example, in hell the sins of unrestrained desire lacking malice are the least pernicious because human beings are more susceptible to them. Chronicling the sins of incontinence from less to more grievous: lust, gluttony, avarice and miserliness, and wrath and sloth. Moving lower into hell we find the heretics, those who, through false beliefs generated by intellectual hubris, divide what should be united, namely political and religious communities. Moving into the lowest regions of hell, we meet those who maliciously willed harm to self or others, including God: suicides, blasphemers, sodomites, and usurers. Then in the eighth circle of hell, malicious reprobates who perpetrated ordinary frauds reside: panderers and seducers, flatterers, simonists, sorcerers, swindlers, hypocrites, thieves, fraudulent counselors, sowers of discord, and falsifiers and counterfeiters. Finally, in the ninth circle, the bowels of hell, reside perpetrators of complex frauds, those involving treachery against special bonds: traitors to kin, double-crossers of party and country, traitors to guests and hosts, and, finally, the lowest of the low, betrayers of lords and benefactors. In each of his mouths, Lucifer, himself the ultimate traitor, munches on one of the three founding members of Dante's hall of sinner shame: Brutus, Cassius, and Judas, respectively.

In purgatory, the pilgrim journeys from more to less grievous sins. He travels from transgressions flowing from misdirected love, passion for wrongful objects: pride, envy, wrath; to misdeeds arising from deficient love of the good: sloth; to wrongdoing promoted by unwarranted love of merely secondary goods: avarice and prodigality, gluttony, and lust.

We are Free, Responsible, and Reflective

For Dante the ongoing process of soul-crafting is the paramount human project. Soul-crafting involves a journey of spiritual purification in confrontation with temptation, suffering, and human fallibility. No light matter is at stake: our flourishing on earth and our fate in the afterlife hinge on the outcome of this struggle. Dante's embrace of human freedom and responsibility, as well as his intense commitment to faith, coalesce comfortably with his firm conviction that salutary change is possible. Human beings are not fixed objects whose characters are planted once and forever.

Unlike evildoers in hell, penitents in purgatory no longer sin. The main function of punishment in purgatory is purifying and corrective in that rebellious wills are thereby elevated to harmony with the divine will. The restoration of noble nature assumes priority over justified, proportionate retribution. At each level of purgatory, penitents reflect on the virtue they must attain and on the evil they must transcend. The critical difference between penitents in purgatory and sinners in hell is that the former at some point of their lives recognized and accepted responsibility for their depravity, sincerely repented their past, and pledged to change positively their behavior in the future. Dante accentuates the theme that human beings have the power to change their profane habits, to learn to love the proper objects in the appropriate measure, and to repent their past wrongdoing. He is clear that sincere repentance, even at the moment of death, will invalidate a sinner's ticket to hell.

What, then, constitutes genuine repentance? I offer the following working analysis.

P (a human agent) *repents* T (an act or series of acts) if and only if:

1. P performed T.
2. T was morally blameworthy.
3. P recognizes (1) and (2).
4. P accepts moral responsibility for T.
5. P sincerely regrets having done T because P was morally wrong, and P performed T without excuse or justification.
6. In service of salutary personal transformation, P sincerely resolves not to repeat T.
7. P expresses that sincere regret to someone or in some way.

Moral agents cannot repent actions that are not blameworthy or that they did not perform. They can regret that such actions occurred or celebrate them or evince any number of other reactions, but genuine repentance implies acknowledgement of moral, not merely causal, responsibility for wrongful behavior. Repentance also implies recognizing that no exonerating excuse or

justification can relieve the agent of that moral responsibility. Although not an independent element in the formal definition, genuine repentance almost always signals or spawns positive reconfiguration of character. Subsequent performances of morally blameworthy deeds, especially of T, call into question the sincerity and authenticity of the prior "repentance." Accordingly, regret that arises only from calculations of rational self-interest is insufficient to establish repentance. In like manner, belief that is conjured only from rational self-interest falls short of the genuine faith required for salutary personal transformation. The repentant must also express sincere regret in one way or another. Here the range of possibilities is wide; even internal monologue is enough under the appropriate circumstances.

For Dante, writing *Commedia* was, among other things, participating in a redemptive process, coming to grips with his own shortcomings, and scrambling for possible remedies. The pilgrim participates in the sins of penitents in purgatory as a necessary part of purifying his soul, in preparation for paradise. Following established Christian doctrine, Dante deeply appreciates the redemptive power of suffering. He understood keenly that a pristine world of pleasure would bear no glad tidings for the development of human character. Dante could easily cheer the slogans "No pain, no gain" and "No guts, no glory," especially when applied to mental and spiritual transformation. Through the pilgrim, the protagonist of *Commedia*, Dante crafts and chronicles his own spiritual crusade for purification and reunification with the divine.

DANTE'S MOST FERVENT VALUES: LOVE AND COMMUNITY

Dante's Principle of Dual Governance summarizes his maximum commitment to human solidarity: only a universal political community and a universal religious institution can ensure human flourishing. Both are divinely ordained. Each is required to ensure lasting peace, proper allocation of authority, widespread spiritual transformation, worldly and transcendent happiness, and realization of the divine will. Dante gazes through the comforting lens of retrospective falsification and gushes at the glories of Rome to conjure possibilities for a universal political community. He imagines Catholicism stripped of its temporal intrigues and renovated by an immaculate papacy to summon possibilities for a universal religious institution. To contemporary readers, Dante's vision is plagued by macular degeneration. The dismissive rejoinder to his perception is that if these conditions—a universal political community and a universal religious institution—are required, then the possibilities for human flourishing repose in hospice.

Still, a charitable reading might well celebrate Dante's paean to community on a more modest rendering. We yearn for intimate connection with

others and their affirming recognition is necessary for our efficacious self-understanding. Our bonding within communities, however, must not be so impenetrable as to suffocate our autonomy and individuality. Even if their disharmony is never fully reconciled once and forever, the dual human cravings for individualism and community must negotiate a series of viable compromises and adjustments as we jaunt through our lives; otherwise we invite spiritual disorders: alienation, estrangement, and psychological isolation should our hankering for individualism remain unbridled; emotional impoverishment, loss of self-esteem, and unhealthy immersion in the collectivity should our thirst for intimacy swell intemperately.

In this spirit and at the level of social organization, David Brooks observes:

> A society is healthy when its culture counterbalances its economics. That is to say, when you have a capitalist economic system that emphasizes competition, dynamism and individual self-interest, you need a culture that celebrates cooperation, stability and committed relationships.[32]

The Florence of Dante's time embodied a thriving economy, one of the more efficient financial engines in the world. But Florentine culture was devoid of widespread stability and civic commitment. Political and tribal sectarianism pervaded society. In Brooks's terms, Florentine culture did not counterbalance its economic avidity with robust communal solidarity. Accordingly, Florentine society, and Italian civilization generally, remained divisive and malignant. A society's ineptitude in actualizing its highest potentials is directly proportionate to its degree of failure in negotiating a rapprochement between economic competition and cultural cooperation. Following this line of thought, Dante's plea for universal political and religious communities is nothing more than his reaction to the failures of Florentine society, where individualism and tribal identities frustrated cultural solidarity, thereby obstructing social vigor.

His mother died when Dante was about seven. His father died when Dante was around eighteen. Dante's grandest earthly relationship was with an idealized version of a woman who gains specific personality only in his *Paradiso*. Dante was exiled from his homeland at the age of thirty-six. He was a deeply committed Christian engaged in a quest for spiritual reunification with the divine. That Dante's most fervent values were love and community should register no surprise. But what sort of love animates Dante's spiritual journey? Why and what sorts of communities are required for human flourishing?

To understand Dante's invocation of love, we must recall the character Socrates's discourse in Plato's *Symposium*. Socrates there offers an exquisite mystical vision of love that he claims to have learned from the priestess,

Diotima. He insists that love is not a fixed, glorious state or a static condition. Love demands ongoing change and adaptation; it is a process. Love is a desire; we desire that which we do not have or that which we have insufficiently; if love is the desire for beauty then love cannot be beauty. Indeed, love is a process by which we reveal and get closer to our deepest yearnings. We begin by recognizing and appreciating the beauty of a particular object or person in the world. This instance of physical beauty allows us to abstract and recognize all physical beauty; it permits us to go beyond particular manifestations of a quality to a general understanding. We then come to recognize and appreciate the beauty of the soul and spiritual beauty in general. We continue by recognizing the beauty of just laws, social institutions, and salutary customs and activities. We rise to the appreciation of the beauty of math, science, and knowledge in general. Finally, we may glimpse the most profound source of our yearning: a vision of Absolute Beauty, the Form of Beauty, Beauty as such (S 199c–212c).

As we climb Socrates's ladder of love—which is a journey toward higher degrees of reality, truth, and knowledge—we travel from the derivative reality of immediate experience to the foundational Reality in a timeless realm. Socrates assumes that if we love an object or person we do so for a reason and it is that reason that is the deepest object of our love. If I love Marcia because she is beautiful and good, then Beauty and Goodness are the true objects of my love, not any particular instantiation of beauty and goodness. Accordingly, loving particular people and things in the world directs me to the most fundamental source of my yearning: to attain my destiny in the eternal world of Forms. That is, genuine human fulfillment is impossible in this world; only in a disembodied condition can the human soul reunite with Absolute Truth, Absolute Beauty, and Absolute Goodness. The actual beloved in an intimate relationship is Truth, Beauty, and Goodness as such. Socrates unravels the paradox of love so brilliantly articulated earlier in the *Symposium* by Aristophanes—that our deepest desires in pursuing love are never completely fulfilled, however fervently we undertake the quest. Socrates answers that because our true desire is for reunification with Forms in a higher realm, any earthly love will point us in that direction, but fall short of fulfilling our most profound aim. Hence, we will simultaneously be elevated yet be somewhat unfulfilled by even the most genuine earthly loves. We will always yearn for more.

Under the Socrates-Diotima rendering, love is a process through which we express and strive mightily to fulfill our longing for eternity and the divine. The pursuit of love by human beings is as inevitable as it is disappointing.

What of Dante's great love, Beatrice? Either theirs is an utterly fantasized relationship or their paths crossed infrequently and unremarkably, except in Dante's extrapolations. In the poet's artistry in *Vita nuova*, Beatrice does not

emerge as a concrete individual. She is a name and face that Dante affixes to analogues of the Platonic Forms of Truth, Beauty, and Good. No human being could embody the transcendent qualities that Dante attaches to Beatrice. Dante seemingly swaps one set of transcendent foundations with another, replacing the Platonic Forms with God and the beatific vision.

Beatrice gains individuality only in the fictional *Commedia* where she scolds the pilgrim for abandoning her, for squandering his divinely bestowed talents, and for scurrying far from righteousness and truth (P 30.73–85, 112–20, 136–38). Beatrice sternly and sarcastically berates the pilgrim, demands that he confess his transgressions, and disparages his immature reaction to her death (P 31.1–6, 52–60). She manifests specific personality: a betrayed authority figure disappointed by her self-proclaimed lover's shortcomings. Later, after the pilgrim has confessed his wrongdoing and repented his moral defects, Beatrice becomes his sagacious guide to heaven, alternately didactic and sympathetic, as the pilgrim gradually apprehends her beauty and goodness more acutely (Par. 1.103–42; 5.1–6; 22.1–9). Still, even in *Commedia*, Beatrice is less a concrete, human individual and more a symbol of Divine Revelation and a literary embodiment of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness. Beatrice is nothing less or more than a divine spokesperson or, in Platonic terms, an adjutant for the Form of the Good. Her humanity evaporates because it is superfluous for Dante's spiritual quest. The object of the Florentine poet's ardor was never a flawed, fallible human being, however estimable when evaluated by earthly measures.

Dante, like Plato, celebrates awe and wonder when confronting beauty. An intellectual passion intersects with erotic desire and a yearning for the eternal. Love is a way to connect to the divine and to reach beyond ourselves. It is a plea for immortality, the quest for the eternal. As such, for Dante, love aspires to connect with enduring value. Yes, love flows from desire, which signifies a lack: human beings struggle in a world not of their making and yearn for an ultimate culmination, a rational and just cosmos, and reunification with the Divine. Dante's great love, Beatrice, is amplified and elevated in death. As obsessed as Dante was about her in life, he loves her even more after she dies. She becomes his conduit of grace, a necessary link to the beatific vision. Sexual consummation, then, is not a requirement of either Dante's or Plato's idealized depiction of love.

Dante's spirit of gravity correlates the condition of a person's soul to its proper site in the universe—how, what, and to the extent a soul loves manifests its quality. Joseph Anthony Mazzeo acutely observes:

> This measureless craving, this desire for eternal possession of good or beauty, is a function of the rational soul, of man's natural desire for possession of eternal good in an external existence . . . for Dante sensible human beauty is the highest temporal analogue of the perpetual joys and contentment of the

> eternal existence man desires. This satisfaction which is the goal of man's desire is a union of peace and ardor, tranquility and passion, a passionate tranquility in which desire finds rest without in some sense ceasing to be a desire—a state in which Paradise cannot be lost and which requires no effort to retain.[33]

Love, then, is virtuous if directed toward God and virtue, or toward secondary goods in moderation. Love is evil when it is directed toward the wrong objects, or toward the right objects but pursued with an improper measure.

In *Symposium*, the character Socrates does not appear to be advising us to dismiss interpersonal love in deference to the philosophical love of Forms that he sketches. Interpersonal love is instrumentally valuable to our quest for eternal fulfillment in the transcendental realm. But is that the only value of interpersonal love? To serve as an energizing marker for or signpost to what we truly desire? If so, Socrates, at best, can tell us *why* we love, but he does not help us understand *whom* to love.

Surely, we might pursue the person whom we were convinced best exemplified the general attributes that we allegedly desire—the best embodiment of truth, beauty, and goodness. But that suggests that we might legitimately seek to "trade up." If Marcia is a grand exemplifier of truth, beauty, and goodness, but later I meet Muffin, who exhibits those traits even more gloriously, should I then seek Muffin's love and cast Marcia aside? If this is a consequence of Socrates's position then he loses an indispensable aspect of salutary, interpersonal love—how the other person comes to be viewed as unique and irreplaceable even when we recognize that someone else possesses more excellences. In healthy loves we do not seek to trade up as a strategy for deeper fulfillment. On the other hand, Socrates might advise us that it is not necessary to identify and court the person we are convinced is the *best* exemplifier of the excellences for which we allegedly pine. If so, the problem of trading up evaporates. But, still, we seek guidance about whom we should love. Will *any* person whom we regard as somewhat beautiful, good, and true be suitable? Should the degree of beauty, goodness, and truth embodied by particular persons have any bearing on our selection?

My point is that Socrates's underlying assumptions—that the reason we love someone or something is the genuine object of our love; that the reason we love centers on excellences we perceive that someone or something possesses; that we seek the purest form of those excellences; that no earthly person or thing embodies the purest form of any excellence; and that love is therefore of excellent properties and attributes residing in another realm of reality—reduce interpersonal love to a passionate, intellectual exercise. Our passion in love is not really directed toward another concrete person, but, instead, is centered on philosophical abstractions that allegedly subsist in a transcendental realm accessible to us only after we die. For Socrates, the

world of everyday experience is never enough, and earthly loves are merely instrumentally valuable. To the extent that Dante endorses a similar view of love, he is subject to comparable objections. Does Dante understand what human love genuinely concerns? Does his disappointment in this world compel his faith in a blissful, transcendental realm? Of course, the Florentine poet, following religious imperatives, gazes at a more enthralling metaphysical reality than the impersonal dominion of Forms sketched by Plato. But is Dante's grasp of interpersonal human love more penetrating than Socrates's formulation in *Symposium*?[34]

DANTE'S MOST NOXIOUS VICE: EXCESSIVE PRIDE

In *Inferno*, as the pilgrim meanders through hell, Dante reveals his most noxious vice: excessive pride. The pilgrim meets his earthly mentor, Brunetto Latini, now residing among the sodomites in the seventh circle. During a lengthy conversation, the pilgrim expresses, among other things, his gratitude to Latini for showing him how man makes himself eternal: "*m'insegnavate come l'uom s'etterna*" (I 15.85). The pilgrim's reverence, however, exudes an admonition. Brunetto, through his example as a Florentine statesman, humanist, and intellectual as well as his direct counsel to Dante, revealed the recipe for earning enduring, deserved glory along ancient Roman lines. In that respect, Brunetto lubricated Dante's passage to earthly success. However, the natural human desire to attain and to exhibit excellence often spawns passion that flows away from spiritual salvation and reunification with the divine and misdirects toward only the self. To focus unwarrantedly on the self is to distort human identity unworthily.

Although the underlying reason Dante relegates Latini to the seventh circle of hell remains a matter of scholarly dispute,[35] one dimension of the great Florentine's condemnation was his excessive pride, exercised in a passel of different circumstances.

Later in the journey through hell, the pilgrim's guide, Virgil, scolds him for his indolence and urges the pilgrim on through a traditional Roman appeal for pursuing enduring glory:

> *"Omai convien che tu così ti speltre," disse 'l maestro; "ché, seggendo in piuma, in fama non si vien, né sotto coltre; senza la qual chi sua vita consuma, cotal vestigio in terra di sé lascia, qual fummo in aere e in acqua la schiuma."*
> ["Now you must cast aside your laziness," my master said, "for he who rests on a featherbed or under the covers cannot come to fame; and he who spends his life without fame leaves no more vestige of himself on earth than smoke bequeaths to air or foam to water."] (I 24.46–51)

Under pagan Roman values, deserved, enduring glory was the highest prize. In thirteenth-century Christian Florence, the allure of that crown continued to sparkle and tempt the highest cultural exemplars. But now conflict arose between recognized secular greatness and religious purification required for eternal salvation. Make no mistake: Even for as committed a Christian as Dante Alighieri, teleological imperatives and secular honors waged a battle for his soul. His response, in my judgment, occurs within his *Commedia*, where he both chronicles and therapeutically assuages these conflicting forces. In effect, he wins deserved, earthly glory as a fringe benefit while laboring in the service of higher objectives.

However, to conclude that Dante resolved his inner turmoil is overly sanguine. Justified pride in his accomplishments animated his quest for excellence. Yet, if exaggerated, justified pride amplifies into arrogance and vanity that undermined possibilities of promoting the love and community he cherished. In *Commedia*, Dante forces the pilgrim to participate in the sins of the (excessively) proud in the first terrace of purgatory. The pilgrim feels himself weighted down by his own arrogant tendencies as he perceives sinners beating their chests and walking about while burdened with stones of enormous weight. Having looked down on others while on earth, they are now unable to look up at anything. Looking downward presumably induces humility (P 11.43–57).

Suddenly a denizen of the first terrace recognizes the pilgrim and shouts out to him. Odersi da Gubbio (1240–1299), reminiscent of a chastened Brunetto, stands for excessive pride in talent, particularly literary and artistic. Odersi was an overly competitive artist, who, like Brunetto, aspired to "make himself eternal" through intellectual talent and attainment. He now extols the skills of a former student and rival, Franco Bolognese (P 11.82–84). Odersi mocks the conceit of talented intellectuals, who fail to comprehend that a better version of their expertise is already present or will soon emerge: Cimabue is overshadowed by Giotto as a painter; Guido Guinizelli has been surpassed by Guido Cavalcanti as a poet, and there may be someone already alive who will outshine both (P 11.94–99). (Any chance that would be Dante? If so, this is yet another reiteration that the disposition of excessive pride is obdurate.)

Odersi summons the insignificance of any one human being; we all occupy this earth for barely a moment in the great flow of time. Our earthly fame is only a capricious, stunningly unreliable burst of wind bearing an inescapable expiration date: "*Non è il mondan romore altro ch'un fiato/di vento, ch'or vien quinci e or vien quindi/e muta nome perché muta lato/Che voce avrai tu più, se vecchia scindi/da te la carne, che se fossi morto/anzi che tu lasciassi il 'pappo' e 'l 'dindi.*" ["Your earthly fame is but a gust of wind/ that blows about, shifting this way and that. and as it changes quarter, changes name. Were you to reach the ripe old age of death, instead of dying

prattling in your crib/would you have more fame in a thousand years?"] (P 11.100–5). Odersi anticipates the soliloquy of the Shakespearean character, Macbeth, as he highlights our cosmic insignificance, glaring fragility, and the contingency of human achievements. As such, Odersi offers a stern antidote to the breezy smugness of Brunetto Latini and his quest for enduring, worldly glory.

Odersi represents the hard turn away from the cheerfulness of the ancient Romans and of Brunetto Latini regarding the value of merited posthumous fame. Even ten centuries of worldly renown are trivial when contrasted to the immeasurability of eternity: "*pria che passin mill' anni? ch'è più corto/ spazio a l'etterno, ch'un muover di ciglia/al cerchio che più tardi in cielo è torto*" (P 11.106–8).

As Virgil and the pilgrim depart the first terrace of purgatory, the Angel of Humility brushes a wing over the pilgrim's brow, allowing him to ascend with humility. The pilgrim, by participating in the corrective punishment of pride meted out in the first terrace, has presumably been purged of the sin of pride (P 12.88–93).

If only Dante could self-exonerate so facilely. Our most deleterious shortcomings are often only amplification of our most splendid virtues. Dante endured the internal struggle between secular recognition and religious imperative throughout his life. He, as must we all, continued to live without cosmic guarantees and in the absence of final resolution.

What, then, is unwarranted self-regarding pride? I offer the following analysis. I am tempted to call it an analysis of arrogance—after all, "unwarranted pride" reeks with the stench of dissipation—but amplified, unworthy pride undoubtedly admits of numerous variations: arrogance, selfishness, vanity, presumption, self-righteousness, sanctimony, snobbery, and the like. Because distinctions can be reasonably drawn among these variations, I will stick reluctantly with "unwarranted pride" as the name of the genus. In the analysis, the unwarrantedly prideful person is represented by P and the object of pride by X.

P has unwarranted pride regarding X if and only if:

1. X is unworthy or not valuable in the relevant dimension (the one that P focuses on) and P is culpable for believing wrongly that X is worthy or valuable, *or*
2. P's feeling of satisfaction arising from P's connection to or achievement of or contribution to X is grossly inflated even though X is in fact worthy or valuable; *and*
3. P's unwarranted satisfaction or actions related thereto jeopardize the well-being of others by wrongly setting back their interests or by ignoring their interests where P should not, *or*

4. P's unwarranted satisfaction otherwise jeopardizes P's own well-being by affecting his character unworthily.

The basic structure of the analysis is that unwarranted, self-regarding pride occurs when either (1) or (2) is the case *and* either (3) or (4) is the case. Stating it more formally, unwarranted, self-regarding pride = [(1 or 2) and (3 or 4)]. In Dante's terms, the first condition concerns loving the wrong objects, the second condition involves loving objects in the wrong measure, and the third and fourth conditions relate to loving objects in inappropriate ways.

The analysis, though, requires further refinement. For example, suppose only the first condition is true. That itself implies that pride is unwarranted. After all, loving the wrong objects is enough to undermine all legitimate claims to warranted pride. True, but the unwarranted pride that ensues may be benign. If I take pride in, say, today's weather and oddly believe its existence is causally related to my efficacy, my pride is clearly unwarranted. I am probably taking pride in something that does not merit that emotion and I am certainly mistaken in taking credit for its existence. Yet without more, my unwarranted pride is harmless to self and community; it amounts to nothing more than a fatuous attribution.

Likewise, where the second condition of the analysis is true, the resulting pride is unwarranted from the outset. Disproportionate feelings of satisfaction are bereft of justification. Again, however, the pride at issue may be benign. If I take enormous pride in my ability to identify the starting outfield for the 1927 New York Yankees—draw the details of my inner glow as starkly as you wish—my self-congratulations need not impart insalubrious effects on either self or community. Assuming knowledge of such trivia embodies some minimal value and that I cherish my studied connection with the Yankee franchise, the disproportionate aspect of my pride, without the inclusion of more details, does not automatically translate to venality. Accordingly, technical precision requires that I flag my analysis as one of unwarranted, self-regarding pride that is noxious to self or community. Like Dante, my concern is not centered on benign forms of unwarranted pride.

The spectacular problem is that warranted pride so easily amplifies into arrogance or some other species of unwarranted, self-regarding, noxious pride. Arrogance is unwarranted, idolatrous, misdirected, and inaccurate. It oozes epistemological and moral deficiencies. Arrogance is love of self wrongly diverted toward contempt and hatred of others. Scoffing contemptuously at community, arrogance shuns moral duty as unworthy of pursuit. Arrogance struggles mightily to render the self invulnerable; it is unreasonable, inaccurate, unwarranted, and narcissistic. As such, arrogance hardens our hearts to intimacy, spiritual and earthly, and celebrates self-aggrandizement as an intrinsic good. Like all capital vices, arrogance corrodes the self and eviscerates human relationships. It persuades us that we are more than

we are; that we must demean those who may seem more exalted; that others are less worthy and deserve our scorn and condescension; that we are exceptions to the supposed moral law; that the good life consists in relentlessly striving for ever more recognition and status; that victories in zero-sum contexts are the measure of greatness. The citadel of the self becomes impenetrable and supreme. As such, arrogance denies the need for community and thereby reneges on our moral duties to others: the arrogant are selfish in that they ignore the interest of others when they should not.

Much unwarranted, pernicious self-regarding pride flows from the desire to excel. Other people are merely obstacles to our ends. We must struggle mightily to diminish them as a means of elevating ourselves. Furthermore, such pride is rebellion against rightful superiors, including the divine, as the self amplifies to become its own God. From Dante's vantage point, unwarranted, pernicious pride, like all vice, is its own punishment. The more desperately we struggle for self-sufficiency, the emptier and more self-absorbed we become. Our internal psyches reflect our wrongful deeds.

Warranted self-pride arises when its object is worthy or valuable in the relevant dimension (the dimension the agent focuses on) and the agent perceives that worth or value; the agent feels satisfaction arising from his or her connection to or achievement of or contribution (that is, the agent's relationship) to the object; the agent's satisfaction is proportionate to (not grossly inflated given) the agent's connection to or achievement of or contribution to the object and its worth or value; and the agent's satisfaction and actions related thereto do not jeopardize the well-being of others by wrongly setting back their interests or by ignoring their interests where the agent should not. Such pride is required if we are to maximize our highest potentials. Without warranted pride and the desire to excel, we court passivity and slothfulness. Pride ignites heroism and underwrites most of the great accomplishments in the world. In sum, a healthy pride spurs our best efforts, vivifies our quest for meaning and purpose, and shields us from resignation when adversity stings us.

Dante's message is that warranted pride grows so easily into arrogance or some other species of unwarranted, pernicious pride, that we must be permanently vigilant and self-assessing. Arrogance and its depraved siblings are probably unavoidable to some extent from a practical standpoint, and we all must yet again admit to being sinners. We must supplicate ourselves in the knowledge that pride, as a condition of fulfilling moral duty and an appropriate sense of self-worth, will naturally fatten into arrogance, which threatens our humanity and contaminates our relationships. Although we cannot extinguish the problem that lies at the core of the human condition, we can minimize its deleterious effects and remain resolute (and humble?) in our predicament.

CONCLUSION

Ancient Roman values and, especially, the illustrious launching of the Caesarian empire profoundly influenced the thought and life of Dante Alighieri. In a desperate genetic analysis of or metaphor for the maladies of Florentine society, he indicts its supposed Fiesolean heritage as the source of the city's cultural afflictions while he salutes its presumed Roman legacy as the wellspring of the city's distinction. Given his temporal context, however, pursuing the glories of Rome conflicted with Dante's theological mission. Understood as an ongoing tussle between the fascination with making himself eternal by earning deserved, enduring earthly glory and the transcendent crusade of spiritual purification, Dante's life secreted internal tension. In my judgment, Dante placated that incongruity by composing *Commedia*, a work that both exemplifies and interrogates his worldly pride in service of spiritual redemption. Dante understood painfully that warranted self-pride easily inflates into pernicious arrogance, that only loving the right objects in the proper measure can mollify but not dissolve the human existential crisis, and that wholesome communities are the antidote to cultural infirmities. In the end, he places his faith in the Principle of Dual Governance, which either illustrates the intractability of our earthly and heavenly salvation or encapsulates their last best hope.

NOTES

1. Giovanni Boccaccio, *Life of Dante*, trans. Philip H. Wicksteed (London: Oneworld Classics, 2009), 37–38.
2. Giovanni Villani, *Chronicle: Selections*, trans. Rose E. Self (Lexington, KY: CreateSpace, 2017), X. 136.
3. Marco Santagata, *Dante: The Story of His Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 282.
4. Boccaccio, *Life of Dante*, 40, 51, 52, 53.
5. Raymond Angelo Belliotti, *Dante's Deadly Sins: Moral Philosophy in Hell* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 3.
6. Ibid., 32–33.
7. Giovanni Boccaccio, *Expositions on Dante's Comedy*, trans. Michael Papio (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 447.
8. Santagata, *Dante*, 80–81.
9. Ibid., 81.
10. Giuseppe Mazzotta, *Reading Dante* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 60–63.
11. Steven Botterill, "*De vulgari eloquentia*," in *The Dante Encyclopedia*, ed. Richard Lansing (New York: Routledge, 2010), 294.
12. Ibid., 291.
13. Richard Lansing, "*Convivio*," in *The Dante Encyclopedia*, ed. Richard Lansing (New York: Routledge, 2010), 225.
14. Ibid., 230.
15. Anthony K. Cassell, "*Monarchia*," in *The Dante Encyclopedia*, ed. Richard Lansing (New York: Routledge, 2010), 617.
16. Etienne Gilson, *Dante the Philosopher* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1948), 211–12.

17. Cassell, "*Monarchia*," 622.
18. Santagata, *Dante,* 272.
19. Dante Alighieri, *The Letters of Dante*, trans. and ed. Paget Toynbee (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1920), "Letter to Cardinal Niccolò da Prato," para. 3, 4.
20. Dante, *Letters*, "Letter to Counts Oberto and Guido da Romena," para. 1, 3.
21. Dante, *Letters*, "Letter to Marquis Morello Malaspina," para. 2.
22. Dante, *Letters*, "Letter to the Princes and Peoples of Italy," para. 1, 2, 5.
23. Dante, *Letters*, "Letter to the Florentines," para. 5, 6.
24. Giovanni Villani relates the myth of the creation of Florence arising from the Roman trouncing of the Catalinian conspiracy and the genetic foundation of recurrent conflict in Florence thereafter: "And note that it is not to be wondered at that the Florentines are always at war and strife among themselves, being born and descended from two peoples so contrary and hostile and different in habits as were the noble Romans in their virtue and the rude Fiesolans fierce in war." *Chronicle*, I. 38.
25. Dante, *Letters*, "Letter to Emperor Henry VII," para. 7.
26. Dante, *Letters*, "Letter to a Friend in Florence," para. 3, 4.
27. Dante, *Letters*, "Letter to Can Grande della Scala," para. 8.
28. Ibid., para. 15.
29. Boccaccio, *Life of Dante*, 59.
30. Raymond Angelo Belliotti, *Dante's Inferno: Moral Lessons from Hell* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).
31. Cicero, *On Obligations*, trans. and with an introduction by P. G. Walsh (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), I. 41.
32. David Brooks, "The Rise of the Haphazard Self among Working-Class Men," *New York Times*, May 14, 2019, A22.
33. Joseph Anthony Mazzeo, "Dante's Conception of Love," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 18, no. 2 (1957): 147–60 at 160.
34. In the *Phaedrus*, Socrates delivers two speeches, the last of which describes philosophy informed by passion and personal love. In this dialogue, to love another person is not merely to seek a means to scale Diotima's ladder of love. Instead, to love another concrete individual is to be intoxicated with that person's character, and with mutual memories and shared aspirations. Here love is more than preoccupation with perceived excellences that the other person may well lose in the future. Passion fuels appreciation of the other for the person's own sake, not simply as a means to the world of Absolutes. Responding to another person passionately unifies the otherwise conflicting parts of the soul. While erotic love sustains our yearning for a return to the transcendent world of Absolutes, that is not its only function. In the *Phaedrus*, lovers of beauty and followers of Muses are not only compatible with but essential for the philosophical journey (PH 248d–249a). In the *Symposium*, we were left with a choice of understanding love as either Alcibiades's obsessive, unexplainable madness for another person or Socrates-Diotima's portrayal of earthly love as an instrument for the soul's intellectual ascension to direct apprehension of the highest Good. In the *Phaedrus*, we are presented a fuller alternative: a vision of mature love that elevates both parties, that is defined by passion, and that focuses on relationships between concrete individuals that are valued for their own sake. To attain the good, the true, and the beautiful requires the complexities of the passionate life. No longer is abstracting from the particularities of our world enough to ascend to the divine. A touch of erotic madness is required for personal depth and theoretical insight. In this dialogue, Plato combines Socrates's quest for the transcendent and Alcibiadess's passionate yearning for another person in all of his or her concreteness. Readers are no longer offered a stark choice between alternate renderings of erotic love, but are, instead, invited to embrace an alluring synthesis. In any event, *The Symposium* and *Phaedrus* challenge us to test the vitality of our own characters, our own souls, by assessing what and whom we love. Plato, *Phaedrus*, trans. R. Hackforth; *Plato: Collected Dialogues*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973).
35. See, for example, Mark Musa, Dante's Inferno, Notes, Canto XV (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971); Massimo Verdicchio, Reading Dante Reading (Edmonton, AB: M. V. Dimic Research Institute, 2008); John Aherne, "Troping the Fig: *Inferno* XV 66." *Lectura*

Dantis 6 (1990): 80–91 (sodomy); Lorenzo Guelfi, *Nuovi Studii sui Dante* (Città di Castello: S. Lapi, 1911) (onanism); Peter Armour, "Brunetto, the Stoic Pessimist," *Dante Studies* 112 (1994): 1–18 (pessimistic about human nature); "Dante's Brunetto: The Paternal Paterine?" *Italian Studies* 38, no. 1 (1983): 1–38 (Manichaean heresy); Mario De Rosa, *Dante e il padre ideale* (Naples: Federigo and Ardia, 1990) (Latini is condemned as an exemplar of an entire generation of Florentines); John Freccero, "The Eternal Image of the Father," in *The Poetry of Allusion*, ed. Rachel Jacoff and Jeffrey T. Schnapp (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991) (refusal to be bound by human limitations); Diane Culbertson, "Dante, the Yahwist, and the Sins of Sodom," *Italian Culture* 4, no. 1 (1983): 11–23 (lust for fame); Thomas Nevin, "Ser Brunetto's Immortality," *Dante Studies* 96 (1978): 21–37 (lack of spiritual vision and indifference to grace); Nicholas R. Havely, "Brunetto and Palinurus," *Dante Studies* 108 (1990): 29–38 (excessive worldliness); Elio Costa, "From *locus amoris* to Infernal Pentecost," *Quaderni d'Italianistica* 10 (1989): 109–32 (rejection of love); Sally Mussetter, "Dante and the Sin of Brunetto Latini," *Philological Quarterly* 63 (1984): 431–48 (professional malfeasance; amplified humanism); Lillian M. Bisson, "Brunetto Latini as a Failed Mentor," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 18 (1992): 1–15 (obsession with earthly fame); Massimo Verdicchio, "Re-reading Brunetto Latini and *Inferno* XV," *Quaderni d'Italianistica* 21, no. 1 (2000): 61–81 (pride and glory); James T. Chiampi, "Ser Brunetto, *Scriba* and *Litterato*," *Rivista di Studi Italiani* 18, no. 1 (2000): 1–25 (excessive individualism and solitude); Andre Pezard, *Dante sous la pluie de feu* (Paris: Vrin, 1950) (Latini blasphemed against the Italian language by writing the *Trésor* in French); Richard Kay, *Dante's Swift and Strong* (Lawrence: Regents Press of Kansas, 1978) (from Dante's perspective, Latini failed to recognize the rightful authority of the emperor and instead obsessed over Florence as an independent republic); Francesca Guerra D'Antoni, *Dante's Burning Sands* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991) (administrative improprieties involving conflicts of interests; exploiting ancient wisdom for profit); Eugene Vance, *Marvelous Signals* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986) (political opportunism, material aggrandizement while in office, excessive pride); Gregory B. Stone, "Sodomy, Diversity, Cosmopolitanism," *Dante Studies* 123 (2005): 89–132 (deranged ethnocentrism); Julia Bolton Holloway, *Twice-Told Tales* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993) (usury); Holloway, ed. and trans., *Il Tesoretto* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1981) (following Cicero too closely); Glenn A. Steinberg, "Dante's Bookishness" *Modern Philology* 112, no. 1 (2014): 25–55 (although Latini is portrayed as a sodomist, Dante places him in the seventh circle because of his inadequate poetry); Jeffrey Richards, "Dante's *Commedia* and Its Vernacular Narrative Context," (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Dissertation, 1978) (Dante is jokingly complying with Brunetto's instructions in *Tesoretto*, 103–12); C. T. Davis, "Brunetto Latini and Dante," *Studi Medievali* 8 (1967): 421–50 (Latini's placement is designed to facilitate the structure of the poem, connecting Brunetto, Marco Lombardo, and Cacciaguida). This list barely scratches the surface of the ongoing centuries-long scholarly speculation on Brunetto's sin in the eyes of Dante.

Chapter Three

Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527)

The Prince of Paradox

Your legacy marks you as a realist who grounded his political conclusions in dispassionate analyses of empirical events, even as the first modern political scientist; yet you yearned for things that were not and had never been, and often construed historical data to meet those objectives. Your reputation in popular literature is that of an unscrupulous intellectual mentor to political bunko artists; but you often professed love of country as your most cherished value: "*acciò che la Italia, dopo tanto tempo, vegga uno suo redentore*" ("Italy, so long enslaved, awaits her redeemer.") (P 26). You verbally scourged the papacy and mocked religious devotion; nevertheless, your writings exuded a deep spirituality. You often roamed through life cynically and ironically; yet romantic idealism just as frequently oozed from your façade of skepticism. Your efforts at composing verse were plebeian; notwithstanding, your most celebrated prose emanated soul-stirring poetry. Your father was unwavering in his republican affiliation and nearly all scholars place you within the same circle; still, you curried the favor of and sought political position with dynastic monarchs. Your surname is now uttered as a noun or adjective connoting the invocation of self-serving political or social scheming, cunning, and duplicity; however, you were never presumptive enough or sufficiently guileful to attain your earthly ambitions. You are Niccolò Machiavelli. Are you the prince of paradox? Or are you a patriotic dreamer ensnared within a political nightmare? Or are you both?

BIOGRAPHICAL HIGHLIGHTS

Machiavelli had black hair, was average in height, and was slender in build. His bearing was upright and dignified with a hint of cryptic confidence. His head was relatively small with sparse features and a prominent forehead. Machiavelli's eyes sparkled with mischief and his delicate lips harbored an enigmatic smile. Was this the smile of a man savoring special insight and advanced learning? Or was this the smirk of a Florentine grifter contemplating with self-satisfaction his next hoax? Or perhaps the ironic grin of a man resigned to the understanding that all human beings must in the end fail?

Niccolò was not a man to permit his marriage vows to impede a brief tryst with an agreeable paramour or a protracted romantic affair with an ardent partner. He was quick with a joke, witting in a sarcastic fashion, uncommonly intelligent, generous although not wealthy, often profane, and highly spiritual even if invariably critical of papal machinations within Italy. Although an unrepentant falconer of *la dolce vita*, Machiavelli had a knack for annoying complacent power brokers and piercing the inflated pretensions and self-congratulations of presumptuous influence peddlers. A man who prowled for money in service only of squandering it, Machiavelli was more deeply invested in earning public accolades and advancing his reputation. Beneath his frequent irreverence resided a passionate crusader for principle. Laughter was his medium, not his message, his way of staving off anxiety and concealing despondency.

Not immune to superstition, Machiavelli accepted the authority of celestial omens. Convinced his destiny exceeded the domesticity of rural living, Machiavelli was often intellectually preoccupied. Perceived by his contemporaries as more of an abstract thinker, a theoretician, than a man of political action, to some later commentators Machiavelli was a zealous patriot who anticipated Italian unification; to other interpreters he curried the favor of the powerful to prevail in the avaricious Florentine competition for personal honors, public recognition, and material gain.

Florentine Values and Their Social Context

Fifteenth-century Florentine values blossomed from the seeds sown by ancient Rome as nurtured by earlier iterations of Florentine culture. In Machiavelli's own words, Florence was "a city greedy for gossip, and judging things by results not theories."[1] Florentines were renowned for their acute irony, easy amiability, and sophisticated urbanity, all of which formed a patina for their inner bitterness and unbridled individualism. An ongoing commercial success, Florence financed its military defense through ad hoc employment of mercenary and auxiliary troops. Within the city, Niccolò Capponi identifies three predominant social vectors: the importance of nurturing powerful

associations; the contentious, argumentative independence of citizens; and the willingness for self-deprecating humor and teasing of others leavened by a reluctance to be the victim of ridicule.

> Wealth, personal connections, and the ability to jump on the right political bandwagon were not just cherished, but could make the difference between a life of privilege or one spent in exile—if not untimely death. . . . Florentines themselves were always polemical, corrosive, and wary of anything they felt could constitute an imposition on their lives. . . . Florentines love to make fun of themselves as well as others, though they do not want to be the target of jokes.[2]

The highest values were starkly personal: *honore et utile* (honor and gain), typically vested in earning lofty reputation, securing high public office, and material aggrandizement. The older Florentine emulation of pagan Rome's quest for posthumous preeminence was adjusted slightly to place additional weight on scoring success in the here and now. Rising to high public office was the goal of every Florentine bristling with *ambizione*. Still, genuine political unity and fervent collaboration continued to elude Florentine sensibilities: individualism retained pride of place over robust community.

In sum, the ancient Roman social structures of *amicitia* and *clientele*, and the Roman quest for deserved, enduring glory, competitive avidity, obsession with honor, and fixation with *dignitas* and *gravitas* remained vibrant in Machiavelli's Florence. The obstinate social maladies that Dante had cautioned the Florentines about two centuries earlier continued to fester and mortify. Still, these social dispositions and values were never unadulterated afflictions. Just as in ancient Rome and thirteenth-century Florence, they were also the source of astonishing creativity and stunning accomplishment.

Birth and Background

Niccolò Machiavelli was born in Florence in 1469, the year that Lorenzo de'Medici ("the Magnificent") rose to power in the city. His father, Bernardo, was a lawyer who had opposed the rule of the ruling hereditary Medici family and who had promoted republican governments—understood as political control by some of the city's most prominent citizens. The Machiavellis were well respected but far from wealthy. They were not, however, as impoverished as Niccolò sometimes suggested. From what little information is available, Niccolò enjoyed an untroubled, secure, warm childhood. Bernardo had helped compile the index for an edition of Livy's history of the early Roman republic and the publisher rewarded him with a copy of the text. Niccolò enjoyed a solid education and, although unfamiliar with Greek, read the classical Greek and Roman authors in Latin. Niccolò would later exten-

sively use his father's copy of Livy's history in his own writing. He was also enamored of modern authors such as Francesco Petrarca and Dante Alighieri.

In 1478, when Machiavelli was nine years old, the Pazzi, a wealthy family with an ancient Florentine lineage, plotted to oust Lorenzo the Magnificent and assume control of Florence. Part of the scheme was economic. The Medici bank was the most influential in Florence and much of the Medici family influence was grounded in its capability of controlling the purse strings. Most of the traditional Medici political power in Florence, in fact, was grounded in the family's economic advantage and shrewd manipulation of the electoral process. The Pazzi succeeded in having the papal bank account, the grandest in Italy, transferred from the Medici bank to its control. The Pazzi accomplished this by currying the favor of Pope Sixtus IV, who harbored dynastic ambitions. The Medici had earlier refused to finance one of the pope's adventures. This hardened Sixtus's resolve to destroy the Medici. Pursuant to that aspiration, the pope supported an enemy of the Medici as archbishop of Pisa, a port city controlled by Florence.

The Pazzi hired assassins to murder Lorenzo and his brother, Giuliano, in the cathedral during a Holy Week mass. When the altar bells rang during the Eucharist, the assassins struck. Giuliano was slain, but Lorenzo, wounded, escaped into the sacristy. The Pazzi, a case study in premature celebration, rode to the Palazzo della Signoria to seize power, while their minions rode through the streets of Florence shouting, "Liberty, liberty!"

Once the Florentine masses learned of the treachery, the brief reign of the Pazzi evaporated. The people admired Lorenzo and loved Giuliano. The Pazzi conspirators, enjoying the hospitality of the governmental palace, were arrested and their supporters were forcefully gathered. The Pazzi and the Archbishop of Pisa, who had a role in the plot, were executed and their corpses were untastefully displayed in the windows of the Palazzo della Signoria. The palaces of the schemers and their supporters were looted and burned. The people stormed through the streets shouting the anthem of the Medici.

Pope Sixtus, disappointed that the plot failed and stunned by the murder of the Archbishop, demanded that Lorenzo be turned over to papal control. The Florentines refused and the pope dispatched his minion, King Ferrante of Naples, to attack Florence and seize Lorenzo. Florence, as usual, was unprepared for war, and the Neapolitan army met no resistance. Lorenzo escaped, sailed to Naples, and convinced the king that the pope's annexation of Florence to his territories would also disadvantage Naples. After protracted negotiations, the War of the Pazzi Conspiracy ended in 1480. Lorenzo returned to Florence. The people greeted him as a conquering hero. The Pazzi conspiracy and its aftermath had profound effects on Machiavelli. He comments on this period of Florentine history frequently in his writings.

Lorenzo, understandably, was deeply affected by the Pazzi experience and the murder of his brother. Feeling more insecure, he traveled only with armed bodyguards. He began to act more like a domineering prince instead of an avuncular *padrone*. He began to treat state revenues as personal resources in contrast to the Medici tradition of promoting Florence with Medici funds. Lorenzo constricted the city's constitution to increase his power and the authority of his confidants.

In 1492, the year of Columbus's historic voyage, Lorenzo the Magnificent died. His son, Piero, assumed political control. Two years later, the French, under King Charles VIII, invaded Florence. Piero bungled the defense of the city. Piero was not merely less capable than his father; he was also immature and feckless. He had unwisely supported Naples in its dispute with Milan and France, virtually ensuring an invasion of Florence. When the attack occurred, Florence surrendered with almost no resistance, losing its control of Pisa as well. Piero was forced into exile and republican government was restored in Florence. Machiavelli was twenty-five years old.

Girolamo Savonarola

The brief, brilliant, deranged influence of Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498) followed. Savonarola was a Dominican priest who relentlessly railed against renaissance humanist values, the corruption of the papacy, and preoccupation with material goods. He first preached in Florence at the age of thirty without success. He left for Bologna, where his apocalyptic style began to draw attention. He was recalled to Florence around 1489 and immediately drew a receptive audience. Claiming to communicate directly with God and unveiling his numerous prophetic visions, Savonarola targeted Pope Alexander VI and the Medici rulers of Florence. He preached energetically about the final days of the world and the need to cleanse souls in preparation for final judgment. Perhaps aided by a widely held superstition that the year 1500 would mark the end of the planet, the increasing economic disparity in Florence between the rich and the poor, and the rapidly expanding effects of a plague—probably caused by syphilis spread by returning seafarers—Savonarola's haunting message of impending gloom and doom leavened by the possibility of salvation resonated among the people.

Savonarola was as austere as the rations at Auschwitz, as zealous as red ants at a picnic, and as driven as Silas Marner in sight of a dollar. Although inelegant and dour, Savonarola was a spellbinding orator who not only articulated his apocalyptic sermons but lived them. From 1490, working out of the monastery of San Marco, he spewed his fire and brimstone, criticizing the wicked ways of Florentines and the paganism of Lorenzo. Savonarola warned of an angry God whose imminent, final judgment would hurl terrible

vengeance upon the sordid Florentines. The people, wracked by guilt and riddled with insecurities, listened and cowered.

In 1494, Charles VIII of France invaded Florence, as Savonarola had predicted, and ousted the Medici. The French invasions presented Savonarola opportunity. Savonarola revealed that Charles VIII had been sent by God to punish Italy, purify the Church, and prepare the way for the second coming of Christ. Savonarola supported republicanism only as a prelude to theocracy. Savonarola filled the political gap caused by the overthrow of the Medici by serving as the spiritual leader of Florence. He and his followers inaugurated bonfires of the vanities in which luxuries of all manner—fancy clothes, mirrors, cosmetics, secular art, musical instruments, dice, chess pieces, humanistic poetry, and the like—were immolated in the town square. Paintings by masters such as Michelangelo and Botticelli were among the treasures burnt. Savonarola was hypersensitive to fun, recreation, and aesthetic pleasure, especially when enjoyed by other people.

Savonarola, emboldened by his success, ratcheted up the flames of his intensity. He and his sanctimonious, puritanical disciples were able to outlaw horse races, dice and card games, dancing, carnivals, and brothels. Homosexuality became a capital offense. Torture and excessive punishment for moral offenses were instituted. Demanding the regeneration of Christian spiritual values, veneration of asceticism, and repudiation of secular frivolity, he and his supporters organized a morality police. Through spying, rumor gathered from informants, speculation, and gossip, they passionately excoriated alleged wrongdoers, often publicly, and warned of impending retribution. Spiritual repression suffocated the city.

Isaac Newton's third law of motion assures us that for every action there is an equal, opposite reaction. Traditional Catholics, rival Franciscans, bankers, secular humanists, Medici holdouts, and miscellaneous others all had reasons to resent Savonarola's mercurial leap to power. Sectarian bitterness ensued between the *Arrabbiati* ("Hotheads") and the *Piagnoni* ("Sobbers"), the label that the Hotheads affixed to Savonarola's supporters who were renowned for weeping during the Dominican's sermons. Savonarola descended from power even more quickly than he had risen. As Machiavelli would later report, the friar was astonishingly inflexible and lacked an army. His defeat was inevitable. Eventually, the Franciscans challenged Savonarola to prove his status as a prophet. In a contest worthy of the World Wrestling Federation, an ordeal by fire was proposed: a Franciscan and Savonarola would walk through flames and God would protect the favored son. Savonarola, unable to refuse precisely the type of zany challenge that was his stock and trade, accepted. But on "game day" he quibbled and niggled over the terms and conditions of the ordeal for hours, while the entire city, including Machiavelli, waited anxiously for the advertised main event. Finally, God rendered His verdict: rain poured and the fires were extinguished.

Our unworthy attributes, the ones that lead to our demise, are usually just our worthy features, the ones that led to our ascension, exaggerated. So, too, with the well-meaning, deluded, fanatical Dominican friar. Predictably, he had gone too far. The world was not coming to an end, Savonarola's prescriptions had not enhanced the quality of life, and the people began to understand the dangers of his excesses. In addition, to give citizens added security, the friar had helped enact a legal right of appeal from sentences in political cases. Shortly thereafter, five citizens were condemned by the government to death. They lodged their right to appeal, but they were denied that right. Savonarola, who viewed the condemned men as his enemies, refused comment: "This took away more of the Friar's influence than any other event . . . revealing his ambitious and partisan spirit . . . [the event] brought him much censure" (D I 45). The rule of law can be a stern mistress.

He was excommunicated by an increasingly irritated Alexander VI, outbreaks at his monastery occurred, and Savonarola was taken prisoner. In 1498, accused of heresy and schism (trying to split the union of the Church), Savonarola and two of his main associates were tortured, hanged, and burned. Their ashes were dumped eagerly into the Arno River.

While Machiavelli could admire the friar's verve, boldness, and, especially, keen awareness of the corruption in the Church, he anticipated Savonarola's fall: "he acts in accordance with the times and colors his lies accordingly" (Ltr. 3: 3/9/98). Savonarola's deceptions were too thin to endure, a textbook case of ineffective reform grounded only in amplified rhetoric.

Savonarola lacked the means—the strong arms and secular laws—required to harden the resolve of his remaining supporters or to persuade critics to obey his decrees (P 6). Moses and Romulus understood that in founding or reforming a state, enemies harboring envy had to be slain. Machiavelli credits Savonarola with that same knowledge. Machiavelli had a measure of admiration for Savonarola's ability to rouse a crowd and rally supporters, but also perceived his fatal flaws and doomed ideology. The friar lacked a political or military position from which to launch the required assault. He had only the fire of his pulpit and the tenuous support of his followers (D III 30). Again, the message is that the unarmed prophet or the leader who cannot or will not take the horrifying steps required for political success must fail. Government is not run by prayers alone.

Public Service

Merchant aristocrats regained political control of Florence at Savonarola's death. Machiavelli, at age twenty-nine, was appointed Secretary to the Second Chancery of the Republic of Florence and a member of the Council of Ten of Liberty and Peace. Specializing in foreign and military affairs, he was one of the more important administrators in the city. Machiavelli, though,

was not an elected official. He was a state employee, not an independent politician.

From 1498 through 1512, Machiavelli made over two dozen diplomatic missions to Italian city-states and European powers. This experience greatly influenced his conclusions about international military and political affairs. Machiavelli's conviction hardened that Italy was culturally superior to the barbaric, better-organized monarchies of northern Europe. Italy itself was divided into regional loyalties: Venice, Milan, Florence, the Papal States, and the Kingdom of Naples were the main players. Machiavelli understood that foreign armies too easily threatened the balance of power on the Italian peninsula. He looked to the glories of the ancient Roman republic for additional lessons on military and political matters. Those two sources—his experiences as a diplomat and his interpretations of Roman history—would animate his thinking and writing.

In 1502, Machiavelli married Marietta di Ludovico Corsini. His wife proved to be undemanding and uncommonly understanding. She bore six children, one of whom died soon after birth. Also in 1502, Piero Soderini was elected *gonfaloniere à vita*, chief magistrate of the Florentine republic. Machiavelli became one of his closest ministers. So close was Machiavelli to Soderini that he was known as *il mannerino di Soderini* ("Soderini's puppet"). Machiavelli had genuine affection for Soderini, but later became disenchanted with the *gonfaloniere*'s indecisiveness and squeamishness.

Pivotal to Machiavelli's political education was his diplomatic mission to Cesare Borgia, who was consolidating his power in northern Italy through force, fraud, and theatrical bluffs. Machiavelli was dispatched to ingratiate himself into Borgia's favor, and to advance and safeguard Florentine interests. He saw in Borgia a decisive, fearless, ruthless, often brutal commander. Backed by the power and influence of his father, Borgia had mastered the unforgiving techniques that had served foreigners so well in Italy. Machiavelli clearly admired Borgia's skills in foreign affairs—he was a conqueror—and in internal relations—he supposedly reformed Romagna (P 7; Leg 11.15: 7/26/02; Leg. 11.10: 10/13/02; Leg. 11.36: 11/3/02; Leg. 11.50: 11/20/02; Leg. 11.82: 12/26/02; Ltr. 247: 1/31/15; AW VII 194). Cesare advised Machiavelli that Florence was hamstrung by waffling, compromise, and delay. Florence, as with all cities in crisis, needed a strong man to lead resolutely.

Cesare Borgia ("Duke Valentino") (1475–1507)

Cunning grifter, colorful mountebank, ferocious warrior, charismatic opportunist, ruthless gangster, intellectual strategist, deceptive charlatan, cold-blooded murderer—Cesare Borgia was all of these and more. He was the illegitimate son of Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia. In 1492, the cardinal became Pope Alexander VI. Cesare was immediately the beneficiary of the first of a

recurring string of nepotistic acts: he was named Archbishop of Valencia and soon thereafter was anointed as a cardinal. Describing and analyzing Borgia more fully is required if we are to comprehend Machiavelli's patriotism, his longing for a united Italy, and how the Florentine projected his hopes and fears onto this fierce swashbuckler.

At first, Cesare was content to enjoy *la dolce vita* in Rome. But, as Machiavelli would have anticipated, Cesare Borgia seethed with *ambizione*. Rafael Sabatini reports:

> [Borgia was] a cold, relentless egotist, using men for his own ends, terrible and even treacherous in his reprisals, swift as a panther and as cruel where his anger was aroused., yet with certain elements of greatness: a splendid soldier, an unrivalled administrator, a man pre-eminently just, if merciless in that same justice . . . boundless in audacity, most swift to determine and to act, not impulsive. Cold reason, foresight, and calculation were the ministers of his indomitable will.[3]

The ecclesiastical life, although brimming with benefits and security, was too domesticated. He lusted after the political position of his older brother Giovanni, Duke of Gandia, who was the main architect of Pope Alexander VI's political stratagems. The Duke of Gandia was murdered. Insiders attributed the slaying to Cesare. In fairness to Borgia but without exonerating him, numerous other suspects also had motive, opportunity, and means to dispose of the Duke.[4] With the death of his older brother, Cesare assumed the role of the pope's political hatchet man. He traveled to Naples and crowned Frederick of Aragon king. After receiving permission from the pope and the College of Cardinals, Borgia renounced the priesthood. God's loss was Treachery's gain. Borgia brought Louis XII a papal edict annulling Louis's marriage, so the monarch could wed his latest favorite. Louis showed his gratitude by appointing Cesare the Duke of Valentinois and pledging military aid for Cesare's proposed military adventures.

The pope dispatched Cesare to subdue the province of Romagna. With the aid of French auxiliaries, Swiss and Italian mercenaries, a dose of fraud, a measure of theater, an overpouring of ruthlessness, and recurring violence, Borgia was soon on the move: Imola, Forli, Pesaro, Rimini, Faenza, Piombino, Camerino, Urbino, and other regions soon fell under Cesare's heavy hands. A conspiracy, though, quickly ensued against him. Led by some of the princes ousted by Borgia, such as the Orsinis and some of Cesare's own captains, such as Vitellozzo Vitelli and Oliverotto da Fermo, revolts at Urbino and elsewhere were temporarily successful. But Louis XII, presumably savoring his new marriage, pledged additional help. That, along with a rupture in the solidarity of the conspirators, swung the pendulum in Borgia's favor. For his part, Cesare managed, through fraud and savagery, at Senigallia to eliminate the captains who had betrayed him.

After Borgia had destroyed the power of the Colonnas in Romagna, he faced several obstacles. He doubted the reliability of his own military forces, he could not be certain of the continued support of Louis XII, and he doubted the allegiance of the Orsini troops. His reliance on the military forces and goodwill of others was bound to be his undoing (P 7).

Borgia responded resolutely. He moved against the Orsini and Colonna by luring nobles allied to them in Rome to his side through promises of pensions and power. After the Orsini and some of Cesare's own captains spawned the rebellion at Urbino, Borgia hatched the glorious stratagem that won Machiavelli's approval. Cleverly hiding his true intentions, Borgia arrived at a rapprochement with the Orsini. Their leaders, along with Borgia's formerly traitorous captains, arrived at Sinigallia to celebrate their supposed reunification (P 7; P 8). Later that night, Vitelli and Oliverotto were strangled. The others were disposed of soon thereafter. Neither man showed moxie at the end. Vitelli begged that the pope be petitioned to give him a plenary indulgence for his sins. Oliverotto sobbed and feebly tried to indict Vitelli as the true and only source of the injuries perpetrated upon Duke Valentino. Garrett Mattingly tidily describes Borgia's aplomb and Machiavelli's response:

> [Borgia] was a ruthless gangster and an expert confidence man, and the revolt of some of the smaller gangsters, his captains, gave him an opportunity to display his talents. Machiavelli watched, fascinated, while Cesare, all mildness and good will, lured his mutinous subordinates into a renewed friendship, and when they arrived unarmed and unescorted at a rendezvous where Cesare had hidden his bodyguards, had them seized and murdered. Machiavelli was delighted at the virtuosity of the performance.[5]

Borgia's analysis of this incident differs. He claimed that the Orsini and Oliverotto, under the guise of reconciliation, had amassed a major military force at Sinigallia and were planning a full-scale attack. Borgia took them by surprise in a classic, justified preemptive strike.[6]

Another highlight of Borgia's reign, for Machiavelli, occurred in Romagna. Finding that ineffective nobles had exploited their subjects, and that internal corruption and destructive conflict—led by hordes of robbers, bandits, and criminals—were pervasive, Borgia acted decisively. He bestowed complete power over the region to the cruel, effective, Remiro d'Orco. Quickly, d'Orco established order through harsh and extralegal means. Then, fearing that the inhabitants were coming to hate d'Orco, Borgia named a civil court of justice to investigate complaints against him. The people received the message that Borgia could be tough—he had appointed d'Orco—and he could be just—as he named a court to examine d'Orco's excesses. To prevent the people from wrongly concluding that Borgia was not completely in charge, Cesare had d'Orco killed. For theatrical and symbolic effect, he had

d'Orco sliced in two and the bodily halves placed in the corners of the town piazza, with a chopping board and a bloody knife beside them. The citizens of Romagna were at once pleased, awed, and shocked (P 7).

The conventional interpretation of this horrifying deed is that Borgia used d'Orco, then disposed of him when convenient and advantageous for Borgia; the autocratic governor was merely following Cesare's orders and was murdered when he was no longer required for Borgia's purposes. The more charitable rendering is that d'Orco grossly exceeded what was necessary to pacify Romagna, expropriated and sold food for his own profit, and was also part of the conspiracy—involving Vitelli, the Orsini, and Oliverotto—against Borgia: the tyrant of Romagna was properly slain for offending Borgia's sense of justice and for plotting against him.[7]

Borgia used cruelty and deceit to unite and bring order and peace to Romagna. In order to accomplish his goals, Borgia coldly exploited d'Orco, apparently in premeditated fashion. Borgia also "established a civil court in the center of the province, placing an excellent judge in charge of it, and requiring every city to appoint a lawyer to represent it before the court" (P 7). In this manner, Borgia was able to exact his plan while avoiding the hatred of citizens ("better to be feared than loved but avoid being hated"). Borgia had positioned himself to be viewed plausibly as forceful (he had d'Orco sliced in two) but fair (he established a legal system and short-circuited d'Orco's excesses).[8]

Cesare had gained the friendship of Roman nobles, made allegiances in the College of Cardinals, and consolidated his power in conquered territories. Knowing his father was mortal, Borgia aspired to acquire so much force and influence that he would be able to independently resist any attack. Cesare, wisely, moved to distance himself from reliance on mercenary troops, the French, and the papacy (P 7).

Fortuna, though, turned against Cesare Borgia. He could not complete his master plan. Early in 1503, Borgia went to Rome to track down the last of the Orsini loyalists. He was amassing troops for a new offensive in central Italy, when both he and the pope contracted a virulent fever. The pope died. Cesare was incapacitated. Without his father's support, Borgia's power, especially his alliance with King Louis XII, softened. Pope Pius III replaced Alexander VI, but he was old and ill. Borgia's hold on conquered regions began to loosen, town by town.

Pope Pius III died shortly thereafter. Then, Cesare, his judgment weakened, blundered colossally. He eventually allowed Julius II to be elected pope. Borgia apparently had enough influence to prevent this, but relying on the enterprising papal candidate's assurances, he agreed to throw his support to Julius. In return, Borgia was to retain control of conquered land and be placed in charge of the papal army. The great con man misread Julius's intentions. Predictably, the new pope, who was a longtime enemy of the

Borgias and who feared and hated Cesare, reneged on his promises and moved successfully against him (P 7; D III 4).

Pope Julius II demanded all of Cesare's remaining territories be restored to the church. Borgia was arrested but was freed when he surrendered his territories. Borgia went to Naples and was there arrested under order of King Ferdinand of Spain. He was a prisoner in Spain for two years but escaped and found refuge at the court of his brother-in-law, the king of Navarre. Cesare died fighting on his behalf at Viana.

Regarding military matters, Machiavelli called Borgia "a model to be imitated" (P 13; Ltr. 247: 1/31/15). He had used French auxiliary troops to conquer Imola and Forli. Sensing these were unreliable, he switched to the mercenary troops of Orsini and Vitelli. Finding these dangerous and treacherous, he understood that he must form and train his own troops. At this point, Borgia's reputation soared as it was apparent that he was in total command of his own forces (P 13). Machiavelli also praised Borgia's military tactics (D II 24; AW VII 194). Sabatini adds:

> A proof of the splendid discipline prevailing in Cesar's army is afforded during his brief sojourn in Pesaro. . . . Occupation by such an army was, naturally enough, cause for deep anxiety on the part of a people who were but too well acquainted with the ways of the fifteenth century men at arms. But here was a general who knew how to curb and control his soldiers. Under the pain of death his men were forbidden from indulging any of the predations or violences usual to their kind.[9]

Machiavelli also uses Borgia indirectly to once again indict the use of power by the Church (P 11). For the most part, Cesare was the instrument of Pope Alexander VI. He was eventually defeated by the treachery of Pope Julius II. The church, yet again, had failed to act in the best interests of the country. It placed its own material interests ahead of the common good. Machiavelli was disappointed yet again but not surprised.

In the beginning, Machiavelli created from his own projections a Cesare Borgia whom he could admire, a standard bearer for Machiavelli's longing for a united Italy and a medium for Machiavelli's fears, hopes, dreams, and needs. Borgia's ultimate failure—caused by unfavorable *Fortuna* and Cesare's shocking gullibility in trusting the assurances of Pope Julius II—is a microcosm of human life a la Machiavelli: Our most profound yearnings inspire faith; acclaimed successes ensue; our faith amplifies only to be frustrated as our triumphs prove ephemeral; and in the end we all must fail. Necessity and *Fortuna* must prevail.

Political Glory

During his missions to Borgia, Machiavelli observed the unreliable nature of mercenary troops, which seemed to vacillate between treacherous and cowardly actions. He also noted the danger of auxiliary troops, which were loyal to their homeland not to the country that employed them. Machiavelli was enthralled by the accounts of the Roman historian, Livy, who celebrated the citizen armies of volunteers that had energized Roman expansion. Such armies were not only militarily effective, but they exuded patriotism, discipline, common identity, and civic virtue. Machiavelli petitioned Soderini. The *gonfaloniere* put Machiavelli in charge of military operations. The citizen army that was recruited, however, consisted mainly of politically disenfranchised rural peasants who lacked a strong stake in the Florentine republic. In 1508, Machiavelli was put in charge of the war against Pisa, which had been waged sporadically for over a decade. He directed the sea and land blockage that brought about Pisa's surrender in 1509. The citizen army, over ten thousand strong, appeared to be a success. Machiavelli bowed to cheers.

Political Rejection

Soon thereafter, however, events spiraled uncontrollably and disastrously. In 1511, the Holy League of Mantua—led by the Papal States, Spain, some German regions, and some Italian city-states—was formed to oust the French from Italy. Florence, though, was allied closely with France. What should it do? Soderini fumbled, mumbled, and bumbled. He avoided serious participation in the dispute, eventually sending only a token force to France. As Machiavelli had predicted, both sides ended up despising Florence. Regardless of who won the war, Florence would suffer the sting of retribution.

Within a year, the Holy League had largely defeated the French. Just outside of Florence, an elite force of Spanish veterans attacked Prato. Machiavelli's large militia was ensconced within the thick walls of a fortress. Spanish artillery assaulted the fortress and penetrated its walls. Machiavelli's marauders threw down their weapons and ran helter-skelter into the countryside. Over four thousand people were slaughtered in Prato. No obstacle to the Holy League's triumphant entry into Florence remained.

Soderini's prospects for remaining *gonfaloniere à vita* were zero. The "*vita*" turned out to be only a decade. He resigned and scampered into exile. Machiavelli resented the aristocratic political class he served. They often criticized him while failing to appreciate the sensitive diplomatic positions in which they placed him. All the while, he—more honest, capable, and patriotic than they—was dischargeable at their whim as he labored at their pleasure (Ltr. 176: 11/29/09). Moreover, the aristocrats generally hindered republican government with their amplified sense of entitlement, haughty skepticism,

and deflated commitment to the common good. They were too weak to consolidate an alternate view of politics but pesky enough to swing the balance between republicanism and Medician principality. For Machiavelli, such aristocrats were the most annoying serpents in Florentine society. The aristocrats viewed Machiavelli similarly.

In his *Ricordo ai Palleshi* (Memorandum to Supporters of the Medici), written in late October or early November 1512, Machiavelli cautioned the Medici against publicizing the alleged misdeeds of Piero Soderini. Doing so would only embolden the aristocrats who had long opposed Soderini. A wiser course of action was available: expose aristocratic excesses to the people; invite the people to despise the aristocrats; and make the aristocrats dependent on the Medici rulers. In that missive, Machiavelli stigmatized the aristocrats as "those who play the whore between the people and the Medici." The diatribe backfired. The Medici were currying the favor of the aristocrats to buttress their return to power. Machiavelli's vitriol hastened his own fall from political grace. The aristocrats celebrated.

With Soderini's capitulation, Machiavelli would soon be between jobs. Giovanni de'Medici, the second son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, took control of Florence. Giovanni had strongly served the Holy League and was rewarded for his prescience. In 1513, Giovanni was elected Pope Leo X. The Florentine republic was no longer. Giuliano de'Medici, youngest son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, was governor of Florence.

Machiavelli was not only discharged, but he was soon implicated, apparently falsely, in a plot to overthrow the Medici. His name was included in a list in the possession of a Medici opponent. He was imprisoned and tortured with the *strappado.* Sebastian de Grazia gracefully describes the brutality:

> Your wrists are tied behind your back and bound to a rope hanging from a pulley. The other end of the rope is pulled down and you are hoisted up to a ceiling, arms yanked up behind, your body turning almost horizontally, its weight borne by twisted arms and shoulders. Then the rope is released and you plunge almost to the floor, the halt virtually tearing your arms out of their sockets. The process is then repeated, four times being a rough average for interrogative purposes.[10]

The *strappado* was crude but earned an impressive record: Almost everyone subjected to this torture confessed even though they knew that an admission of guilt was typically followed by an execution. For those with an unrefined sense of matching penalties to crimes, the *strappado* was an unmitigated success. Need a perpetrator? Subject the accused to the *strappado.* Granted the notion of the "voluntariness" of the confession was stretched beyond recognition, but the *strappado* drastically reduced the need for investigative police work.

Machiavelli survived six yanks of the *strappado* and twenty-two days in manacles. He did not confess and from all accounts conducted himself honorably and courageously. Machiavelli later wrote that "I should like you to get this pleasure from these troubles of mine, that I have borne them so straightforwardly that I proud of myself for it and consider myself more of a man than I believed I was" (Ltr. 206: 3/18/13). Machiavelli was released as part of a general amnesty accompanying the election of Pope Leo X. With no prospects, few resources, and much to fear, he left Florence and retired to a small family farm near San Casciano, about seven miles outside the city. When the weather cooperated, he could view the tower of the Palazzo della Signoria, the seat of Florentine political authority, now so far from his grasp. In 1513, Machiavelli was relegated to obscurity.

The Rucellai Gardens and the Literati

While in exile, Machiavelli hunted, farmed, squabbled with local merchants, hung out in taverns, played card and dice games, and wrote. The scholarly consensus is that Machiavelli wrote *The Prince* between July and December of 1513, with the possibility that he added the dedication and final chapter as late as 1516. He wrote *The Discourses* from 1513 to 1517, although some historians argue it was composed mostly from 1515 to 1516, with late adjustments in 1517. A few scholars claim that *The Discourses* were not completed until 1519.[11] Machiavelli completed the *Art of War* in 1517 and published it in 1521—the only one of Machiavelli's major works issued during his lifetime. He wrote his first and best-received play, *La Mandragola*, from 1518 to 1519. He completed *The Life of Castruccio Castracani* by 1520 and *The Florentine Histories* in 1526. *The Prince* was not published until 1532 and *The Discourses* in 1531.

Machiavelli also penned two sorts of letters: official correspondence, *The Legations*, when he was secretary of the Committee of Ten; and informal letters he wrote to his political associates and friends. Among the recipients of the latter were Francesco Vettori, ambassador of the Medici-controlled Florentine republic to Rome, Francesco Guicciardini, Biagio Buonaccorsi, Filippo Casavecchia, Agostino Vespucci, and Francesco del Nero. By far the most famous of these figures were Vettori and Guicciardini, the Papal Governor of Romagna. Machiavelli also participated in political discussions in the Rucellai Gardens, presided over by his republican friend, Cosimo Rucellai.

Many of the ideas compiled in *The Prince* were rehearsed in Machiavelli's correspondence with Vettori. In a letter dated December 10, 1513, Machiavelli poignantly details a typical day in his life, which culminates in the evening as he dons courtly garments and "converses" with great ancient writers. He also announces in that letter the completion of *The Prince* and his

intention to dedicate the work to Giuliano de'Medici, who was briefly the governor of Florence prior to being named a cardinal when his brother was elected as Pope (Ltr. 224: 12/10/13). Machiavelli eventually dedicated *The Prince* to Lorenzo de'Medici, grandson of the Magnificent, who was the Duke of Urbino and the de facto ruler of Florence once Giuliano left for Rome. Throughout this period of exile, he longed to return to political office and implement the principles he had derived. Despite his maneuverings and his implorations to his friends Vettori and Guicciardini, Machiavelli's résumé remained unsolicited.

Finally, Cardinal Giulio de'Medici commissioned Machiavelli to write *The Florentine Histories*. Machiavelli was eager to work and hoped it would lead to a return to politics, but he was anxious about describing the Florentine republic, 1494–1512. He assumed that he was expected to curry the favor of the Medici and sully the image of the republican era. Yet he was an integral part of that republican government for fourteen years. Machiavelli solved the problem with characteristic aplomb: he ended the book at 1492, the year Lorenzo the Magnificent perished. Moreover, he finessed his account of Medici rule, honestly praising their foreign policy and paying less attention to the loss of liberty attending the Magnificent's final decade of rule. In 1525, Machiavelli traveled to Rome to present the work to Giulio, who had been elected Pope Clement VII two years earlier.

The pope received Machiavelli's labors warmly and offered Machiavelli a return to Florence. By 1526, Machiavelli was given minor work related to the defensive structures in Florence. He thirsted for more critical assignments. Events conspired against him.

Final Disappointment

The following year, the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, sacked Rome, an event that eviscerated the power of the Medici. Machiavelli and others had implored the pope to heavily fortify Rome in preparation for the emperor's unwelcomed arrival. Instead, Clement VII negotiated a series of truces with Charles V and released his own troops to save money. The result was completely predictable: The emperor, sensing an easy military victory, ignored his promises, broke the peace, and stormed into Rome. The imperial army included mostly undisciplined barbarians who savagely despoiled the city. For more than a week, Charles's cutthroats murdered, raped, looted, ransacked, and kidnapped. Pope Clement VII retreated to safety. About fifty thousand Romans either fled or were slaughtered. The foreigners left only decay, disease, and despair behind them.

As a direct result of the sack of Rome, the Medici were, once again, expelled from Florence in 1527. Machiavelli was convinced that the revitalized republic that emerged would thirst for his services. But Machiavelli was

now associated with the Medici, whose benefits he had cadged. No job offer was forthcoming.

Seduced then abandoned by the narcotics of public approbation and political ascendency, enthralled by unrequited patriotic reveries and nationalistic fantasies, disheartened by the discrepant reception of his civic recommendations, befuddled that his literary cachet radiated first and foremost from a comedic play, spurned once and finally by the goddess *Fortuna* he had wooed forever, Machiavelli was fifty-eight years old, without hope, and bereft of redemption.

Death and Legacy

Niccolò Machiavelli died later that year and was buried in Santa Croce, a Franciscan church in Florence that also contains the bodies of Michelangelo and Galileo, and a memorial to Dante. By 1559, the Roman Catholic Church had placed Machiavelli's books, all allegedly contaminated by the evil ostensibly celebrated in *The Prince*, on its Index of Prohibited Books. Throughout the past centuries, thousands of tourists have strolled through Santa Croce every week. They take photos of Machiavelli's grave. The epitaph on his tombstone reads, "*Tanto nomini nullum par elogium*" ("To such a name no eulogy is equal").

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Interpreters of Machiavelli's corpus of writing should preface their exegeses by expressing their self-understanding of their projects. That any thinker who wrote as extensively as Machiavelli can be unreservedly consistent is implausible. Wavering contexts, motivations, and intentions compel nuances that resist facile assimilation. I will resolve interpretative conflicts arising from Machiavelli's letters, poems, political treatises, histories, military analyses, and comedies by appealing to the principle of charity that requires critics to put the work in the best possible light prior to evaluating it. That is, we should interpret Machiavelli in a fashion that demonstrates that his work is rational, avoids obvious falsehoods and fallacies, and forms a coherent whole.

We begin by trying to understand the work instead of by foraging for perceived contradictions and weaknesses; we aspire to understand his thinking in its most powerful, persuasive form; and if more than one interpretation of a passage is available, we select the most credible. Moreover, we attend sympathetically to innovative ideas while suspending our own settled convictions on the matter; we focus carefully on how a phrase or concept can be used in various contexts and with different connotations, choosing the meaning that best supports the author's conclusions; we avoid accepting sweeping

statements that undermine those conclusions and instead recognize distinctions that might salvage the author's evidence. In short, we read the text in the manner that renders it most compelling and evaluate its theses only after we are satisfied that we have interpreted it charitably.

That interpreters should attribute the most reasonable and most persuasive view to the texts they later judge seems both honorable and uncontestable, at least at first glance. But first impressions, like solicitous time-share vendors and empathetic telemarketing evangelists, often belie their initial appearances. Applying the principle of charity requires an antecedent notion of what constitutes a text's "most persuasive form" or "best light" or "most powerful rendering." What is taken to be the "best light" may distill to little more than that rendering which mirrors the standards that the interpreter embraces. Thus, the danger of applying a principle of charity is to conflate the results of an interpreter's application of his or her own values with what, in this case, Machiavelli embodies and exemplifies. To a certain extent, that interpreters project their values on the texts they are investigating is inevitable, but the degree to which an interpreter's normative, often subconscious, agenda drives the analysis must be minimized.

Fortuna and *Virtù*

Machiavelli sometimes writes as if *Fortuna* is a personified, natural force that consciously and capriciously plays with the circumstances of human beings. At other times, he writes as if *fortuna* is only the set of circumstances within which human beings must operate and choose alternatives (P 25). Although he entertains and admits being drawn to the proposition that the affairs of the world are governed completely by *Fortuna*, he rejects that view. Citing the existence of free will, Machiavelli carves a spot for human agency and prudence. *Fortuna*, he speculates, controls only about 50 percent of human actions (P 25). Wise human beings can take proactive and reactive measures to soften *Fortuna*'s fury.

Few words in a political text have generated as much controversy as Machiavelli's use of the term *virtù.* Typically, translators caution readers not to associate the term with moral virtue. That warning, though, is misleading because at times Machiavelli does speak of moral *virtù*. This, however, is not the primary way he uses the term. *Virtù* has been translated as efficiency, skill, strength, excellence, discipline, manliness, admirable qualities, ability, virtue, effectiveness, will power, exceptional qualities, vigor, greatness, courage, intelligence, and a host of related attributes.

Machiavelli's rendering of *virtù* is complicated because he readily includes three sometimes conflicting qualities into the general understanding of that term: discharging excellently one's functions, whatever they may be; demonstrating virility through exercising power, autonomy, and resolute-

ness; and practicing moral rectitude as understood by conventional morality grounded in Christianity. Accordingly, those who seek to interpret *virtù* univocally foster ambiguity and confusion. To remedy that potential problem, I prefer to discuss different senses of the term that reflect to different degrees the three qualities contained in the general understanding of it: military *virtù*, political *virtù*, civic *virtù*, moral *virtù*, and artistic *virtù*.

A critic might object: "If Machiavelli intended *virtù* to connote different qualities for politicians, militarists, artists, and the like why did he not use a different term for each or at least different modifiers to highlight such differences?" My response is how could *virtù not* connote different qualities in different contexts? The most general meaning of the term is virtue, understood as excellence in discharging one's functions. Are not the virtues of an excellent artist different from those of an excellent politician, an excellent teacher, an excellent warrior, and the like? But why did he not use different modifiers to distinguish civic *virtù* from military *virtù* from artistic *virtù*, and so on? Classical writers were rarely that precise.[12] Machiavelli recognizes various types of excellences appropriate to different roles and uses the same general term for them. This is typical of classical writers who were less analytically rigorous than contemporary philosophers. That Machiavelli was often imprecise in this sense is also attested to by the dozens of radically different interpretations of the meaning of his work that have emerged throughout the centuries.

Accordingly, for Machiavelli, *virtù* connotes primarily an excellence relevant to a person's function. Human beings inhabit a world of scarce resources and keen competition that coalesces uncomfortably with our bottomless ambitions and passions. Worse, we are susceptible to the whims of *Fortuna*, which often conspire against our best-devised stratagems. Only people embodying *virtù* can adequately cope with *Fortuna*, confront adversity with renewed purpose, imagine and pursue grand deeds, and maintain their resolve and passion in a relentlessly competitive world.

Fortuna always affects human actions by limiting possibilities and foiling the most assiduous calculations. But human free will and *virtù* retain vibrancy and permit us the agency to conceive and assess our deeds regardless of the constraints of necessity and the machinations of *Fortuna*. Still, the presence of necessity and *Fortuna*, along with the behavior of other human beings and the nature of the world, often render strict compliance with conventional morality impossible. As such, *virtù* and necessity are codependent. Where necessity constrains possibilities and thereby narrows the range of human choice, *virtù* becomes paramount in making the proper decision and choosing the best alternative. The power of necessity, then, tills the fertile soil for the testing of human *virtù.*

With these cautions in mind—the pitfalls of charitable textual interpretation and the interplay between *fortuna* and *virtù*—I begin by undermining the

most common perception about his political philosophy: that Machiavelli endorses the normative proposition that the ends justify the means.

Justifications and Excuses

Machiavelli never wrote or subscribed to the proposition that "the good end justifies every means." The closest he came is in *The Prince*:

> *e nelle azioni di tutti gli uomini e massime de' principi dove non è iudizio a chi reclamare, si guarda al fine. Facci dunque uno principe di vincere e mantenere lo stato: é mezzi saranno sempre iudicati onorevoli e da ciascuno laudati; perché il vulgo ne va sempre preso con quello che pare e con lo evento della cosa.* (P 18)

In some British and American translations of that work, particularly those composed in the first half of the twentieth century, the phrase "the end justifies the means" appears. For example, the Modern Library edition of *The Prince*, based on a translation by Luigi Ricci in 1903 as revised by E. R. P. Vincent in 1935, reports: "In the actions of men, and especially of princes, from which there is no appeal, *the end justifies the means*. Let a prince therefore aim at conquering and maintaining the state, and the means will always be judged honorable and praised by every one [*sic*], for the vulgar is always taken in by appearances and the issue of the event" (P 18; emphasis added).[13]

Those translators projected a principle or phrase unknown to Machiavelli upon his work, perhaps to make it relevant to contemporary readers. Much worse, they transformed a descriptive observation ("most people evaluate only by results") into a prescriptive doctrine ("a felicitous outcome morally justifies whatever the means used to secure it."). Happily, in every translation I have read in the past, say, thirty years that error has vanished. For example, David Wooten's translation of the same passage: "In the behavior of all men, and particularly of rulers, against whom there is no recourse at law, *people judge by the outcome*. So if a ruler wins wars and holds on to power, the means he has employed will always be judged honorable, and everyone will praise them. The common man accepts external appearances and judges by outcome" (P 18; emphasis added).[14] Wooten, correctly, retains the descriptive grounding of Machiavelli's words.

From a philosophical standpoint the difference between what Machiavelli wrote and what some translators and interpreters have attributed to him is profound. Machiavelli is making an *empirical* claim: the masses, as a matter of fact, evaluate actions, especially those of politicians, by their results. Even the Ricci-Vincent translation recognizes that the masses are deceived by appearances and evaluate actions only by their outcomes. Machiavelli is not lodging a *prescriptive* claim: he is not concluding that human beings should

evaluate actions only by their outcomes. He is not arguing that the ends justify the means as a feature of sound moral principle. In fact, Machiavelli's observation that "the common man accepts external appearances" is more redolent of condescension than affirmation.

In Machiavelli's *Mandragola*, Frate Timoteo observes that "the end has to be looked to in all things" (M 3.11). Might this not revive the notion that Machiavelli held that the ends justify the means? No, we should regard Timoteo's musing as additional evidence for the gullibility of the masses. Timoteo, the messenger for this bromide, is an unscrupulous, hypocritical cleric, precisely the type of priestly scoundrel that Machiavelli, following Dante, invariably ridiculed. His testimony about the cleansing power of outcomes, assuming his assertion rises to that level, reflects his obtuse, disreputable character and the moral vacuity of mass opinion.

The implicit message is that wise men, spurning mass opinion, would do well not to evaluate actions only by results. In fact, Machiavelli rejects the proposition that the results of actions are necessary or sufficient for properly evaluating those actions (P 25; AW I 29–32; D III 35; D I 9; D I 53). However, Machiavelli insists systematically throughout his writings that politicians must operate on the way human beings are, not as they ought to be. Thus, rulers must recognize why and how most people will evaluate their actions.

Critics might agree that Machiavelli never penned the words or vividly understood the normative implications of the phrase. Still, they might counter, large amounts of his doctrine tacitly endorse the conventional interpretation of his work—and not just what Machiavelli says in *The Prince* about the salutary uses of fraud, force, coercion, and the like. In the *Discourses*, Machiavelli is unrepentantly enthusiastic when recalling the stunning cruelty of Romulus killing his brother (D I 9), Brutus overseeing the execution of his sons (D III 1; D III 3), and Moses helping to slay three thousand of his countrymen (D III 30; D III 41). The Florentine relentlessly exalts strong men of robust military and political *virtù* who are willing to dirty their hands in service of founding or preserving a healthy, expansionist state, or reforming a corrupt state. What is this other than implicit agreement that "the good end justifies every means"?

To demonstrate my conclusion that Machiavelli did not hold, even tacitly, the principle that "the good end justifies every means," I must begin with two sets of distinctions. The first distinction is between *justifications* and *excuses.*

To *justify* an act is to defend the act as just, right, and appropriate. The perpetrator of the act admits performing it, but advances reasons that claim to show that the act was proper; he accepts responsibility for the act, but argues that he should be exonerated from blame because the act was not blameworthy under the instant circumstances: "I did act X and was responsible for X, but I should not be blamed for X because X was not wrong because of R

(the reason or set of reasons allegedly supporting the performance of X)." Human beings try to justify acts that are typically viewed as unjust, wrong, or inappropriate by appealing to the special set of circumstances giving rise to that act. "I lied to spare Grandma's feelings" may be a valid justification. Imagine that grandma is a wonderful lady but mediocre baker. She spends time and effort concocting an apple pie for your enjoyment. When you visit, she proudly slices you a piece. Having tasted her cooking efforts in the past, you would rather swallow a locust washed down with motor oil than consume her pie. Still, you choke down the dessert, praise it effusively as one of the best confectionaries you have ever sampled, and thank your grandmother. Although lying to your grandmother is almost always wrong, in this case you may well be justified because you know how sensitive she is to criticism. Acts that are typically wrong are sometimes justified by appeals to self-defense, necessity, emergency, unavoidable conflict of interests, avoidance of gratuitous harm, and the like. Such conditions may demonstrate that an action that is usually or almost always wrong is, under the circumstances, morally right. Accordingly,

P (a human agent) is *justified* in doing T (an act or series of acts) if and only if:

1. P performed T;
2. P is morally responsible for T;
3. T is either (a) morally permissible or (b) T is typically or almost always morally impermissible but in this instance T is morally permissible because of R (overriding moral reasons supporting the doing of T in this case); thus,
4. Because of R, P does not incur legitimate moral disapprobation for P's performance of T.

To *excuse* an act is not to defend the act as just, right, and appropriate. Instead, perpetrators petition to be exonerated from blame, either partially or entirely, because they were not completely responsible for performing it. The agents of such an act may claim that they did not actually intend to perform the act, perhaps because they were incompetent at the time they did it or because they were coerced into doing it: "I did act X and X is morally tainted, but I was not (completely) responsible for doing X because of C (some special set of circumstances such as coercion, incompetence, lack of intent, or the like).[15] An excuse presupposes wrongdoing and precludes justification. If an act is justified, then an excuse is neither required nor appropriate. If an act is not justified, then an excuse is required to eliminate or reduce the agent's responsibility for wrongdoing. "The dog ate my homework" is a classic excuse. Student claims she did her schoolwork, but she

cannot turn it in to her teacher because her curious canine gobbled it up. The student is not asserting a justification—she is not asserting that failing to turn in homework is appropriate—but, instead, says that she is not responsible for the failure and is not complicit in any wrongdoing. Assuming she was neither negligent nor reckless in placing the homework too close to her pet, she may have a legitimate excuse. Actions are excused because they were done inadvertently, accidentally, through mistake, under duress or other necessity, from non-blameworthy ignorance, by someone with diminished mental capabilities, while temporarily deranged, while under the influence of drugs in a non-blameworthy way, while suffering from a mind-altering disease or while insane, and the like. All such underlying conditions mitigate or erase the moral agent's responsibility for wrongdoing.

P (a human agent) is *excused* for doing T (an act or series of acts) if and only if:

1. P performed T;
2. T is morally impermissible;
3. P recognizes (1) and (2) or agents do so on P's behalf;
4. But P is not morally responsible for performing T because of C (special circumstances that relieve or at least partially diminish that responsibility); and
5. Because of C, P does not incur legitimate moral disapprobation for P's performance of T.

The second distinction, one Machiavelli makes, is between *evil well-used* and *evil ill-used* (P 8). The distinction turns on traditional moral considerations: intention, motivation, reasonably foreseeable and actual results of actions. *Evil well-used* is aimed at securing the most valuable goals: founding or preserving a healthy, expansionist state, or reforming a corrupt state; driving out foreigners as a prelude to the other ends; facilitating the common good by removing obstreperous elements as a last resort; and the like. Such evil occurs in one fell swoop; it does not persist. And the means used are compelled by necessity; they are required for the valuable goals. Finally—and this is probably redundant—the valuable goals serve the common good.

Effective mercy may require evil well-used, harsh measures needed for order, security, and unification. A statesman should not shrink from being considered cruel if his purpose is to keep citizens united, faithful, and safe. The sensitive ruler—who is too squeamish to use evil well—may, through misguided short-term compassion, permit rebellions and insurrections to develop that do more long-range harm than the amount arising from the ruler judged cruel over the short term (P 18; P 19; P 21; D III 3; D III 9; D III 30; Ltr. 203: 9/16/12).

Evil ill-used is, at bottom, gratuitous cruelty. It is not required to attain the most valuable goals and may be counterproductive to those ends. Evil ill-used is often disproportionate and recurrent, and frustrates the common good. Moreover, it sometimes advances the cause of tyranny.

Applying the two sets of distinctions, I would remind readers that Machiavelli never calls evil anything other than evil.[16] Accordingly, Machiavelli does not enter the realm of justification, only that of excuse (P 18; D I 9). Even here, however, Machiavelli registers nuance. Military and political leaders whose actions are severe and jarring but excused still incur dirty hands, understood as moral blemishes. The excuses at issue do not fully cleanse the perpetrators of moral disapprobation.

The Souls of State Leaders are Stained

Machiavelli often derides sensitive, self-righteous politicians who, in the name of morality and their own exalted rectitude, refuse to do what is necessary to establish or preserve a healthy, expansionist state, or reform a corrupt state; or who are reluctant to expel military barbarians as a prelude to founding or invigorating a state; or who decline to slay the "sons of Brutus" in order to save the republic (P 21; D I 38; D II 13; D II 14; D II 15; D III 3; D III 9; D III 30; Ltr. 203: 9/16/12). Preoccupied with their own self-images as virtuous people, timid leaders self-indulgently sacrifice their countries on the mantle of their moral egos. Military or political leaders, then, who aspire to moral purity may become strategically paralyzed, fail the duties of their office, and jeopardize the well-being of their country and its citizens: "The integrity of the martyr is saved at his own expense, whereas the statesman's refusal to compromise is paid by his people."[17] Dirty-hands situations typically involve overriding the claims and interests of an individual, group, or humankind to promote the collective interests of the unit that the moral agent represents.

With the possible exception of Aristotle, Machiavelli is the first theorist to discern keenly the paradox of dirty hands: seemingly absolute moral prohibitions sometimes must yield in political and in everyday contexts; and a good person will feel and be guilty from having broken those prohibitions, while a person bearing political and moral *virtù* will understand the necessity of sometimes doing so.

Machiavelli points out that founding or reforming a corrupt state requires extraordinary, violent, cruel means. Morally virtuous men are unlikely to be drawn to such tactics. Morally evil men gleefully adopt the necessary means but are unlikely to promote the good thereafter. The desired combination—a morally good man willing to temporarily embrace evil and use it well—is extremely rare (D I 18). This accounts for the gushing praise Machiavelli

lavishes on the few who fit the bill: Moses, Romulus, Theseus, Lycurgus, and their like.

Chief military and political officials, acting on our behalf and in our name, sometimes act in ways that are incontestably condemned by conventional morality except that under unusual circumstances such acts prevent great harms or achieve great goods. Choosing under imperfect conditions and with only probabilistic evidence, the officers judge that no other morally permissible alternative exists and that the likelihood of securing the desired ends is high. The contemplated act is experienced, simultaneously, as required and prohibited. Thus, good people seem forced to compromise their moral principles for the sake of accomplishing crucial goals. They are pressured by necessity into violating absolute principles of impersonal morality to advance the interests of their constituents.[18]

Machiavelli's advice concerning moral conflicts involving dirty hands is consistent for both princes and republican rulers. His prescriptions in *The Prince* are reflected in *The Discourses* (P 15; P 18; D I 9; D III 34). For Machiavelli, moral leadership sometimes requires performing actions because of the strength of duties to a limited constituency but doing so transgresses absolute moral prohibitions. Such prohibitions are absolute not in the sense that they cannot ever be overridden, but in the sense that even when properly overridden they leave serious moral remainders: disvalues that are not erased by the overall positive evaluation of the action from which they arise.

The crux of the paradox of dirty hands for political officers, then, is the partialism demanded by their stations. Impartial, impersonal morality, where everyone's interests are equally important, competes with the partiality of the executive, who is charged with advancing the relatively narrower interests of his own citizens or specific group. While the degree of warranted partialism is contestable, the existence of a duty to be partial is clear.[19]

Statesmen are responsible for the well-being of a circumscribed group and act in the name of their constituents. The state emerges as an institution that is created by its members to serve their interests. The very existence of the state presupposes a distinction between members and nonmembers. The state itself is necessary to attain numerous important human purposes. Although this does not confer upon statesmen license to disregard totally the interests of humanity, it does sanction considerable latitude in preferring and privileging the interests of their constituents over the interests of other nations or at times even over the interests of the global community. Morally permissible actions undertaken by one state to benefit its members will often affect nonmembers and other states adversely. The practical necessity that governs the activities of statesmen does not arise, then, from an autonomous normative sphere ("politics") that competes with morality. Instead, it is a constitutive feature of morality itself. Perhaps the activities and necessities

that frame the decision-making contexts of statesmen highlight this characteristic of conventional morality, but they do not define it. As the state's reason for being is to weigh unequally the interests of members with those of nonmembers, it represents the clearest but far from the only illustration of the power of partialism in conventional morality. At its core, conventional morality is internally limiting in that its imperatives and considerations are at times incommensurate and on other occasions qualified by social practice. Machiavelli employs the broad term "necessity" to describe the circumstances of social practice. Accordingly, morality as practiced must coexist with the circumstances of necessity.

Still, to ensure their country's political success, statesmen cannot be given a blank moral check. They are not permitted to ignore completely the general interests of humanity to advance the interests of their constituents. The proper balance between honoring the imperatives of impersonal morality and duties to limited constituencies is an ongoing matter of dispute.

No form of moral consequentialism can solve the problem of dirty hands for Machiavelli. He is not a moral consequentialist bent on maximizing the good on each occasion or committed to judging the morality of actions or principles by their results in each social context. In Machiavelli's view, only imprudent and unwise people judge solely by the results of actions (P 18; P 25; AW I 29–32; D I 9; D I 53; FH VIII 22; D III 35). Even the most prudent *consigliere* cannot predict results with certainty. Actions that appear useful antecedently to capable advisors often generate unwelcome outcomes. Statesmen must always choose between alternate courses of action prior to knowing their outcomes. Also, judging only by results is open ended: the long-range consequences of actions extend beyond the moment of such judgment, whenever that may occur. Accordingly, to judge decisions and deeds only by their results is unwise. In fact, evaluating only by results is the feckless method of the *ignoranti*. Instead, the reasons for engaging in a course of action must be evaluated prior to instituting policies or rendering decisions. Assessing the reasons that led to a course of action and the context that framed their persuasiveness is critical to sound judgment. In addition, the means used by statesmen will influence the quality of the ends attained.

Placing the implications of Machiavelli's principles in the context of modern moral theory suggests the following: the morally disconcerting feature of a dirty-hands situation both figures into the overall value of the contemplated act and again independently of the overall value of that act. Machiavelli takes moral principles to be categorical: to transgress such a principle leaves a moral remainder (moral disvalue) even when the act in which it takes place is overall appropriate. Machiavelli derives categorical moral principles from his observations of and reasoning about human capabilities, desires, and dispositions that he regards as timeless. The overall evaluation of the act that concludes it is appropriate in the instant circum-

stance does not erase the partial evaluation that the means are evil. Accordingly, the means remain evil well-used: they remain a moral disvalue within the whole. The contemplated act is the correct choice, but it is undertaken at a high moral price. Knowing that they are implicated in evil, as all proper Machiavellian statesmen must, the agents *feel* guilty because they *are* guilty. As reluctant but ultimately willing participants in using evil well, agents embody the moral remainders of their deeds: these moral disvalues exert direct effects on the souls (the dispositions and characters) of the agents. Such agents risk their souls because they do not simply perform deeds that are overall justified. Instead, they use evil well and struggle with the moral remainders of their patriotic choices and actions. They must acknowledge both the severity of the evil means they employed and the necessity of their deed. As argued previously, for Machiavelli acting properly in a dirty-hands situation provides only a partial excuse, not a justification.

Accordingly, for Machiavelli these excuses greatly mitigate responsibility, but do not erase all vestiges. That is why chief military and political officials risk their souls. He does not locate the paradox of dirty hands in a logical puzzle: how can it be morally wrong to do what is morally right? Instead, the problem of dirty hands arises from the inability of some excuses to totally exonerate moral agents from all responsibility, culpability, and guilt. For Machiavelli, some moral excuses do not cleanse completely, some military and political actions are not entirely coerced, and the moral agent bears some responsibility for the deeds to the extent his action was voluntary.

Machiavelli concludes that "though the deed accuses [the founder of a state], the result should excuse him; and when it is good, like that of Romulus, it will always excuse him, because he who is violent to destroy, not he who is violent to restore, ought to be censured" (D I 9). Thus, even where evil is well-used the act accuses in that the immoral remainder of violating a categorical moral principle survives. Because such an act is required to promote or even to establish the common good of a nation, however, the perpetrator should be excused. The excuse makes public censure of the perpetrator inappropriate but does not remove entirely the immoral remainder. The perpetrator has still used evil, even if well (P 8; P 18). Accordingly, the excuse is only partial in that it eliminates the appropriateness of public censure but does not transform the evil means employed: they remain evil even if well used.[20]

Risking One's Soul

What does it mean to risk one's soul in fulfilling one's duties to country? As noted earlier, Machiavelli is far from explicit. It might mean eternal damnation in the fires of a theological hell, but it probably does not. Perhaps the additive culpability of numerous instances of evil well-used is enough for a

man to lose his soul. But didn't God cheer Moses for wiping out the three thousand? Won't God lavishly honor the prince who liberates Italy? For Machiavelli, the cost is worth the enterprise. In his play, *Mandragola*, the lover Callimaco rages, "the worst that can come to you is to die and go to hell; but how many others are dead! And there are so many good men in hell! Are you ashamed to go there? Face your lot; flee evil, but, not being able to flee it, bear it like a man; do not prostrate yourself, don't degrade yourself like a woman" (M 4:1). For Machiavelli, "Hell is an exclusive club. For real men only."[21] Machiavelli insists that he loves his "native city more than my own soul" (Ltr. 331: 4/16/27). He lauds those citizens who "esteem their fatherland [much more] than their souls" (FH III 7: AW I, 7).

Machiavelli, though, is hopeful that God will not permit men of admirable military and political *virtù* to fry in hell because of a few moral technicalities. Aside from the biblical examples of Moses, Peter, and David, Machiavelli suspects God's forgiveness is more expansive than commonly thought.[22] After all, God, too, is neither a moral theorist nor an academic philosopher.

Risking one's soul can also bear an earthly connotation. The appropriate use of evil transforms the agent. What we do reflects and reinforces the values we embrace, or not. The number, magnitude, and far-reaching effects of violent acts tear into the fabric of personal character. Machiavelli, perhaps surprisingly, joins Plato and Dante in assuming that the condition of a person's soul (or character) is an objective condition. Might not chief military and political officials become morally desensitized? Might they not rationalize the use of evil where it is not well used? Might not each use of evil strike a corrupting influence? Is not the common good hostage to the statesman's capability of maintaining his soul in the face of many confrontations, internationally and domestically, with the forces of evil? Those of *grandezza d'animo* (noble soul or spirit)—who passionately sculpt their characters and pursue deserved, enduring glory—must use evil well recurrently and thereby jeopardize the condition of their souls.

The healthy polity does not want to be led by militarists and politicians who have lost their souls: "Only those who are reluctant or disinclined to do the morally disagreeable when it is really necessary have much chance of not doing it when it is not necessary."[23] Yet to run that risk is precisely what such leaders must do. Although Machiavelli does not delve explicitly into the interior life of his heroes, the ability to rise with full hearts, despite countless temptations and situations that militate otherwise, is pivotal for leaders to preserve a healthy, expansionist state. Is it possible for such leaders to preserve their sensibility to moral costs yet use evil well on a continuing basis? Does occupying public office permit a leader to depersonalize his morally disagreeable acts?

Although many of a politician's decisions in dirty-hands situations are rightly concealed from public scrutiny, even those that are revealed will be judged by the multitude only by their success in attaining critical goals, according to Machiavelli (P 18). The public, then, is an untrustworthy evaluator of a politician's actions in such cases. Success may have blossomed through good luck or accident. Failure and disappointment may have resulted from bad luck or an unavoidable sequence of events. Judging actions only by their results is an unreliable guide. Appropriate social expression, evaluation, and limitation of a politician's anguish in dirty-hands contexts is unavailable. Are chief military and political officials, then, the only rightful judges of their own cases? Must they retain a supra-moralism that empowers them to evaluate what they do independently from their doing it? Or does morality, in imagined personified form, hover over a politician's decision making? Or does God?[24]

Partial Excuses

Why, though, do excuses in dirty-hands situations only absolve partially?

One possibility: suppose a moral agent is not restricted to only two morally disagreeable choices. For example, no one is burdened with an antecedent duty to become a military or political leader, or to remain a leader once he has assumed the post. In a dirty-hands situation, chief military and political officials have another choice beyond the two unpleasant options: they may resign. Strictly speaking, military or political leaders bear some responsibility for not choosing this third option. Even if they cannot resign without gravely jeopardizing citizens, at the moment of choice, the fact that they assumed leadership with full knowledge that the job description included facing circumstances that would dirty their hands is enough to render them somewhat responsible for moral transgressions that occur.

The idea here is that necessity is not strict in such cases. The military or political officer has a third way. He has an excuse that partially exonerates him from full responsibility, but by not choosing the third way and by assuming the duties of office knowing that he inevitably would confront dirty-hands situations, the moral agent bears some degree of responsibility.

A second possibility: "the dog ate my homework" is a shiftless response if I placed the paper in Fido's feeding dish, ladled gravy over it, and covered it with the dog's favorite dinner. Or if I was negligent in placing my homework in a spot inviting to my dog, I cannot convincingly brush off all responsibility for the loss. That is, if I am responsible, fully or partially, for the circumstances under which my homework disappeared, I cannot properly invoke my canine's appetite as a legitimate excuse for my failure to produce the work in class. Accordingly, when military and political leaders, by their antecedent acts, are partially responsible for the circumstances under which

they brave unappealing choices, they bear proportionate responsibility and are only partially excused in the court of moral logic.

A third possibility: might the *enormity* of the violation of a nearly absolute moral principle warrant only a partial excuse for the moral agent? Murdering a brother (Romulus), helping to slay three thousand countrymen (Moses), overseeing the execution of sons (Brutus), exploiting a confederate by using him to pacify a region and then slicing him in two when convenient (Borgia)—are not these transgressions of moral principles that are absolute or nearly so? Even if the acts were warranted by extraordinary circumstances, should not their mortifying natures render the agents partially responsible? Should not their excuses be only partially exonerating?

If we recognize epistemological uncertainty and uncertainty of attaining desired outcome, we might well insist that some acts are so horrifying, even if warranted overall, that feelings of guilt would arise in all but the most insensitive moral agents. More telling, those feelings reflect the partial responsibility borne by the agent who is only partially exonerated. On this account, the morally horrifying features of that act, even if unavoidable, still count against the action and its agent. That is, the overall judgment of what to do—the proper evaluation that we should perform the act—does not expunge all the wrongness of the values that constitute that act. The wrongness of certain parts of the act persists as a disvalue. The feeling of guilt that results is righteous and appropriate, not simply an unwarranted neurosis that merits psychological therapy or a lecture on the logic of moral concepts.[25]

Moral principles are absolute not in the sense that they cannot be overridden under any circumstances, but in the sense that even when they are excusably overridden the wrongness of transgressing them remains. The experience of having dirty hands resonates with that conviction. The most important cases of dirty hands include significant "betrayals of a person, value, or principle."[26] Although Machiavelli lacked the conceptual apparatus of twenty-first-century moral philosophy, he intuitively accepted that dirty hands were the inevitable consequence of the clash between absolute moral principles, the requirements of public office, the conflict between impersonal morality and partialist duties, and the necessities of navigating in the zero-sum contest that adjudicates international affairs. The actions, even if excusable in Machiavelli's view, of political leaders nevertheless strain from the persisting wrongness of some of their constitutive values. That is why strong leaders blessed with military and political *virtù* must risk their souls to found, reform, and lead their nations.

A fourth possibility of why some excuses are only partially exculpatory combines epistemological, psychological, and theoretical considerations.[27] The impartiality required of the Ideal Moral Observer often rests uncomfortably with the partialism permitted when moral agents are discharging obligations to special, limited constituencies. This theoretical tension within con-

ventional morality is not merely conceptual but experiential. Human beings confronting dirty-hands situations feel the force of competing moral vectors. Unable to satisfy the imperatives of both vectors, they search for an objective way to arrive at the right answer all things considered. But the actuality of arriving at such an overall evaluation presupposes that the elements that comprise our moral calculus are commensurable. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Conventional morality is not so neatly packaged that all values are compatible with one another or susceptible to being weighed on a single scale.

Although I have presented dirty-hands situations as distinguished partially by the feature that the agent knows what to do—in contrast, say, to moral dilemmas—that knowledge is not the result of an objective calculation of commensurable but conflicting moral values. In international relations, Machiavelli's statesmen know what to do because they typically (too often?) privilege the interests and common good of their limited constituencies over the well-being of other nations or even over the well-being of the global community. Domestically, statesmen sometimes privilege the common good of the nation over the civil liberties of some individuals: the sons of Brutus must be slain; harsh measures are often required to found or maintain a healthy republic; means that are typically evil must be employed to advance national interests.

Statesmen employing evil well do so resolutely. They must swallow all doubt and perform their duties as they must. But the horizon of their choices and actions lingers: They cannot derive what they should do conclusively from the materials comprising conventional morality; they will feel great pressure to privilege their national interests over the well-being of other countries; they may find doing so easier and more natural after several past occurrences; they understand keenly that the means used to attain their goals remain evil even if required by what they take to be necessity; and, finally, the conditions they take to constitute necessity often expand as past successes promote future overreaching.

Taking excuses under such circumstances to be only partially exculpatory serves several purposes: doing so serves as a caution to overreaching; it recognizes and underscores epistemological uncertainty; it tacitly acknowledges the incommensurability of values pervading conventional morality; and it highlights that even when used well, evil remains evil. Statesmen willing to risk but determined not to lose their souls cannot merely alternate between the impartial imperatives of and the partialist exceptions permitted by conventional morality. Conventional morality cannot draw that line so neatly because of the incommensurable values it embodies, the epistemological obstacles haunting determinations of necessity, and the psychological sirens luring decision makers to privilege their own causes.

Accordingly, statesmen willing to risk but determined not to lose their souls must not embrace too easily the excuses and justifications so readily available to them when they dirty their hands in service to their nations. Military and political officers are required by their job descriptions to promote the interests of their partisans over the interests of the international good. The extent of warranted partialism is contestable—no contemporary moralist would endorse the degree of partialism advocated by Machiavelli in international affairs. But might not some responsibility and some guilt for harmful outcomes to foreigners arise from implementing partialistic reasoning under conditions of uncertainty? Might not some occasions of preferring the interests of our own to the interests of outsiders exonerate moral agents incompletely?

Machiavelli's understanding of necessity, contrary to current usage, does not allow a statesman to lodge a legitimate claim of justification. Necessity permits only a claim of excuse that does not fully exonerate the actor from responsibility in Machiavelli's court of morality. For Machiavelli, limitations on a leader's range of alternatives do not fully exonerate him or her from responsibility. Machiavelli takes moral principles to be categorical. Leaders are sometimes partly responsible for the antecedent conditions that nurture necessity, the horrifying nature of their acts, and their prior understanding of the inevitability of resorting to evil when they freely assumed office combine to make them partially responsible for moral horrors that ensue. Leaders who have already lost their souls—those who feel no pangs of conscience when violating moral norms—are too likely to promote tyranny. The perhaps impossible task for chief military and political officials is to preserve their souls while consistently and systematically using evil well. Machiavelli's model invokes a solitary actor, estranged from simplistic evaluations by results only, aspiring to but suspicious of honors conferred by the masses, commanded by the duties of office to advance the interests of his country above those of the international community. Surrounded by packs of jackals and wolves immersed in a zero-sum contest in which the winners harvest glory, power, and *virtù* while the losers suffer humiliation, impotence, and servitude, leaders must soil their hands and risk their souls.

The multitude will, naïvely, judge only by the results. If the evil used turns out to facilitate desired ends—such as the founding, preserving, or reforming of a healthy, expansionist republic—the masses will judge the means praiseworthy. If the evil used fails to achieve the desired ends, the people will evaluate the means harshly. But actual outcomes blossom from numerous causes, some of which are planted by *Fortuna*. To evaluate leaders only by results is to bestow too much credit or too much blame for circumstances and events outside their control. Machiavelli stresses the current situation and the reasonably foreseeable consequences of alternative possibilities. Our predicted outcomes and assessment of present circumstances arise

from our own acts and evaluations. The actual results occur, at least in part, from things beyond our command.

Machiavelli's Corollary Principle of Morality

In summary, military and political leaders are often forced by necessity in service of the most valuable ends to perform actions that are normally morally abhorrent and remain morally tainted even during exigency. Such leaders take responsibility for the choices they make, and may be implicated in the circumstances that induced those selections. The exercise of military and political *virtù* often requires unpleasant yet sound decisions that issue in morally tainted, but excusable, actions. Leaders must choose between degrees of evil, avoid unnecessary cruelty, and follow conventional morality if possible, but be prepared to exercise harsh means when unavoidable to attain paramount goals (P 17; D III 3). Moreover, even when evil is well used it registers potentially dangerous effects upon the perpetrator's character—it jeopardizes the quality of his soul. The excuse rendered under the appropriate circumstances, then, is only partial: it does not completely exonerate the agent from all culpability.

Machiavelli rejects the notion that every means is permissible for any valuable goal. The means must be necessary to attaining the most valuable political goals; they must pass the criteria of evil well-used. The private ambition of founders, preservers, and reformers of states is insufficient. The common good must be implicated in the goals. Furthermore, the nature of the state is crucial. The state must be effective, aim at the common good, and have the requisite purposes. In sum, tyrannies are unworthy. Not every action that serves every state is a candidate for Machiavelli's approval. Crucially, Machiavelli's program is not a general moral theory, but a recommendation only for political leaders: the prince in a principality, the monarchical or executive element in a republic. The Florentine is not counseling private citizens in their everyday dealings, despite the laughable ways that contemporary writers of self-help literature struggle to trade on his name.

Accordingly, the language of justification is misapplied to Machiavelli; not every good goal is a candidate for his approval, only the most valuable political ends; not every means is acceptable even for those most valuable political ends; the private *ambizione* of military and political leaders is always insufficient; the domain of his advice is restricted to statesmen in healthy principalities and republics; he does not think the most refined evaluations of political actions focus solely on outcomes; he never calls evil anything but evil; he argues against the rule of offsetting good against evil; and he often invokes necessity as the coercive engine of political actions. Necessity compels human beings to act as reason demands under the given circumstances (D I 24; D III 12).

If the actions of statesmen were always morally *justified*—in the typical sense of being unambiguously morally right under the circumstances—then they would not need to learn how not to be good. Yet Machiavelli takes that knowledge to be crucial for effective statecraft (P 15; D I 9; D I 18). The capability and willingness to use evil well are uncommon personal attributes but required of those aspiring to exercise robust military and political *virtù* (D I 18). Aspiring leaders must overcome moral squeamishness and dirty their hands as they perform morally dubious acts. The attainment of earthly power and enduring glory are the rewards Machiavelli identifies for those few who can accomplish the mission (P 8; P 26; D I 10). Of these, the more important is deserved glory, which confers on men a spark of immortality and permits them a measure of revenge on the Grim Reaper. Here Machiavelli channels the spirits and values of ancient Romans such as Julius Caesar and thirteenth-century Florentines such as Brunetto Latini.

Furthermore, Machiavelli accepts the validity of conventional morality for ordinary citizens and in the private realm. He also takes conventional morality as relevant for leaders and commanders, especially when they are managing internal affairs. Power obtained through inhumanity and evil wickedly used cannot reap enduring glory (P 8; D I 10; D III 40). Nor does Machiavelli embrace Roman (pagan) morality as the sole appropriate guide for political and military leaders. One of his major themes is the conflict between the imperatives of conventional morality and the duties required by the political and military offices of power. The imperatives of impersonal morality do not simply evaporate.

In sum, Machiavelli is not inciting a revolution in values. Nor does he state or implicitly adopt an obtuse slogan such as "the good end justifies every means." Nor does he embrace tyranny, either consciously or tacitly. If Machiavelli advances a normative doctrine on these matters, then the relevant principle is:

> "*A few political ends partially excuse some (typically horrifying) means.*"

Under Machiavelli's corollary principle of morality, a statesman must follow conventional morality if possible, but be prepared to transgress morality if necessary (P 18). Only a few ends partially excuse the use of means that are almost always wrong: founding or preserving a healthy, expansionist state, or reforming a corrupt state; driving out foreigners as a prelude to founding or invigorating a state; facilitating the common good by removing obstreperous elements as a last resort; and the like. These ends, for Machiavelli, are required for a social life that can transform the people in positive ways, allow military and political leaders to satisfy their yearning for glory, and confer on a nation the reward of immortality.

Machiavelli's corollary principle of morality may be formulated as follows:

> Military and political leaders merit a partial excuse for attaining a military or political objective through use of morally horrifying means if and only if:
>
> 1. The objective is a paramount state purpose such as founding or preserving a healthy, expansionist state, or reforming a corrupt state; driving out foreigners as a prelude to founding or invigorating a state; or facilitating the common good by removing obstreperous elements as a last resort;
> 2. No less severe means is a reasonable alternate to the morally horrifying means in achieving that objective;
> 3. The morally horrifying means constitute evil well-used;
> 4. The partial excuse that military and political leaders merit for using these morally horrifying means absolves them from the moral disapprobation of their constituents;
> 5. That partial excuse does not relieve the leaders from all moral culpability for using morally horrifying means to achieve the objective;
> 6. A moral remainder (or moral stain) attaches to the leaders' use of horrifying moral means to achieve the objective;
> 7. The moral remainder results from one or more of the following: (a) the leaders did not resign their positions and assumed the duties of office knowing that they inevitably would confront such situations; (b) the leaders, by their antecedent acts, are partially responsible for the circumstances under which the horrifying means were required to secure the objective; (c) even if warranted by extraordinary circumstances, the use of these horrifying moral means is staggeringly alarming; (d) the leaders selected the horrifying moral means under circumstances embodying radically incommensurable values spawning an uncommon level of arbitrariness and irrationality.

For Machiavelli, because of a scarcity of resources and the nature of human beings, the world is a zero-sum contest (P 3; D II pref.). Competition between states is inevitable; governments will always wage war on one another; a successful state is one that has a strong, well-prepared military and expansionist aspirations; the freedom of my homeland may well depend on the defeat of yours. Enduring peace can be purchased only at the cost of enslavement. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882) observed that "In this world a man must be either anvil or hammer." Having observed his native city used too frequently as an anvil, Machiavelli prefers being a hammer.[28]

Finally, Machiavelli recognizes a distinction between a politician managing internal matters and a military commander manipulating foreign affairs: "There is a moral element in Machiavelli's notion of political glory, he thought there were modes of conduct incompatible with political glory, whereas this element is absent from his notion of military glory, for this sort

of glory is achieved through deserved success in war, whatever the methods used."[29] General William T. Sherman famously intoned that "War is hell." Machiavelli would disagree: War is worse than hell. At least in hell people presumably reap what they have sown; they receive deserved retribution for their freely chosen deeds. In war, appeals to notions of desert and merit lack an audience.

Machiavelli and Italy

Did Machiavelli genuinely aspire to a united Italy? Or is such a conviction merely an anachronistic projection of later romantic commentators? Those who argue against the romantic interpretation ground that conclusion in their conviction that the concept of "Italy" in sixteenth-century Florence did not connote a unified political nation but was merely a placeholder for the cultural and spiritual legacy of ancient Rome.[30] The city-states of the peninsula were fiercely independent, none more so than Florence. Recall Dante's earlier condemnation of the Florentines for resisting the unifying efforts of Emperor Henry VII. The exiled Dante excoriated what he took to be the imprudent obsession for independence among his former countrymen. Thus, the foreign barbarians to which Machiavelli sometimes refers are simply those northern Europeans who threatened the independence of Italian city-states and those who were enemies of the cultural and spiritual legacy of ancient Rome. They were not the forces preventing a unified political nation christened "Italy."

I would argue against that analysis and in favor of the romantic interpretation. First, the concept of a unified political nation of Italy was well documented by the time of Machiavelli's birth. To cite two of the most influential commentators in the canon: Dante Alighieri's pillorying of early fourteenth-century Florence arose from his considered judgment that a united Italy was required to promote eventually an international community. Francesco Petrarca (1304–1374), whom Machiavelli quotes in the final lines of *The Prince*, also composed several patriotic poems extolling a unified political nation of Italy.

Second, Machiavelli's passionate finale to *The Prince* is not the political outlier that some commentators suppose. In Machiavelli's judgment, the five loose-knit regions of Italy were in a dire predicament in the early sixteenth century. They could either remain disunified and provide easy targets for invading barbarians or they could follow the leadership of a strong man, rise above factional bickering, and unite for the greater good—either continued victimization or unification. In *The Prince*, Machiavelli argues that the regionalized people of Italy were generally corrupt—they lacked civic *virtù*—so the monarch would sometimes be forced to use fraud and coercion to unify the nation, invigorate citizens, and fend off external aggressors.

Others have failed through inadequate methods and strategies, but the Medici can succeed. New methods and means are available (translated: Machiavelli has sketched the way and is, of course, currently between jobs and available for hire). Italians have proved themselves cleverer, stronger, and quicker than foreigners in individual duels. Their armies have disappointed only because of inadequate leadership: too many self-styled chiefs, too few disciplined followers. No leader bearing *grandezza d'animo* has manifested the blessed union of *Fortuna* and *virtù* within his spirit. But now opportunity must not be permitted to evaporate. Italy awaits a redeemer: "What Italian would refuse to pledge him allegiance? Everyone is sick of being pushed around by the barbarians. Your family must commit itself to this enterprise" (P 26).

Unquestionably, the emotional final chapter of *The Prince* diverges sharply with the prose and texture of the rest of the text.[31] I would argue that the trajectory of Machiavellian politics is toward a united Italy. Suppose Florence or Rome, through the Medici power connection, became strong enough to begin acquiring new territories. Every robust principality or republic has expansionist aspirations, according to Machiavelli (P 3; D II 2; D II 4; D II 6; D II 9; D II 21; Ltr. 222: 8/26/13). Where are the most likely prospects for expansion? Where did the ancient Romans first expand? Not in southern Africa, China, or the East Indies. Not in France or Spain, at least not in the beginning. The vital expansionist state would, almost necessarily, start in Italy by bringing less powerful regions under its domain. Perhaps, after initial successes brought larger, stronger armies with more experience and confidence, even those feisty Spaniards could be dislodged from the Kingdom of Naples.

Granted, huge differences separate (a) the regions of Italy uniting voluntarily and freely in common cause and forming a nation-state once and forever from (b) one strong region emerging and conquering the other areas. In both cases the peninsula would be under one centralized government, but the tone and tempo would be much different.

My point, though, is that the debate about what type of unified Italy, if any, Machiavelli imagined should be informed by his general political principles. From his vantage point the most glorious climax would be a united Italy, led by Florence with Machiavelli as chief *consigliere*, which could begin expanding beyond Italy. The next best choice would be a united Italy, led by Rome with Machiavelli as chief *consigliere*. In any case, with or without Florence, Rome, or Machiavelli, the logic of Machiavelli's political principles implied that a united Italy was the natural result of the emergence of a strong principality or republic on the peninsula. Contemporary political conditions, regional traditions, and a hostile Church protective of its own privileges notwithstanding, a version of Italian unification would eventually transpire. That the blessed event would not occur until more than three hun-

dred forty years after Machiavelli's death attests to the might of *Fortuna*, the power of regional identification, and the recalcitrance of the Church.

In addition to the final chapter of *The Prince*, advocates of the romantic interpretation can point to textual evidence in *The Discourses* that Machiavelli aspired to a united Italy. There he indicts the Roman Catholic Church as the perpetrator that has thwarted Italian solidarity:

> No geographical region has ever been unified or happy if it has not been brought under the political control of a single republic or ruler, as has happened in France and Spain. And the only reason why Italy has not been unified as they have been, the only reason why she does not have a republic or a prince who has been able to acquire control of the whole territory, is the existence of the church (D I 12).[32]

Machiavelli's *Decennale primo* (*First Decennial*), a poem describing historical and political events in Florence from 1494 to 1504, also extols a united Italy and the misfortunes besetting Florence.

Thus, I take Machiavelli's imploration to the Medici at face value: *Non si debba, adunque, lasciare passare questa occasione, acciò che la Italia, dopo tanto tempo, vegga uno suo redentore. Né posso esprimere con quale amore e' fussi ricevuto in tutte quelle provincie che hanno patito per queste illuvioni esterne; con che sete di vendetta, con che ostinata fede, con che pietà, con che lacrime* (P 26). ["So you should not let this opportunity slip by. Italy, so long enslaved, awaits her redeemer. There are no words to describe what devotion he would receive in all those regions that have suffered from foreign invasions which have flooded across the land. No words can describe the appetite for revenge, the resolute determination, the spirit of self-sacrifice, the tears of emotion that would greet him."] A unified Italy was Machiavelli's holy grail, his gauzy reverie, providing respite from a world that too frequently prefigured Hobbes's description of life in a state of nature—nasty, brutish, and brief.[33]

All Human Beings Must Fail

The quest for deserved, enduring glory must confront daunting obstacles orchestrated by *Fortuna*. The message to rulers is crisp. Do not depend on past favorable *fortuna*. Your fortunes will change. No person will enjoy positive *fortuna* forever. Leaders must be flexible and adjust their policies as circumstances permit. If a ruler's attributes and actions are not compatible with present needs then he will fail. Sometimes caution wins the day. Sometimes boldness succeeds. The character of the times is dispositive. If a man continues behaving in his customary way, then eventually he will be defeated when unfavorable *fortuna* appears. Only if a man could alter his character as time and the situation warrant would his luck be consistently favorable.

Next follows the shocker: But Machiavelli has not found a man of such great prudence. Men are either unable to go beyond their fixed characters or are unable to convince themselves to change because their past style has been so successful (D III 9; P 25). *Fortuna* changes, but men cannot adjust enough: [A]nyone wise enough to adapt to and understand the times and the pattern of events would always have good fortune or would always keep himself from bad fortune. . . . But such wise men do not exist; in the first place, men are shortsighted; in the second place, they are unable to master their own natures, thus it follows that Fortune is fickle, controlling men and keeping them under her yoke" (Ltr. 121: 9/13–21/06).

Fortuna, like all women for Machiavelli, is both threatening and malleable. She is capricious and thus beyond the deterministic schemes of fate, but also subject to being overwhelmed by bold, masculine action (P 25). Unlike other women, though, *Fortuna* has an endless bag of relentless tricks, while even the greatest men are limited by their relatively fixed characters and the seductions of past success.

Machiavelli does not explicitly spell out the conclusion of this argument: All human beings must fail eventually. The worst of us will supplicate ourselves before *Fortuna* and submit meekly in defeat. The best of us will defeat *Fortuna* most of the time. None of us will defeat *Fortuna* all the time. Even those of the grandest *virtù*, if they live long enough, will eventually confront *Fortuna* so unfavorable that they will fail due to inherent limitations on human flexibility of character. People flourish when their character and actions mesh with circumstances fashioned by *Fortuna*. We fail when our characters and actions are out of step with the times.

Machiavelli astutely grasps that success requires a happy marriage between a person's character and situation. For example, the question, "Would Russo be a great president?" should be replaced by "Would Russo be a great president at this time under these circumstances?" A person's temperamental range and his ability to adapt to fortune are limited. Instead of seeking a great ruler *as such* we are better advised to assess carefully the prevailing context and select the person best suited to flourish in *that* environment.

Machiavelli's sagacious, famous call for flexibility and adaptability as crucial to military and political success is deflated by the dreary, insightful conclusion that human beings must fail in the end. This does not mean enduring glory, the highest prize for Machiavelli, is impossible. Part of that glory is fighting the strong lifelong battle against an unconquerable foe, refusing the easy consolations of lesser people, and relishing the contest as an opportunity to manifest one's mettle. We are born of dust and to dust we shall return. But along the way, if we retain our nerve, energize our spirit, activate our understanding, and greet the world with *brio* and *virtù*, we, too, may earn a measure of glory.

Machiavelli's tragic view of life understands fully the inevitability of human suffering, the flux that is the world, the Sisyphus-like character of daily life. Yet it is in one's response to tragedy that one manifests heroism or bland resignation, *grandezza d'animo* or *animo effeminato* (effeminate soul or spirit). We cannot rationalize or justify the inherent meaningless of our suffering. We cannot transcend our vulnerability and journey to fixed security. We are contingent, mortal beings and will remain so.

But we are free to create ourselves: we bear no antecedent duties to external authority; we are under the yoke of no preestablished goals, other than those endorsed by a God who presumably mirrors the patriotic fervor embodied by Machiavelli. We need not recoil squeamishly from the horrors of existence; instead, we can rejoice in a passionate life of perpetual self-overcoming. Machiavelli forces us to confront the paramount questions of human existence, invites us to live—and not merely contemplate—our answers, and challenges us to take responsibility for the persons we are becoming.

Accordingly, part of Machiavelli's tragic view of life is that the greatest among us will nurture ever-more-challenging first-order desires that will present more daunting resistances that will probably eventually lead to greater defeats and possibly to death. Even those who achieve felicitous, immediate results will in the end fall victim to the limits of their own flexibility and the caprices of *Fortuna*.

Machiavelli is himself a case study of his own account. He was more flexible and adaptable than most human beings. His willingness to adapt to his times is reflected in his willingness to serve republics and principalities, as the circumstances warranted. In the end, *Fortuna* ground him down and he was not trusted completely by advocates of either form of government. He died disillusioned, the product of high expectations and unfulfilled political promise. Although he did not live long enough to know and experience it, Machiavelli eventually earned enduring glory as a writer, theorist, and provocateur—a deserved response to his artistic *virtù.* Fittingly, Machiavelli's life mirrors his teachings on the caprices and power of *Fortuna*.

MACHIAVELLI'S PATRIOTISM AND NATIONALISM

Machiavelli's highest value is patriotism. On several occasions he testifies that he loves his city more than his soul or that he admires those who do likewise.[34] Machiavelli's commitment to public service, his ardor for his country, his conviction that political activity animated his soul, and his willingness to sacrifice for the public good resonate throughout his life and saturate his private correspondence.[35]

Skeptics have argued that Machiavelli was much less a patriot and much more a typically self-serving Florentine relentlessly chasing personal *honore et utile*.[36] After all, although supposedly a stalwart republican, once the Medici returned to power Machiavelli avariciously sought a political post under them and connived to curry their favor. Is not this strong evidence that Machiavelli was, like most of his peers, ever eager to scuttle ideological commitment in service of personal honor and gain? Was he not just another vainglorious political sailor who cruised with the prevailing social winds?

In my view, Machiavelli was a genuine patriot operating from mixed motives. Yes, he was a resolute suitor of personal honor and gain, but he was also a fervent lover of Florence who struggled mightily to advance the city's best interests regardless of the current structure of her government. Moreover, his political ideology supported such strategy.

Consider his best-known works. Once the monarch attains national unity, promotes the common good, and nurtures a strong national character, his power should be dispersed. *The Prince* is a necessary stage of development for new or corrupt territories not yet prepared for self-government. Moreover, in *The Discourses*, Machiavelli underscores the proposition that although republican rule is generally best, not all states have the prerequisites in place for self-government (D I 55).

This interpretation accounts for Machiavelli's desire to seek employment with the Medici even though he was part of the former republican government of Florence. After that regime was ousted, he was suspected of participating in an anti-Medici conspiracy and was tortured thereafter. Machiavelli's job search is not crass opportunism; instead, he sought political office to help a new prince sow the cultural seeds that would eventually be reaped as the prerequisites for a return to republicanism. Hopefully, Italian liberation would also result. Machiavelli then writes *The Prince* as one more instance of his relentless public service and devotion to his country.

Of course, the practicality of Machiavelli's vision is dubious. Would a prince, after acquiring new territories and painstakingly crafting the civic *virtù* of the populace through strong arms, sound laws, and robust religion, quietly release his power in deference to republican rule? The more reasonable dynamic is that such a prince would luxuriate in his power and privilege and, if anything, would strive for more of the same. The prince's quest, after all, begins in private ambition coupled with the recognition that tyranny does not issue in enduring glory. He must facilitate the common good and promote civic *virtù* to develop a healthy, expansionist regime able to compete vigorously in international military and political affairs. If he efficiently and effectively advanced these goals, would he not reason that he deserved to be honored and obeyed, not shunted aside for an experiment in self-government?

Machiavelli praises Romulus for establishing a senate and yielding most of his power to it, reserving only the authority to command the army after war had been declared and of convening the senate itself (D I 9). Here Machiavelli expresses his preference for a powerful prince to cede absolute control in deference to the common good. One possibility is that he is convinced that this is what is required for a unified Italy that endures, and his patriotism clouds his reasoning into hoping that Romulus-types will be more common than we might suspect. Machiavelli, despite his reputation in some circles, is not a dispassionate, clear-headed realist. Instead, his patriotism often trumps his vision of reality and of the possible. This response is plausible; it underscores Machiavelli's romanticism.

Perhaps a better response to the problem of the transition from monarchy to republicanism is available to Machiavelli: for a corrupt, impotent territory to blossom into a robust state with the prerequisites for a successful, expansionist republic would take a generation or more. All princes are mortal. The bane of good government has been hereditary rule. History attests that the death of an exemplary leader is too often followed by the inept bungling of his self-absorbed, feckless son (D I 2; D I 19). A ruler who seizes power violently should rule prudently and virtuously thereafter, and transfer authority to the masses as soon as practicable instead of retaining authority and later bequeathing it to his heirs.[37] Still, Machiavelli places enormous importance on the value military and political leaders bestow on their historical legacies. Is the quest for enduring glory—which certainly animates Machiavelli's labors—truly paramount for men who embody military and political *virtù*?

In any event, Machiavelli embraced patriotism as his highest value. He concluded that patriotism was both intrinsically and instrumentally valuable because of (a) the need to develop civic *virtù*; (b) the nature of the world; (c) the requirements of personal identity; (d) the importance of personal security; and (e) the nature of the quest for deserved glory.

Developing Civic *Virtù*

According to Machiavelli, human beings are inherently inclined toward evil and will follow wicked impulses unless properly socialized (D I 3; D I 4; D I 5; D I 29; D II 13, D III 6). Some men can conceal their natures for a specified time, but their wantonness will eventually emerge. Only necessity—in the form of sound laws, good habits, and external conditions—makes men good. Necessity forces human beings to respond intelligently to external conditions and to rise above their inherent selfishness. Machiavelli consistently judged that human nature was so inclined toward evil that people were turned to the good only by necessity (D I 3). Also, necessity often demands action that reason would oppose (D I 6).

Clearly, for Machiavelli the most important forms of personal excellence are military and political *virtù.* A sound political unit, grounded in good laws and strong arms, is a prerequisite for the rigorous education needed to promote civic and moral *virtù*. The opposite of *virtù* is corruption. Corruption, for Machiavelli, is weakness: *ozio* (sloth or idleness), civic and moral decay, lack of discipline, softness, timidity, muted will, resignation, inability to compete, hesitancy, indecisiveness, an *animo effeminato.*

Nature of the World

Machiavelli envisioned international affairs as grounded in a zero-sum context. He is convinced that the world is always in the same overall condition: the total amount of *virtù* and total amount of corruption is constant. What changes is the distribution of *virtù* and corruption in individual territories. While contemporary Italians and Greeks compare unfavorably to the greatness of their ancestors, to conclude that the good old days as such were better on the whole than the present is an error: only the distribution of *virtù* and corruption has changed (D II pref.; D II 5; D III 43).

Machiavelli's message is as cold as steel tempered too hard. The world is a competitive battleground. A nation's choices—unless it is astonishingly insignificant—are to expand or to be subjugated. The bluff, guile, courage, knowledge, and panache of a political leader must be backed by strong arms. Conditions of scarcity, the basic nature of human beings, the rush for glory by those with *grandezza d'animo*, and the relentless whims of *Fortuna* compel the need to triumph or to be destroyed. The call for enduring peace is a tinny hustle. A long-standing peace lures citizens into *ozio*—the indolent, soft, undisciplined, unworthy life—where leisure and the pursuit of luxury are paramount (D III 16). Whereas for Socrates the unexamined life is not worth living, for Machiavelli a lackluster, unheroic scramble for tranquility is no life at all. *Ozio*, the lack of heroic action, and a deficiency of *virtù* lead to political ruin (D II 30).

Personal Identity

Machiavelli does not renege on his gruff assessment of human nature. Left to our own devices we are nasty, brutish, and selfish. Only a strong state offers redemption. Only such a unit can exploit conditions of necessity to compel human beings toward civic and moral *virtù*. Inclination to a common good is unnatural for us. Patriotism and national character must be carefully promoted. Only they can elevate human beings from myopic focus on our greedy, grasping yearnings to a sense of common identity, shared good, and the importance of heroic deeds. For Machiavelli, only a healthy state can elevate human beings from their alienated, pathetic, natural impulses. True,

he ignores the truths that cooperation, shared purposes, mutual aid, and the like must also be potentials within us. Otherwise, we would not even be susceptible to transformation. But his point, persuasive or not, is that such communal values would remain dormant but for the agency of a healthy, expansionist state.

For Machiavelli, a robust nation, committed to advancing the common good, is necessary for salutary personal identity. The prerequisites of the common good are freedom, equality under the law, a measure of free speech, and ability to participate in government.

Personal Security

Most strikingly, military strength is the prerequisite for human redemption. As individuals, we are nasty, brutish, and selfish. Only in a healthy, robust political community can civic and moral *virtù*, sacrifice for the common good, and identification with a wider identity and interests flourish. Such a political community is grounded in the order, stability, and security provided only by strong arms. Because military superiority is required for a healthy republic that promotes order, security, freedom, and civic *virtù*, military commanders are prime candidates for enduring glory (D II 27; D III 42; D III 45). Might may not make right in the deepest moral sense of that term, but might is a prerequisite for good government, which is the prerequisite for good laws and the other socializing influences that nurture the common good and instill civic *virtù* (D I 4; D I 19; D III 31; D III 33).

The Quest for Deserved Glory

For Machiavelli, the highest ends of governments are expansion and glory; the highest end for human beings is enduring, deserved glory. Machiavelli's infrequently noted tragic view of life accepts that the only way to soften our mortality and finitude is to earn an enduring, honorable biographical life. Grand military and political projects in service to a healthy government are the typical routes to deserve such glory. Passionate, ambitious people hunger for recognition that endures beyond their lifetimes.[38] Thus, lust for personal honor and gain among the best citizens can be turned to practical political advantage for the entire community. The quest for deserved glory, whether consciously felt or not, is critical to Machiavelli's political prescriptions.

Loyalty and service to one's nation is the hallmark of patriotism. But only those possessing the requisite nationality can be patriotic. Foreigners can appreciate and benefit another nation, but they cannot be patriotic toward that nation. The significance of the value of patriotism is the tension it produces between the impersonal morality of the Ideal Observer and the explicit partiality and particularity of the robust patriot. Even if Machiavelli overstates

the zero-sum context that structures the world, he is surely correct in thinking that given the relative scarcity of natural resources, occasions will arise such that two (or more) nations must compete for the same desired prize. Impersonal morality would have no preference as to which nation should prevail, while the patriot must strive mightily to ensure that his or her nation prevails. The very nature of patriotism precludes indifference in a zero-sum contest.

Of course, these matters are not resolved so simply. As Machiavelli continually points out, patriotism sometimes requires advancing the interests of one's nation in enterprises that are not always in the interests of human beings taken collectively. At times patriotism requires using evil well—in ways that win zero-sum contests at the expense of foreigners. The difficulty is in distinguishing when and to what extent the imperatives of impersonal morality limit zealous patriotic action. The true but trivial conclusion is sometimes but not always.

If overly inflated, patriotism morphs into rabid nationalism. In Machiavelli's work the differences between the two are subtle. Viewing the world as a series of zero-sum contests where increased *virtù* is a prize emerging from territorial expansion entails that the common good extends primarily to one's own people. Territorial boundaries, however, are constantly changing and the circle of one's own people also expands with time, socialization, and assimilation. Machiavelli makes no appeal to master races, chosen people, or genetically superior tribes. Human beings are inherently flawed and potentially vicious. But within us is the capability to rise above our wantonness if and only if a healthy, expansionist state bestows its guidance. The task, then, is to carve out an appropriate place for patriotic partialism in theory and practice.

CONCLUSION

Machiavelli's highest social value and virtue was patriotism, harvested from the military campaigns of Caesar and the glories of the earlier Roman republic, tempered by Dante's theological admiration of a universal world order, yet cushioned and refined by Machiavelli's understanding of the nature of the world and Florentine exigencies of his time. Machiavelli's radiant patriotism spawned his most obtrusive political vice: nationalism that inadequately considered the collective interests and well-being of those outside his palpable or fantasized political boundaries.

On a personal level, Machiavelli's most splendid virtue is his visceral, not merely theoretical, appreciation of community. The supposedly cynical Florentine perceived sharply the enlightening and civilizing effects of robust communal participation and its critical role in shaping efficacious personal identity. His most apparent personal vices are the human-all-too-human disorders: unwarranted pride and lust. Still, Machiavelli was never as indignant-

ly superior as Dante often appeared and never demonstrated the imperious superciliousness that Caesar sometimes exuded. Machiavelli's personal vices materialize in more measured hues than the vibrant excesses of Caesar and Dante. Machiavelli's improprieties seem a tad repressed when compared to the flamboyant profusions of the others.

Rarely is Machiavelli interpreted as a man undergoing existential crisis. Yet that is precisely what he suffered. Embodying a *grandezza d'animo*, he was haunted by an obsession to resist the Grim Reaper; to carve out a piece of enduring glory; to realize a historical immortality bestowed only on those able to harness *ambizione*, attain military and political *virtù*, and transcend the natural depravity of mankind. Mortality, extinction, evaporating from the historical record—these are the punishments meted out to the multitude who lead lives of tranquil desperation. Machiavelli understood keenly that nothingness and indifference are the cruelest cosmic responses to the deepest human yearnings.

Machiavelli severely doubted that an afterlife awaits human beings at their deaths. Machiavelli's extensive writings reveal no evidence that he feared eternal damnation or believed in the existence of hell. Recall Callimaco's musings on hell in *La Mandragola* (M 4:1). Also, a story recalls Machiavelli on his deathbed being told that "The wisdom of this world is the enemy of God" and Machiavelli replying, "I am not tagging along with those ragbags [the ill, weak, weary, and poor who are blessed] to go to paradise. I am staying with that other company [Plato, Plutarch, Livy, and Tacitus, among others], to talk about the state and go to hell."[39] Even if apocryphal, the story attests to Machiavelli's utter indifference to the threat of Hell and the possibility of eternal damnation.

As further evidence of Machiavelli's lack of concern for his prospects during final judgment, we have correspondence from his friend, Francesco Guicciardini. Writing to Machiavelli, who was charged with the task of selecting a preacher and adjudicating a perplexing issue of jurisdiction over monasteries, Guicciardini noted sardonically, "I believe you will serve them according to the expectations they have of you and as is required by your honor, which would be stained if at this age *you started to think about your soul, because, since you have always lived in a contrary belief*, it would be attributed rather to senility than to goodness" (Ltr. 269: 5/17/21; emphasis added).

Finally, Machiavelli consistently ridiculed the Church practices of accepting money for indulgences and offering masses presumably on behalf of the dead (to soften punishment in the afterlife). He placed no stock in ransoming souls out of Purgatory.

Accordingly, he was not deluded into thinking that leaving a rich legacy was a way of achieving immortality in a literal sense. We are finished at death if no afterlife awaits us. But Machiavelli accepted that generating a

legacy is a way of enriching the meaning of our lives now. Some of our projects should reach beyond our lifetimes. Guiding the next generation, creating something that exudes vitality and identity outside of ourselves, transmitting a culture and heritage, attending to enduring yet finite projects, and influencing the future are not ways of halting Father Time, but they are paths to meaning. Although our biological lives expire, our biographical lives continue through such legacies. Again, this is not immortality as such, but it does mark a life well lived. Generating rich legacies energizes faith in life, binds us to something beyond ourselves, and nurtures meaning above narrow self-fulfillment. Machiavelli apprehended this shrewdly. However, the grand aspirations, profound patriotism, burning ambition, and relentless passion of Machiavelli's interior life coalesced uneasily with his worldly fortunes.[40]

Machiavelli never envisioned the glory history would grant him. When discussing the types of men who merit praise, Machiavelli lists heads and founders of religion, founders of republics or principalities, commanders of armies who have expanded territorial holdings, and, finally, authors (D I 10). Although he burned to earn enduring glory in service to his country as a political *consigliere*, Machiavelli attained historical prominence as a writer. At his death, he could not have forecast the literary distinction his work would reap. He never fully understood the teeming artistic *virtù* he exuded. Ironically, Machiavelli, during his lifetime, was never Machiavellian enough to realize his dreams or anticipate his enduring power.

NOTES

1. Cited in Roberto Ridolfi, *The Life of Niccolò Machiavelli*, trans. Cecil Grayson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 7.

2. Niccolò Capponi, *An Unlikely Prince: The Life and Times of Machiavelli* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2010), 6, 31, 62.

3. Rafael Sabatini, *The Life of Cesare Borgia* (Teddington, UK: Echo Library, 2006), preface, 162.

4. Ibid., 61–71.

5. Garrett Mattingly, "Machiavelli," in *Renaissance Profiles*, ed. J. H. Plumb (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), 26–27.

6. Sabatini, *Borgia*, 193.

7. Ibid., 187–88, 193–94.

8. But how could d'Orco have misread the situation so badly? How could he have not anticipated the treachery of his supposed patron? And should not Borgia have calculated the possibility of d'Orco anticipating that treachery and making provisions to thwart it? The simple answer is that that those, such as d'Orco, who are elevated to positions of authority beyond their realistic hopes and demonstrated talents, are typically too concerned with exercising their privileges and power to question their apparent good fortune. Remiro d'Orco was too intent on proving himself an able executioner of his master's scheme to pacify Romagna to prepare for his eventual betrayal. As such, d'Orco was utterly devoid of the wiles of the fox: he could not recognize traps. As for Borgia, he understood keenly both d'Orco's penchant for cruelty and the unsubtle quality of his mind. Still, I suspect that Borgia had concocted an alternate plan should d'Orco have somehow suspected his destiny.

9. Sabatini, *Borgia*, 125–26.

10. Sebastian De Grazia, *Machiavelli in Hell* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 36.

11. See, for example, Eric W. Cochrane, "Machiavelli: 1940–1960," *Journal of Modern History* 33 (1961): 131–33; John H. Geerken, "Machiavelli Studies since 1969," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 37 (1976): 357–59.

12. For example, most of the Socratic epistemological paradoxes arise from Plato's use of the same term ("knowledge") in different senses or contexts: (a) deep theoretical understanding of the Forms; (b) truths generated from philosophical dialectic; (c) wisdom arising from divine inspiration; and (d) knowing-that and knowing-how gained from worldly experiences. Regarding Machiavelli's multiple senses of *virtù*, consider the English word "good." We are familiar with good people, good books, good knives, good cooks, good sex, good cars, good presentations, good times, good athletes, good singers, good teachers, and the like. "Good" sometimes but not always connotes "moral rectitude." At other times, "good" describes a person, event, or object that performs its function well. The word "excellent" does the same. In ordinary discourse we are rarely confused because context determines the meaning of such words. For example, we do not scratch our heads in puzzlement over how a car can manifest moral goodness. We understand, instead, that a good car is a vehicle that rarely breaks down, runs smoothly, and is easy to maintain.

13. Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince and The Discourses*, trans. Luigi Ricci; rev. E. R. P. Vincent (New York: Random House, 1950), 66.

14. Niccolò Machiavelli, *Selected Political Writings*, ed. and trans. David Wootton (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994), 55; Dante Germino, "Second Thoughts on Leo Strauss's Machiavelli," *Journal of Politics* 28 (1966): 803–7.

15. See, for example, John Austin, "A Plea for Excuses," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 57 (1956–1957): 1–5.

16. Germino, "Second Thoughts," 805.

17. Martin Hollis, "Dirty Hands," *British Journal of Political Science* 12 (1982): 390.

18. This tension between the imperatives of impartial impersonal morality and warranted partialism also appears, typically less strikingly, in everyday morality wherein moral agents advance the interests of their families, friends, and loved ones instead of promoting the more abstract general good. The problem is one *within* morality because conventional moral imperatives permit a sphere of partiality in numerous everyday matters. Advancing our own interests and those close to us in ways that do not advantage, and perhaps even disadvantage, others is often allowed or recommended. In our social relations we are connected to a host of roles that bear moral currency. Our actions not only produce consequences more direct and substantive upon those closer to us, but we also owe those closer to us greater consideration than we owe the public.

19. The theses I advance in this work concerning the problem of dirty hands and the internal condition of Machiavellian statesmen *are not* committed to any of the following propositions: (1) Machiavelli explicitly pondered the inner life of his ideal statesman, came to the conclusions I here advance, but suppressed the information in the interests of intentional obscurantism or because of some other motivation. (2) Machiavelli conceived his thoughts in ways that prefigured the history of moral theorizing: the disputes between teleology and deontology, consequentialism and absolutism, and collectivism and individualism. (3) One of Machiavelli's primary concerns was arriving at philosophical truths. Another of his primary concerns was delving into the inner lives of political agents. (4) My interpretation of Machiavelli reflects his original intentions and the plain meaning of his texts. Thus, the interpretation reveals Machiavelli's actual thinking when he was writing about the matters discussed. On the contrary, the clues Machiavelli left are simply his core principles of effective political action and his observations about what is at stake when rulers act in service of the common good of their nations. As such, I take what strike me as core Machiavellian principles and place them in the context of modern moral theory. Moreover, I draw out the implications of these principles for the inner lives of Machiavellian statesmen. That is, I ask and answer questions such as "What is Machiavelli logically and normatively committed to regarding the problem of dirty hands and the internal condition of statesmen given his views on X, Y, and Z?" "What would be the nature of the inner life of a Machiavellian statesman given how that person is supposed to conduct

himself?" Finally, I strive to advance the interpretation that coherently fits the greater part of Machiavelli's work. Accordingly, even if Machiavelli never actually ruminated about the inner life of his ideal statesman, we can reasonably portray the nature of that life from Machiavelli's descriptions of and prescriptions about effective political action.

20. Moral costs arise from the immoral remainder of using evil well. Agents may suffer in terms of their popularity and reputation. Moreover, damage to categorical moral principles and to the characters of the agents will take place. Statesmen must be steadfastly vigilant that they risk but do not lose their souls. To that end, Machiavelli cautions statesmen to retain their moral rectitude and limit their use of evil to the extent required to ward off wolves and to evade traps. In that vein, they should use evil means only when securing the most valuable goals in service of the common good and when compelled by necessity (when no other means could secure those goals). Also, statesmen should execute the evil means swiftly to eliminate lingering effects. To the extent possible, they should also avoid recurrences (P 8).

21. De Grazia, *Machiavelli in Hell*, 323.

22. Niccolò Machiavelli, "An Exhortation to Penitence," in *The Chief Works and Others*, ed. and trans. Allan H. Gilbert (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989), 170–74.

23. Bernard Williams, "Politics and Moral Character," in *Public and Private Morality*, ed. Stuart Hampshire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 64.

24. Independently of their appeals to punishment in the afterlife, Plato and Dante would agree with Machiavelli: the effects of evildoing on the character of perpetrators are direct, immediate, certain retributions for their wrongful acts. Regardless of the reactions and evaluations of other people and how perpetrators fare materially in the world, their internal condition unmistakably is altered by their deeds—and that is their most fundamental punishment. Such a response, however, may be unconvincing to those who insist that suffering negative sensations is necessary for punishment or that our interests are frustrated only by setbacks we experience. Although it is likely that the perfectly unjust statesman will expose the person he has become or always was, we have no guarantees. At bottom, Machiavelli's best response may be that all human beings should worry about losing their souls because our lives focus mainly on the art of crafting a worthy self. To scoff at that project is to deny a major portion of our humanity.

25. Michael Stocker, *Plural and Conflicting Values* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 9–36.

26. Ibid., 18.

27. Four other possibilities accounting for why excuses in dirty-hands contexts only partially absolve agents from moral culpability. (1) When writing philosophy our examples come deftly packaged: epistemological ambiguities are neatly smoothed over, probabilities are easily proclaimed, and calculations of results are tidily stipulated. In the real world of military and political decision making, however, critical choices are often made under conditions of radical uncertainty. (2) Perhaps feelings of having dirty hands are emotional responses to choosing in a situation where irrationality and arbitrariness, even absurdity, reign. (3) Moral guilt might arise from the way the official performs the act. Determining what to do—deliberating over ends, means, and alternatives—is only one part of the action. (4) Suppose the hypothetical leader's choice was between the lives of both her two children or the lives of fifty equally innocent youths: If the leader chooses to save the lives of the children, the fifty others will be slaughtered; if the leader chooses to save the fifty, the leader's own children will be slain. If the politician chooses to save the lives of the children, does she bear any responsibility for the deaths of fifty innocent strangers? Is the leader partially responsible for the deaths of the fifty others? These issues are explored more thoroughly in Raymond Angelo Belliotti, *Machiavelli's Secret: The Soul of the Statesman* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015): 113–22.

28. In addition, under conditions of supreme emergency—when the safety and survival of your country is at stake—Machiavelli advises that "you should pay no attention to what is just or what is unjust, or to what is kind or cruel, or to what is praiseworthy or shameful. You should put very other consideration aside, and you should adopt wholeheartedly the policy most likely to save your homeland's life and preserve her liberty" (D III 41). Contemporary ethicists define supreme emergencies in terms of imminent, horrifying danger. Respecting moral laws prohibiting harm to innocent people may facilitate, under such circumstances, the enslavement or extermination of a nation by a wrongful aggressor. For Machiavelli, failure

under such circumstances invites servitude, the breakdown of sound arms and laws, and the collapse of civic and moral *virtù.*

29. Russell Price, "The Theme of *Gloria* in Machiavelli," *Renaissance Quarterly* 30 (1977): 628.

30. See, for example, Capponi, *Unlikely Prince*, 277.

31. Some scholars perceive the final chapter of *The Prince* as firm evidence of Machiavelli's patriotic impulses. This romantic interpretation of Machiavelli gained momentum in the middle and late nineteenth century, during and after the period of the Italian *Risorgimento*. In that vein, Pasquale Villari (1827–1917) wrote: "Machiavelli proceeds to draw his conclusions, then at last the practical side and real aim of [*The Prince*] are clearly seen. It is a question of achieving the unity of his Italian motherland and of delivering it from foreign rule. This was certainly the holiest of objects." *The Life and Times of Niccolò Machiavelli*, trans. Linda Villari (London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1929), 516. Francesco De Sanctis (1817–1883) adds: "Let us therefore be proud of our Machiavelli . . . the bells are ringing throughout the land announcing the entry of the Italians into Rome. The temporal power is falling. The shout arises, 'Long live Italian unity!' 'Glory to Machiavelli.'" "Long Live Italian Unity: Glory to Machiavelli," in *Machiavelli: Cynic, Patriot or Political Scientist?* ed. De Lamar Jensen (Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath, 1960), 25–26.

32. Unlike Machiavelli, who often fantasized the unification of Italy, Francesco Guicciardini was pessimistic about the practical possibilities and unconvinced that establishing such a country was desirable. Guicciardini agreed with Machiavelli that the intrigues and influence of the Church had prevented the unification of the country, but he concluded that a unified Italy would bring grandeur to its ruling city but prove disastrous to numerous other cities within the country. Guicciardini concedes that his argument applies only to unified republics and not to a kingdom "which is more common to all its subjects." "Considerations on the 'Discourses' of Machiavelli," in *Selected Writings*, ed. Cecil Grayson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 81–82, Bk. I sec. XII.

33. Machiavelli did, however, recognize the improbability of a united Italy circa 1513. Responding to a letter written to him by his friend, Francesco Vettori, in which Vettori argued that the Swiss would present no danger to the rest of Italy if they gained Lombardy, Machiavelli opines fervidly: "As for the unity of the other Italians, you make me laugh, first, because there will never be any unity to any good purpose. And even if the leaders were united, that would not be enough, both because there are no armies here worth a nickel (except for the Spaniards who are too few to be sufficient), and because the tails are not united with the heads" (Ltr. 219: 8/10/13). Nevertheless, when Machiavelli expresses his dreams in his writings he aspires to masterful citizen militias led by, perhaps, a more refined version of Cesare Borgia, embodying more excellences and enjoying better fortune than the original, that might unify Italy.

34. See, for example, "I love my native city more than my own soul" (Ltr. 331: 4/16/27); "[So] much more did those citizens then [Florentines who united other regions and waged the War of the Eight Saints against Pope Gregory XI and his oppressive legate circa 1375] esteem their fatherland than their souls" (FH III 7); "I am very certain that he [Cosimo Rucellai] would cheerfully have sacrificed all he had in the world, and even life itself, for his friends and that there was no enterprise, however difficult and dangerous, which he would not have undertaken for the good of his country" (AW I 7).

35. See, for example, "There is my desire that these Medici princes should begin to engage my services, even if they should start out by having me roll along a stone. . . . Whoever has been honest and faithful [especially in public service] . . . as I have, is unable to change his nature" (Ltr. 224: 12/10/13); "Never did I disappoint that republic [Florence] whenever I was able to help her out—if not with deeds, then with words; if not with words, then with signs—I have no intention of disappointing her now" (Ltr. 270: 5/17/21).

36. See, for example, Capponi, *Unlikely Prince*, 7, 257.

37. The notion that Machiavelli wrote *The Prince* only to celebrate the ongoing power of a self-serving ruler lacks merit. Even in that book Machiavelli distinguishes evil well-used from evil ill-used; castigates certain rulers for their excesses; advises leaders on how to attain the

enduring glory of a heroic, political exemplar as opposed to the infamy of a tyrant; and calls upon a champion to unite Italy for the good of all.

38. Machiavelli's *biological* life began in 1469 and ended in 1527. The *autobiographical* life of Machiavelli—as measured by his exercises of freedom, his choices, and deeds—began sometime after 1469 when he developed requisite human agency and perished in 1527. The *biographical* life of Machiavelli began at least by 1469, perhaps earlier, and continues to this day and beyond. The idea of biographical life revolves around human life as a narrative, a compilation of stories. We are a series of stories in that we are understood and identified through a chain of events, choices, actions, thoughts, and relationships. Thus, our *biographical* lives, including value and meaning connected to our death and events thereafter, typically extend beyond our *biological* lives, which are measured by earthly existence. A person in an irreversible coma retains a biological life and a biographical life as his or her story continues but lacks an *autobiographical* life—lacking all significant cognitive capabilities, the person lacks human agency and can no longer participate in writing his or her life story—even though his or her biological life continues. In most cases, our biographical lives continue beyond our biological lives, but our autobiographical lives can vanish earlier. See Raymond Belliotti, *Posthumous Harm: Why the Dead are Still Vulnerable* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012), 101–32.

39. De Gravia, *Machiavelli in Hell*, 341.

40. Luigi Barzini concludes, "[Machiavelli] lived an irregular, almost bohemian life. He was a brilliant failure, never really managed to achieve his ends: he never made love to the women he wanted, satisfied his ambitions, reached the top in his political career and was never taken seriously as a thinker during his lifetime. He died penniless: he never even succeeded in persuading the republic of Florence to pay his arrears and to reimburse him for his expenses. He never managed to get his immortal works published. He was the permanent victim of political changes. . . . Such is the fate of very intelligent men who are, however, not intelligent enough to conceal their intelligence and lull other people's fears and suspicions to sleep. Machiavelli was, in reality, too much of a dreamer and an optimist to achieve practical results." *The Italians* (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1964), 165–66.

Chapter Four

Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882)

The Paladin of Liberation

Imagine a person graced with Julius Caesar's charisma, courage, intelligence, and ability to inspire and lead military campaigns, but divested of Caesar's avarice for self-aggrandizement, ardor for material accumulation, and compulsion to control and dominate others. Annex to this person Dante Alighieri's disdain for the temporal power of the papacy, passion for spiritual transformation, and messianic yearning for Italian unification as a prelude to global community, but severed from Dante's proclivity for exercising unwarranted intellectual pride and his penchant for annoyance and condescension when interacting with common people. Then tether this person to Niccolò Machiavelli's patriotic fervor, willingness to sacrifice for larger social causes, and unshakable conviction that Italy required a glorious redeemer to drive out foreign oppressors and unite its factious regions, but shorn of Machiavelli's grim immersion in the Florentine race for honors and gain and his recurrent ineffectual political, social, and military fantasies. Finally, season this person with generous doses of guileless sincerity, unadorned manners, sexual magnetism, inveterate honesty, reverence for freedom, refusal to surrender to the tender mercies of the powerful, and willingness to defy and prevail against adverse probabilities; then enhance this paragon with a balmy tenor singing voice. From this recipe materializes the person who most closely approximates Nietzsche's ideal of "a Roman Caesar with the soul of Christ," the man who earned the sobriquets "Hero of Two Worlds" "Lion of Caprera" and "The only wholly admirable figure in modern history," Giuseppe Garibaldi.

BIOGRAPHICAL HIGHLIGHTS

Garibaldi stood about five feet seven inches; he bore an athletic frame, reddish-brown hair, deep-set brown eyes, a high forehead, a beard, and aquiline nose. He lacked other distinguishing physical characteristics. His face exuded serenity, high resolve, a firm sense of self, and remarkable dignity. Garibaldi was generally quiet, relaxed, and uncommonly courteous, but if subjected to insult or confronted by oppressors his outrage was swift, certain, and intense. Garibaldi dressed for effect, eventually adopting a red shirt as his trademark military uniform as well as a cylindrical beaver hat. Although he was by default a man of few words, when ginning up his troops or extolling support for his military and political causes, he was a stirring orator, vibrant warbler of patriotic music, and galvanizing writer. Garibaldi understood well that he was a symbol of heroic-romanticism. He promoted that image and employed it for instrumental advantage in service of his broader social, political, and military agenda. He had theatrical flair and grasped briskly how a passionate response from his audience invariably arose from the convergence of selfless daring, refusal of reward for intrepid services rendered, and *la bella figura*. Garibaldi was also a favorite of the ladies of every nationality and social class with which he associated. [1]

Although he incessantly puffed on cigars, his other daily habits were abstemious. Garibaldi ate sparingly, rarely consumed meat, and water was his beverage of choice. He retired to bed early, often by 8:00 p.m., and awoke around 2:00 a.m., napping for an hour or two during the day. Influenced profoundly by non-materialistic leftist politics, Garibaldi was immune to the temptations of graft, financial aggrandizement, and domination of others through pecuniary advantage. A serious man, he demanded to be taken seriously. Curiously, Garibaldi was utterly devoid of a sense of humor.

Early Years

In 1807 Garibaldi was born in Nizza (Nice), which Napoleon had seized from the Kingdom of Piedmont ten years earlier. His father, Domenico, and mother, Maria Rosa Raimondi, were wholly "Italian," having been born and raised in Chiavari and Loano, respectively. Born into a maritime family, young Giuseppe excelled as a swimmer and soon came to resent the extent and effects of clerical authority in Piedmont. The influences of his parents and environment nurtured Giuseppe's empathy for downtrodden and suffering human beings, as well as animals. He garnered a deep appreciation of ancient Rome from his diligent reading of history under the supervision of Master Arena. Naturally adventuresome, Giuseppe was active in the Nizzardo Italian community. Garibaldi's first phase of post-adolescent development spanned 1824–1833, during which time he lived as a sailor in the Mediterra-

nean and Black seas. His early voyages, to Odessa and Rome and Cagliari and Genoa, subjected him to the terrors of marauding pirates and deepened his regard for the eternal city: "Rome was for me Italy, because I can only view Italy in the re-union of her scattered members, and that Rome is for me the single and unique symbol of Italian unity."[2] The lessons of his first seafaring adventures sowed the seeds of controlling fear under extreme adversity, lusting for Italian unification under Roman but not papal hegemony, and standing firm for fundamental principles that his later life would harvest. In 1832, Garibaldi was certified as a merchant marine captain.

Political Influences

In 1833, Garibaldi, while working on the *Clorinda*, a ship bound for Constantinople, met Emile Barrault (1799–1869). One of thirteen Saint-Simonian leaders banished from France for offenses against public decency, Barrault, an intellectually acute professor of rhetoric, introduced Garibaldi to the precepts of his sect. Garibaldi was intrigued by these seemingly persecuted disciples of an innovative religion and he provided an enraptured audience of one for Barrault's elocutions. Founded by Claude-Henri Saint-Simon (1760–1825), Barrault's group may well strike modern readers as a zany combination of communal living and egalitarian economics leavened by sexual opportunism. The sect venerated its new leader, Barthélemy Prosper Enfantin (1796–1864), as a quasi-divinity and the patriarch of a new humanity and sought a worthy woman to serve as matriarch. Much like classical Cynic philosophers in the Hellenic world, the Saint-Simonians scorned social and moral norms; they championed free love, sported colorful robes, black gloves, boots, and scarves, and paraded through Marseilles crooning "Song of the Woman," an original composition celebrating the prospective paramour of Enfantin. The members embraced equal distribution of wealth, common ownership of material goods, emancipation of women, faith in technological progress as a way of improving social conditions, equality of men and women, and amplification of physical pleasures, all within a social hierarchy under the auspices of a selfless patriarch.[3]

Although intrigued by the iconoclastic trajectory of Saint-Simonian rituals and doctrines, Garibaldi embraced only its internationalism and idealism summarized in principles such as defend your country against the excesses of tyranny; become a cosmopolitan and offer your sword to those in other lands rebelling against oppression; interrogate the origins of the theory and practice arising from conventional wisdom; struggle for improved living conditions for disenfranchised social classes; toil for universal rights and broad understandings of community; and promote sexual liberation and female emancipation.[4]

Giuseppe Mazzini's (1805–1872) nationalistic *La Giovine Italia* ("Young Italy") political movement provided an even greater political influence. Never a nuanced collaborator and fully confident of his distinctive talents, Mazzini, once a member of the revolutionary underground *Carbonari*, founded Young Italy to gain control of his own organization. Along with Karl Marx, Mazzini was among the most brilliant political theorists of his era. His patriotic zeal dazzled and throughout his life he was firmly convinced that the unification of Italy could spark a world federation. Unlike Dante, however, he did not fantasize that a universal monarch clutching absolute power was the political solution to tyranny and oppression. Like Dante and Machiavelli, Mazzini bristled at the divisive machinations hatched by the Church that served only to maintain its temporal influence, promote foreign interventions, and ensure the continual factionalism and regionalism within Italy. Although Mazzini was deeply religious, which distanced him from socialism, he recognized keenly the discordant role commandeered by the papacy for centuries. Mazzini was an unapologetic revolutionary republican who consistently excoriated socialism, monarchy, tyranny, theocracy, and oligarchy in turn.

Mazzini was not merely a theoretician but also a strategist. He orchestrated win-win political situations for his cause. If his radicals prevailed in battle or in guerrilla insurgency, they won; if they failed gloriously, they could still win by publicizing the events at issue and celebrating the valor and selfless dedication of dead heroes. He always had his eye on the prize: inspiring more patriots, thumping the drum of victory in martyrdom, and exposing the oppression of foreign governments and the pernicious intrigues of a feckless papacy. A prolific writer, Mazzini choreographed his republican designs through the bourgeoning print medium of his day and enthusiastically churned out political propaganda for dissemination throughout and beyond Italy. In the words of Gaetano Salvemini, it was "Mazzini and Mazzini alone, who imposed upon the Italian liberal-nationalist groups the one dominating idea to which all the vicissitudes of the making of Italy, everything else was to become subordinated."[5]

The *Clorinda* sailed from Constantinople to Taganrog; at port Garibaldi entered a club for Italian seamen and was enthralled to hear Giovanni Battista Cuneo (1809–1875) vibrantly extol the secular religion of *La Giovine Italia*. Cuneo's electrifying romantic-revolutionary narrative of a once-dominant Italian nation now laboring under the four horsemen of debilitation—officious foreign intermeddlers, a papacy desperately clinging to temporal prerogatives, insular regionalism, and thin provincial identities—yet hungering for redemption and unification, permeated Garibaldi's spirt and animated his soul. Later that year, Garibaldi would be introduced to Mazzini, with whom he would have a complicated relationship for almost forty years. However, the two men shared throughout that period unshakable, fundamental

commitments to Italian patriotism, international freedom from oppression, revolutionary activity in service of Italian unification, the need to eliminate the temporal power of the papacy, and the importance of heroic military action to nourish radical theory and practice.

In fall 1833, Garibaldi took an oath of loyalty to *La Giovine Italia* and, in accordance with the group's policies, operated under an assumed name: in his case, Giuseppe Borel.[6]

South American Adventures

In 1834, as a member of the Piedmontese navy, he took part in a mutiny for the republican cause. After escaping to France, he was sentenced to death by default. His second phase of post-adolescent development covered 1836 to 1847. During that time, he sailed for Rio de Janeiro; fought for the province of Rio Grande in its attempt at liberation from the Brazilian Empire; met Ana Ribeiro da Silva ("Anita") (1821–1849), who would fight beside him bravely, and whom he would later marry and have children with; commanded a small Uruguayan fleet against Argentina; and formed and commanded the Italian Legion at Montevideo that achieved several successes including victory at the battle of St. Antonio.[7] Garibaldi's close friend, the valiant Francesco Anzani (1809–1848), with whom he shared patriotic fervor and international experience, assumed a crucial role in training and disciplining the Italian Legion. During this period, Garibaldi, buoyed by Mazzini's burgeoning public relations efforts on his behalf, gained considerable renown in Europe.

In 1837, while fighting for the Republic of Rio Grande do Sul, Garibaldi was captured in the port town of Gualeguay, Argentina. After escaping from prison, he was recaptured, perhaps through the betrayal of the guide leading him through the pampas. Argentinian commandant Leonardo Millan lashed Garibaldi across the face repeatedly, demanding that his captive reveal the names of those who aided his escape. Garibaldi remained silent. Millan ordered Garibaldi tortured by a version of the *strappado*, the ordeal Machiavelli had endured more than three centuries earlier. Millan's henchmen bound Garibaldi's wrists and hung him from a beam in the roof of a building; he hung with his entire weight on his arms with his feet slightly more than a yard from the ground. The tormentors informed Garibaldi that he would remain in this position until he identified his accomplices.

Periodically, Millan would enter the building and repeat his question. Garibaldi spit in his face. For two hours, he hung from the beam, after which time he lost consciousness. When he regained his senses, he was in a prison cell chained to a convicted murderer.

Citizens of Gualeguay, many of whom knew and liked Garibaldi, bristled at his treatment. Millan retaliated by oppressing opposition within the town. Garibaldi was transferred to a provincial jail, where he endured for two

months. He was suddenly released, probably due to the intercession of Colonel Pascual Echague, governor of the province of Entre-Rios. Garibaldi, who never identified his confederates, boarded a ship for Montevideo. He never recovered from the long-term physical effects of his maltreatment.[8]

Liberating the politically oppressed, as always, was his cynosure; bristling vehemently against the implacable temporal authority of the Church was his default humor; hurling himself into precarious undertakings where his internal demons would challenge the better angels of his psyche was his prime sustenance; enrobing in a scarlet mantle prefiguring a glorious national, even international, enterprise was his one true vocation; Giuseppe Garibaldi, heeding the sweet canticles of the enchantress of patriotism, headed home.

Return to Italy

Perhaps Garibaldi's greatest political oscillations occurred during his third phase, roughly 1848–1857. At the start of this period, he led eighty of his legionnaires back to Italy, offering his services to the King of Piedmont. Although his offer was rejected, he soon thereafter led a volunteer unit at Milan against the Austrians. In 1849 he was elected a deputy in the Roman Assembly and undertook a series of military adventures: he commanded a brigade that repelled a French attack in Rome; battled a Bourbon Neapolitan army and French forces at Velletri; led a few thousand men from Italy through central Italy in flight from French and Austrian armies; disbanded his men in San Marino, only to be chased by the Austrians; and arrived in Piedmont, where he was promptly arrested and deported as an undesirable.

From 1850 to 1851, Garibaldi tried to go back to sea and earn a living as a trader and wayfarer. He traveled to New York to purchase a ship but lacked sufficient funds. He resided with Antonio Meucci (1808–1889) in Staten Island. He first convinced Meucci to open a sausage factory. Garibaldi, however, was never a man of commerce and the venture failed. He then persuaded Meucci to allow him to work in the inventor's candle factory. Meucci relented against his better judgment. Garibaldi proved an inept candle maker, but an enthusiastic, capable manual laborer. He also delved more deeply into democratic and socialist political theory and action. From there he embarked for Peru and led a clipper on cargo missions to a variety of countries. It was during these travels that he purchased part of the island of Caprera, north of Sardinia. By 1856 he was in England, hatching a failed venture to buy a ship and leading a mission to liberate political prisoners in Naples.

Glory and Disappointment

He enjoyed his greatest military glories during his fourth phase, 1858–1860. Having been summoned by the prime minister of Piedmont, the crafty Count Camillo Benso Cavour (1810–1861), Garibaldi organized volunteers, a corps known as *Cacciatori delle Alpi* (Hunters of the Alps), in readiness for a war with Austria. While the main Franco-Piedmontese Sardinian forces were fighting in Lombardy, he won battles at Varese and Como. An armistice was declared soon thereafter, and Garibaldi was placed in command of the army of Tuscany. His aspirations to march into the Papal States, however, were overruled and he returned, briefly, to civilian life.

Garibaldi's highwater point occurs in 1860. In the aftermath of the Austro-Sardinian war, as a deputy for Nice in the Piedmontese parliament, he vilified Cavour for ceding Nice, which had been returned to Piedmont in 1815, to the French in consideration of its acceptance of the annexation of Tuscany and Emilia to Piedmont. He then organized "the Thousand" to engage in guerrilla attacks against the Neapolitan Bourbons. Composed of volunteers, the Thousand were drawn from a strikingly diverse membership: "students, workingmen, vagabonds and ruffians, tradesmen, civil servants, journalists, authors, university lecturers, barbers, cobblers, gentlemen of leisure, painters, sculptors, ships' captains, chemists, adventurers, businessmen, engineers, a hundred doctors, 150 lawyers, and one woman . . . of peasant stock who worked as washerwoman and cook. They were of all ages—the youngest not yet twelve."[9]

After a stunning victory at Calatafimi, he captured Palermo. He soon won the battle of Milazzo and crossed the straits of Messina, pressed a bold campaign in Calabria, and captured Naples. After seizing both Palermo and Naples, Garibaldi proclaimed himself "Dictator of the Two Sicilies." He held plebiscites in Sicily and Naples, which permitted him to present the whole of southern Italy to Piedmont and to proclaim Vittorio Emmanuele II (1820–1878) of the House of Savoy as king of a united nation. Garibaldi's military triumphs combined with Cavour's stunning political intrigues had forged *Il Risorgimento*: there was now an "Italy," at least in name. Only the Papal States and a few cities remained unjoined. Garibaldi returned to Caprera, which was by now his permanent home.

The Anglo-European world took notice. In 1861, Abraham Lincoln offered him command of a federal army corps in our Civil War. Garibaldi demanded supreme command and the formal abolishment of slavery. Negotiations fell through. In 1862, he revived his long-standing aspiration to march on Rome and was seriously wounded in a clash with Italian troops at Aspromonte.[10] He was briefly imprisoned until the king granted him amnesty. In 1864, he enjoyed a majestic reception in England.

Garibaldi led another army of volunteers against Austria in 1866, after which Venice joined Italy; and in 1867 he again marched on Rome but was repelled at Mentana by papal and French forces. In 1870, sixty-three years old and suffering from several infirmities, he joined republican France in the Franco-Prussian war and commanded an army in the Vosges that enjoyed a series of partial successes. Meanwhile, because of that war, nearly all French troops were withdrawn from Rome, and Vittorio Emmanuele's Italian forces were able to enter. *Il Risorgimento* was complete.[11] Garibaldi returned home at the end of 1871.

After unification, unsurprisingly, a host of problems plagued the new nation. In the words of S. J. Woolf these included "relations between Church and State, the dangers of centralization, the desperate misery of the southern peasantry which manifested itself in widespread brigandage. Massimo d'Azeglio (1798–1866) [Cavour's predecessor as prime minister of Piedmont-Sardinia], stated in a famous aphorism, 'Italy has been made; now we have to make Italians.'"[12] In this fifth phase of his post-adolescent development, Garibaldi was soon disillusioned with the outcome of the movement for which he so frequently risked his life.

Two vectors converged to undermine the creation of an Italy in spirit and not merely in name and institutions of governance. First, the widespread eagerness to jettison foreign oppressors was only a necessary but not sufficient condition of establishing a genuinely national identity. Second, as is invariably the case, the ends realized by political revolution are prefigured in the means employed to attain them. Following the leadership of the monarchy during *Risorgimento* nurtured militarism, an antagonistic foreign policy, and indifference to the basic civil and survival requirements of the lower social classes. Parliament seamlessly transitioned into the new nation by remaining aristocratic and denying suffrage to the masses. Ponderous, centralized bureaucracy extinguished local political traditions that had offered common people the few opportunities for political participation they had enjoyed. Economic and political power was vested in the avaricious paws of an elite corps of self-seeking materialists.

Because of such phenomena, contrary to Garibaldi's enterprise and expectation, the social fracture between the ruling class and the masses widened into a gorge. Under such circumstances, national identity lay stillborn on a gurney of class hierarchy and division and regional acrimony. This was especially the case in the *Mezzogiorno*.[13] Paul Hofmann remarks: "In the South, Garibaldi has been adulated as a liberator in 1860–61, but soon people there were wondering whether they had not simply been subjected by a new kind of invader—Northern Italian soldiers and carpetbaggers."[14]

Isaac Newton's (1642–1727) third law of motion declares that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Garibaldi unwittingly provided a political corollary to Newton's finding. In response to what he perceived as

the betrayal of *Risorgimento* values by the monarchy and rapacious bureaucrats, especially regarding their condescending treatment of him and his volunteers, Garibaldi tacked to the extreme political left. In 1871, he supported the Paris Commune and the International Workingmen's Association. Garibaldi proposed a massive alliance of leftist political forces. He organized a Congress of Unity that advocated for universal suffrage, progressive method of taxation, political reform, mandatory public education, and the abolition of the death penalty. In 1874, Garibaldi was elected to the Italian parliament. In 1875, Garibaldi arrived in Rome with a plan to divert the Tiber river to prevent floods and the transmission of infectious diseases. He attended parliament and submitted his plan, which was eventually rejected. In 1879, he founded the League of Democracy, whose platform included universal suffrage, emancipation of women, abolition of ecclesiastical property, creation of a standing army, and extensive land reclamation and other public works projects. Christopher Hibbert concludes: "[T]here was also seen to be much sound sense in what he wrote about the neglect of Sardinia and the South, the problems of social reform and education, the causes and cures of brigandage and the plight of the starving poor, the vast sums squandered on colonization and armaments instead of on the internal needs of Italy."[15]

THE ROMANTIC HERO

Garibaldi fashioned a distinctively heroic-romantic image. Unlike standard heroes who are distant from the communities they serve and benefit, Garibaldi radiated a message to the masses: unify, cast off your chains, construct a common Italian identity. Like standard heroes, Garibaldi transcended limits while laboring at the periphery of established society and often violated its norms in the name of a higher calling. His aspirations and actions broke through the typical constraints on the self and thereby set him apart from and above ordinary human beings. Garibaldi was the embodiment of possibility and higher meaning. Yet, as is too often the fate of heroic endeavors, as the sibling gremlins of necessity and *fortuna* wove their treacheries, Garibaldi's military and political valor failed to transform culture and society.[16]

Appended to Garibaldi's heroism was his incorrigible romanticism: his commitment to concrete persons and to the quest for human empowerment accompanied by an iconoclastic approach to existing social arrangements. The world, not only the regions of Italy, must be transformed; existing hierarchies and divisions must be unsettled if human solidarity and love are to flourish.[17] Garibaldi venerated integrity, sincerity, and the disposition to sacrifice our lives for our highest ideals. He harbored an insatiable craving to approach infinity by exercising the will to struggle and smash obstacles, and to reimagine and re-create the self through vigorous exertions beyond the

ambitions of the masses. Independently of reaching a final, fixed goal, Garibaldi's romanticism luxuriated in the process of self-creation and the flow of defying recurrent challenges.[18] In sum, Garibaldi attacked the human quandary of constructing a meaningful, purposeful, significant existence, by zealously leading an adventuresome, heroic-romantic life. As much as Garibaldi coveted that image and existence, the subjugated daughters and sons of turbulent, regionalized Italy required a romantic hero even more.

Benefiting from Mazzini's print medium blitz at the outset, Garibaldi's heroic-romantic military image energized patriotic longings during *Risorgimento*. Lucy Riall captures well the elements of the symbolism:

> He was a general who triumphed against terrible odds, a dignified leader who cared for the common man, and a romantic figure who had experienced his full share of personal suffering, loneliness and hardship. His striking appearance—his good looks and flamboyant clothes—made him an instantly recognizable figure, while his simple manner and austere lifestyle reinforced the seductive appeal of a hero unspoilt by his cult status. . . . He is of a "noble and lofty character," personally modest yet rebellious. And defiant in the face of defeat; and he is exceptionally courageous and daring when it comes to upholding moral principles and defending the honour of the community.[19]

Garibaldi did not regard this public pedestal as imprisoning or grueling. On the contrary, he welcomed the depiction—explicitly polishing this image through his actions, presentations, and expressed aspirations—while relishing the tasks assigned to the *Risorgimento* hero. He embodied an indefatigable confidence in the righteousness of the cause of Italian unification and in his power to attain it. Garibaldi believed in himself and his enterprise and petitioned others to share those convictions. Daniel Pick observes:

> Although Garibaldi confessed to his own imperfection, he also offered himself up as the exemplary, fearless redeemer, a rallying point for those intent on restoring the political virtue of "Italy"; he invited others to treat him as the point of identification, a heroic ideal for the new nation: here he was, the very personification of incorruptible commitment, no "mud" stuck to him. He wrote that his conscience was clear, his attitude defiant, his martial skills and expressions of pure love for the nation always at the service of the cause; as he defiantly insisted, "here is the conscience that fears not."[20]

Invoking founding myths and romantic rebellions of the past was a crucial aspect of Garibaldi's rise as national symbol. For example, the early Romans bristled under the tyranny of Tarquin the Proud. The plebeians were forced into oppressive involuntary servitude; the aristocrats were subject to recurrent purges. The son of Tarquin, Sextus, ignited the flame of rebellion. Smitten by the beauty of a married woman, Lucretia, Sextus made his sexual intentions known to her. Lucretia refused. Sextus raped her. Upon being

released from Sextus's custody, Lucretia spewed the truth to her husband and father, then committed suicide.

The fabled Lucius Junius Brutus (ca. 545 BC–ca. 509 BC), led a popular rebellion that drove Tarquin, who cast aside his pride, out of Rome. Brutus was especially instrumental in winning the military to his cause. A republic was instituted, and the power of the senate restored. Brutus and the husband of Lucretia were elected first consuls of Rome. Shortly thereafter, agents of Tarquin the Proud returned to Rome to discuss the return of the tyrant's personal property. They also seized the opportunity to foment counterrevolution. The connivers lured Brutus's two sons into their conspiracy against the republic. The treachery was exposed, and the traitors were brought to justice. Brutus had to choose between exercising the rule of law and special pleading for his scions. He chose the rule of law and all conspirators, including his two sons, were executed under Brutus's supervision.[21]

Tarquin had not punished his son, Sextus, for the rape of Lucretia. Brutus would not make a comparable mistake. The heroism and judicial rectitude of Brutus was an inspiring myth of the ancient Roman republic, a legend later invoked by the architects of *Risorgimento*.

Another energizing narrative, especially popular in the *Mezzogiorno*, was the Sicilian Vespers, a popular uprising in Palermo against the French in 1282. Although several different accounts of its precipitating cause exist, the most popular was that a group of uninvited French authorities joined Sicilians at Easter festivities. Buoyed by alcohol, a French soldier removed a woman from the crowd and sought her favor. Responding to this breach of honor, the woman's husband fatally stabbed the reprobate. French soldiers joined the fray to avenge their fallen comrade. The Sicilians killed them all. The church bells in Palermo began to ring for Vespers. A successful rebellion against Charles of Anjou ensued. Within a few weeks, thousands (between three and thirteen thousand) of French men and women were killed by the rebels, and the government of Charles lost control of the island. For years, various Tuscan and Sicilian cities, in league with several popes, had schemed against Charles, who had proved to be a cruel, avaricious ruler. The Sicilian Vespers was a successful uprising for independence against a foreign oppressor.[22]

Both narratives of rebellion strike heroic-romantic chords: a foreign government rules tyrannically; an agent of that government perpetrates dishonorable sexual aggression; the victim struggles mightily to maintain her honor; her champion, a heroic avenger, expunges the dishonor; wider rebellion ensues; and the community is redeemed as the oppressors are engulfed and extradited. The themes of death before dishonor, assumption of high risk in service of communal integrity, and women as the symbol of national immaculacy resonate. Love, sex, religion, violence, wrongful domination, and national redemption are the recipe for patriotic legends sustaining heroic-

romantic enterprises. The *Risorgimento* required a paladin of liberty and Giuseppe Garibaldi stepped to the plate. The *Risorgimento* hero symbolized the best of the Italian past. He recalled the highest national achievements and inspired the grandest contemporary possibilities.

Unlike Julius Caesar, Garibaldi was not an authoritarian hero, an exemplar venerated for his military achievements who seized absolute political authority or in whom it was vested. Garibaldi positioned himself as the embodiment of the values that the masses cherished or at least should cherish. He welcomed communal expectations and relished public adoration. Only national unification could purge foreign oppressors, ameliorate regionalism and factionalism, and marginalize the noxious temporary power of clerics. Garibaldi was the symbol of the general will, the sword of the collectivity, and the agent of salutary cultural transformation, all this in service not of aggrandizing his own name, but only to promote a greater good. Thus, Mazzini wrote: "History is not the biography of great men. . . . The great men of the earth are but the marking stones on the road of humanity; they are the priests of its religion. . . . The inspiration of genius belongs one half to heaven, the other to the crowds of common mortals from whose life it springs."[23]

Unfortunately, Garibaldi, as did Mazzini, too often failed to distinguish a general will to expel foreign oppressors from a widespread yearning to form a nation and shape a common identity. Particularly in the *Mezzogiorno*, the masses passionately coveted the former, while being indifferent or even strongly resistant to the latter.

MAZZINI AND CAVOUR

Garibaldi shared with Mazzini the fundamental political convictions already noted, but the two men were temperamentally unsuited for a mutually tranquil relationship. Garibaldi was an experienced traveler whereas Mazzini was an intellectual tactician. Garibaldi perceived Mazzini as frequently impractical whereas Mazzini viewed Garibaldi as too often naïve, insufficiently committed to republicanism, and susceptible to being led by monarchists. Both figures inspired different sets of devoted followers who looked to only one but not the other as the leader of *Risorgimento*. Garibaldi was convinced that he understood and could energize the masses well, whereas Mazzini was comfortable among only the intellectual elites; Garibaldi viewed the masses as the engine of revolution and social transformation, whereas Mazzini celebrated the primacy of ideology and theory. Jasper Ridley identifies five stages of the Garibaldi-Mazzini relationship:

> In the first stage, after 1833, Garibaldi had been Mazzini's devoted pupil; in the second stage, in Rome in 1849, they fought together against the French, but

> personal differences divided them; in the third stage, after1854, they became opponents, because Garibaldi supported Victor Emanuel and Mazzini remained Republican; in the fourth stage, after Aspromonte, they once again drew closer together as Garibaldi became disillusioned with the Italian monarchy; in the fifth stage, they disagreed about the Commune and the International, with [Garibaldi] supporting Marx and the Communards.[24]

Although Mazzini was invariably more firmly committed to republicanism than Garibaldi, who was more willing to abrogate that political conviction in service of facilitating his higher aspiration of uniting Italy, the occasional strife between the two men was just as frequently generated by their temperamental similarities. Each perceived himself as a leader; both were envious of the staunch admirers the other attracted; neither was congenial to discharging orders formulated by others; both were selflessly dedicated to the same higher causes, thereby amplifying even slight differences about the proper means to attain their joint ends into immeasurable disparities provoking disproportionate antagonisms; each was supremely confident, uncommonly stubborn, and inimical to criticism. Through the recasting of their almost forty-year association, however, mutual respect glistened. When each peered into the eyes of the other he viewed much that constituted his own soul.

Although profoundly spiritual in their political convictions to the point of creating secular religions, Mazzini and Garibaldi were unrepentantly anticlerical, whereas Cavour was only transactionally anticlerical while not particularly spiritual in any dimension.[25] Mazzini was consistently and thoroughly republican. Although often described as a centrist-liberal, Cavour was more a conservative aristocratic often invoking monarchical prerogatives to accommodate political success. Garibaldi was instinctively a republican, who acknowledged the occasional need for short-term dictatorship, yet relinquished his political power to the monarchy in service of national unification, but then veered strongly to the political left when disappointed by the outcomes generated by the new nation.

Cavour, especially at the onset of *Risorgimento*, was far less interested in Italian nationalism and far more riveted on ousting the Austrians and expanding Piedmontese hegemony. Ever the crafty sailor of political seas, Cavour hoisted the flag of Italian nationalism only in the mid-1850s, when he judged accurately that doing so would facilitate his designs. Although he was invariably opportunistic and often duplicitous, Cavour was also the primary diplomat navigating among domestic and foreign schemers. Cavour manipulated Garibaldi in service of his own ends—turning the Red Shirt's nationalistic passions and boundless self-sacrifice for human liberation in directions that advanced Cavour's narrower concerns—but was also wary of Garibaldi's heroic-romantic image that galvanized the masses and energized volunteer forces not directly controlled by Piedmont. In 1869, once Cavour relin-

quished Savoy and Nice to Emperor Napoleon III (Louis Napoleon) of France (1808–1873), an arrangement Cavour had crafted prior to the Austro-Sardinian War and without informing Garibaldi, the Lion of Caprera was contemptuous of Cavour and would never again trust him.[26]

Ridley cites an example of how Cavour aspired to harness Garibaldi's patriotic ardor to further his own political agenda:

> [Cavour] would not support the revolution [Garibaldi's Sicilian expedition] until he thought that it was likely to succeed; thereafter he supported it in order to control it and reap the rewards of the revolutionaries' daring. He also realized that there were political advantages in having Garibaldi in Sicily instead of stirring up trouble about Nice nearer home.[27]

Mazzini understood Cavour for what he was and predicted, astutely, that the means used to secure Italian unification would prefigure and contaminate the ends attained. Instead of establishing a vibrant republic promoting widespread political participation, a Piedmontese monarchy would arise that would be unable to shape a national identity. Yet such a monarchy, given a jump-start by Cavour, was the only realistic path leading to liberation. Mazzini championed his republican political principles and his creed of victory through martyrdom adamantly and unapologetically throughout his life. He and Garibaldi were joined to basic nationalistic, military, and social commitments, but the two men coalesced uneasily. They were at once too temperamentally similar in certain respects while too congenitally dissimilar in other critical dimensions.[28]

Around 1858, Cavour slid Garibaldi though the political grease, convincing him that unification could occur only under the king of Piedmont-Sardinia and not under Mazzinian republican ideals. Pursuant to Cavour's counsel, Garibaldi formed the *Cacciatori delle Alpi* and supported the Piedmontese monarchy in the Austro-Sardinian War.

Just prior to the Sicilian expedition in 1860, Mazzini, although still republican to his core, was willing to wage war under the leadership of King Vittorio Emmanuele II, but he was convinced that the monarch would ally with Louis Napoleon of France to the detriment of the founding ideals of *Risorgimento*. Cavour, yearning as always to extend Piedmontese-Sardinian hegemony, welcomed an alliance with Napoleon as the only path to annexing all of Italy. Whereas Mazzini sought a transformed, unified Italian identity, Cavour aspired to expand Piedmontese dominion. Garibaldi was convinced that annexing Italy to the monarchy was at the time the only realistic approach, but he still thought popular rebellion would fashion that result. He was uninterested in an alliance with Napoleon.[29] Although, as always, stridently nationalist, Garibaldi scurried from Mazzini's republicanism in deference to political exigencies.

Of the three, Cavour embraced the most coherent program, one that translated to a top-down revolution that would stifle cultural transformation. Predictably, the pragmatism and conservatism underwriting *Risorgimento* from that point forward would transform the movement from mass social revolution to regime change by military action. In the aftermath of unification, that Garibaldi would embrace political programs far to the left of the monarchy and too socialistic for most Mazzinians was unsurprising.

ORATORICAL AND LITERARY PANACHE

Although laconic by nature, Garibaldi was eloquent and galvanizing when addressing his military volunteers or publicly promoting *Risorgimento*.[30] For example, in 1848 Garibaldi's volunteers had fought valiantly but the Austrians had thrashed King Charles Albert's forces at Custozza. The king negotiated an armistice and withdrew his troops. On August 13, at Castelletto, Garibaldi appealed to the Italian people:

> Chosen in Milan by the People and their representatives as leader of my men, with no aim except that of Italian independence, I am not able to conform to the humiliating convention which has been signed by the King of Sardinia with the hated foreigner dominating my country. If the King of Sardinia has a crown which he wishes to save by guilt and cowardice, my companions and I do not wish to save our lives by infamy, and to abandon, without sacrificing ourselves, our sacred soil to the mockery of those who oppress and ravage it.[31]

In 1849, under Garibaldi's command, republican forces defeated the numerically superior French army at Velletri outside of Rome. However, French reinforcements soon arrived and initiated a siege of Rome. Garibaldi demanded sacrifice and martyrdom in the name of honor and national redemption:

> [R]ise up in the name of unrevenged martyrs, of liberty and the looted fatherland, disgraced by the foreigner, strong men prepared to die. . . . Italians after so many years need men who can teach us to dare and to die. And we have learnt. . . . The whole population is rushing onward under the standard of redemption. . . . Italian honor, and you know how important honor is to a fallen nation, Italian honor has been saved by our brave legionaries.[32]

Garibaldi defended Rome valiantly and made his "*Ovunque noi saremo, sarà Roma* ("Wherever we go, there will be Rome") speech in the Roman assembly. Nevertheless, the assembly voted to capitulate. Garibaldi withdrew from Rome, but he vowed to wage guerrilla action while based in surrounding mountains. On July 2, 1849, he addressed troops while seated on his horse:

> I am going out of Rome. Whoever is willing to follow me will be received among my people. I ask nothing of them but a heart filled with love for our country. They will have no pay, no provisions, and no rest. I offer hunger, cold, forced marches, battles and death. Whoever is not satisfied with such a life must remain behind. He who has the name of Italy not only on his lips but in his heart, let him follow me.[33]

On May 23, 1859, Garibaldi hoped to add numbers to his volunteer force, *Cacciatori delle Alpi*. He addressed the people of Lombard with his characteristic invocations of honor, tyrannical foreign oppression, and national redemption:

> You are called to a new life and you must respond to the call, as our fathers did in Pontida and in the Legnano. The enemy is still the same, a cruel, murderous despoiler. From every province our brothers have sworn to win or die with us. We must revenge the insults, the outrages, the servitude of twenty past generations, and bequeath to our children an inheritance which is uncontaminated by the stink of a domineering foreign soldier. . . . [Those who are] capable of taking up arms and do not do so are traitors.[34]

On May 14, 1860, at Calatafimi, during a battle with the Neapolitan Bourbon army, Garibaldi raged to his men, "*Qui si fa I'Italia o si muore*!" ("Here we make Italy or we die!"), a variation of "Here we will conquer or die," which he had trumpeted at Salto in 1845 and would repeat at Bezzecca in 1866.

After yielding Sicily to King Vittorio Emmanuele II, Garibaldi exhorted Italian volunteers to prepare for upcoming, climactic battles.

> You [young men of Italy] have conquered and you will conquer still, because you are prepared for the tactics that decide the fate of battles . . . the slave shall show at last to his free brothers a sharpened sword forged from the links of his fetters. To arms, then, all of you! All of you! And the oppressors and the mighty shall disappear like dust. You, too, women cast away all the cowards from your embraces; they will give you only cowards for children, and you who are the daughters of the land of beauty must bear children who are noble and brave. . . . This people is its own master. It wishes to be the brother of other peoples, but to look on the insolent with a proud glance, not to grovel before them imploring its own freedom. . . . The hour of battle will find me with you again, by the side of the champions of Italian liberty.[35]

In 1862, comprehending the importance of the annexation of the Papal States to a united Italy, Garibaldi intoned:

> At Rome shall we proclaim the Kingdom of Italy. There only can we sanctify the family compact between the free and enslaved sons of the same soil. As long as in Italy there are chains to be broken, I shall pursue my path or strew it

> with my bones. I will never sheathe my sword until Rome is proclaimed the capital of United Italy. Rome or death.[36]

Later that year, while in Palermo reviewing the national guard, Garibaldi struck familiar chords: the tyranny of a foreign oppressor, in this case Louis Napoleon; conjuring past rebellion through the image of the Sicilian Vespers; and crafting the alternatives within bright lines, victory or death.

> People of Palermo! The master of France . . . he who shed the blood of our brothers in Paris, occupies Rome under the pretext of protecting the person of the pope, of defending Catholicism. Lies! Lies! He is stirred by lust, by rapine, by the insatiable thirst of empire. . . . People of the Vespers, people of 1860, Napoleon must quit Rome. If necessary, we must have fresh Vespers. Italians, Rome or death![37]

Garibaldi was disillusioned by the feckless negotiations and political compromises that ensued after Italy was united. He was stunned by the government's ingratitude toward military volunteers, its failure to honor *Risorgimento* values, and its unsavory international compacts. He wrote:

> The men who presided so unworthily over the destinies of Italy, and those whom we see still on their knees at the feet of overbearing potentates or of false protectors—these men, I say, are false representatives of the nation. Italy has not deserved to be dragged through the mud, to be ignominiously made the laughing stock of Europe. Her army is intact, her volunteers are intact, and if the men who stand at the helm of affairs, at the head of her army, have the fibers of sheep—if they tremble before usurpers—I do not fear to become the interpreter of the nation. Here we tremble not; here is the conscience that fears not.[38]

Garibaldi's oratory and prose suggest a careful literary craftsman, a zealous savant, submitting his musings in multiple drafts, assiduously revising rhetorical tone, recasting grammar, aerating phraseology, sharpening similes, honing metaphors, while tightening and polishing his reasoning and arguments. Reality, however, scuttled appearance. When occasion demanded, the customarily breviloquent Garibaldi invariably and vehemently articulated his most profound values, those that thoroughly defined him: his visceral allegiance to the imperatives of his code of honor.

Accordingly, his presentations were formulaic yet inspiring. Anticipating Winston Churchill's exhilarating twentieth-century challenges to the citizens of Great Britain, Garibaldi exhorted his disciples with gloomy promises of daunting hardship, terrifying deprivations, petrifying dangers, and paltry odds of military success, all in service of patriotic glory and amplified honor. Forswearing Prudence as a cruel, imprisoning fascist and scorning Comfort as a sour tune crooned by a malevolent siren, Garibaldi, while targeting the

malignant oppression of foreign occupiers, enchanted a small but august audience: men unfettered by a hankering for *la dolce vita*, whose bloodstreams raged with the brio of liberation. *Le Camicie Rosse su tutto*!

MILITARY TRIUMPHS AND DEFEATS

Garibaldi's military forte as a commander was an inspiring combination of personal exhortation, unequivocal daring, calm under pressure, dramatic gestures, and fierce assaults. He provided evidence for Machiavelli's conviction that *Fortuna* favored the bold. As is the case with most successful leaders, Garibaldi enjoyed more than his fair share of indulgent fortune. Garibaldi's favored military strategies typically included surprise attacks; deployments geared to deluding the opposition that his forces were more numerous than they were; unbridled brio while on the attack; and prolonged close combat maneuvers supported by rapid cavalry and infantry charges. Garibaldi was intoxicated by the romance and daring of massive bayonet assaults he would lead on horseback while brandishing his saber in the air.[39]

Garibaldi's overall record in the fifty-three major military engagements in which he participated is reasonably set at thirty-four wins, fifteen losses, and four indeterminate results.[40] To summarize a few of his major triumphs:

San Antonio (1846)

Garibaldi commanded fewer than two hundred of his Italian Legion, who with one hundred Uruguayan cavalry were marching to meet and then escort part of the army of northern Uruguay to Salto. Along the way, the combined unit of about three hundred soldiers encountered twelve hundred Argentinian enemy troops, of which nine hundred were cavalry and three hundred infantry. The Uruguayan cavalry officer urged retreat, a suggestion Garibaldi summarily rejected because it would only postpone the inevitable battle and deplete the morale of his soldiers. The enemy charged the Uruguayan cavalry, almost all of whom retreated forthwith. Garibaldi and his Italian Legion were now outnumbered six to one and confronted both enemy cavalry and infantry. The Argentinian infantry advanced continually in single file, firing at the Italian Legion as they marched. Garibaldi's troops held their fire until the enemy was within ninety feet. These assaults continued throughout the day.

Led by Garibaldi, the Italian Legion belted out the Uruguayan national anthem to energize their spirits and steel their resolve. The Argentinians invited Garibaldi to surrender. He was not even tempted to comply. The Argentinian cavalry surrounded Garibaldi's forces; some cavalrymen dismounted and joined the attacks by their infantry, while others charged randomly and sporadically on horseback. Inexplicably, the Argentinians never

organized a concerted cavalry attack. The Italian Legion were far more capable in close combat, but its casualties were accumulating, and the soldiers lacked water as they labored under a scorching sun.

Nine hours had passed. At dusk, Garibaldi moved his forces toward the Uruguay River en route to Salto. Along the way, the Argentinian cavalry repeatedly attacked while the infantry provided cover fire. Every time the Argentinians closed in, Garibaldi's troops repelled them with musket fire and assaulted with fixed bayonets. They reached the riverbank, alleviated their thirst, resisted enemy attacks, and after more than four hours and three miles, arrived safely at Salto. Of his roughly two hundred soldiers, fifty-three were wounded and thirty were dead. The Argentinians suffered far more casualties, were defeated, but accrued no wisdom during the process or after the result.

The Uruguayan government celebrated Garibaldi and his Italian Legion, soon thereafter promoting him to the rank of general. Garibaldi initially declined the honor: "Not only the rewards, but also the honors would weigh on my soul, as they have been bought with Italian blood."[41] He accepted only after repeated entreaties from a host of supplicants. Mazzini learned of the battle and lubricated his propaganda machine. Word spread throughout Europe. Garibaldi's fame mushroomed. His victory was perceived as a step toward Italy's recovery of past greatness.[42] Garibaldi averred: "I would not give up my title of Italian Legionary for a world of gold!"[43]

Calatafimi (1860)

Garibaldi arrived near Marsala to begin a series of campaigns resulting in the defeat of 25,000 Neapolitan Bourbon troops and the conquest of Sicily by just over one thousand Red Shirts. He departed for Palermo but soon discovered that a Bourbon force of three thousand commanded by General Landi were nestled at Calatafimi. Landi dispatched two thousand soldiers to engage Garibaldi's forces which, having added Sicilian volunteers, had swelled to twelve hundred. Having modern rifles at their disposal, the Bourbons were superior in both number and equipment to Garibaldi's musket-armed infantry. Garibaldi coveted a significant victory in Sicily to galvanize recruitment and elevate morale among his troops and the masses. Supremely confident, Garibaldi ordered his soldiers to fix bayonets and charge up the hill of the Pianto dei Romani. As was often the case, Garibaldi, brandishing his saber, led the attack while seated on his white horse. His captain and main confidant Gerolamo ("Nino") Bixio (1821–1873) cautioned him against this impetuous strategy. Garibaldi shouted to his soldiers, "Here we make Italy, or we die." At the time, oddsmakers would have forecast the likelihood of the latter.

As the thousand scurried up the terraces of the hill, taking respite for short periods as each tier was reached, they eventually scaled to the highest terrace

just below the hilltop. Bixio counseled retreat as Bourbon ammunition passed over the heads of the Garibaldians. Garibaldi ordered a desperate bayonet charge. The sheer ferocity of the charge from frightfully motivated soldiers impelled the Bourbons to retreat after providing initially harsh resistance. Garibaldi lost thirty men and suffered three hundred wounded. The Bourbons suffered comparable losses but embodied far less resolve. The surviving Bourbons scattered throughout neighboring villages where the same residents they had menaced only a few days earlier now set upon and massacred them. Garibaldi took no solace in the carnage: "They were the corpses of Italians slaughtered by Italians . . . they ended their lives lacerated, torn in pieces by their own brothers with a fury which would have horrified the hyenas."[44]

Garibaldi was off to Palermo. As he moved through the villages, the Sicilian masses celebrated his victory, hailing him as their liberator. He resisted such overtures, but the unrepentantly anticlerical Garibaldi, sensing the bond between local priests and their congregations, attended mass and honored village saints.

Calatafimi was the pivotal battle in the Sicilian campaign. Garibaldi's thousand, outnumbered, with inferior military equipment, and from an inferior strategic position, had routed capable Bourbon forces through sheer intensity and indomitable spirit. Many Sicilians now championed Garibaldi as their paladin and the leader of a new, salutary social order.[45]

Palermo (1860)

Under the command of aging General Ferdinando Lanza (1788–1865), the Bourbon army was twenty thousand strong, bearing the most modern weaponry of the age and supported by heavy artillery. Garibaldi, accompanied by his thousand and armed with antiquated muskets, was convinced he had the Bourbons right where he wanted them. Scoffing at odds of twenty to one, Garibaldi was determined to ride the momentum gained at Calatafimi. That even "to this day the Italian phrase *alla garibaldina* (Garibaldi style) describes an undertaking that is begun with cheerful audacity, little advance planning, and plenty of gambling—let's hope for the best"[46] is no accident.

On this occasion, however, Garibaldi hatched a plan, one consisting of the marriage of military misdirection and guerrilla infiltration. The misdirection confused Lanza: After approaching within fifteen miles of the city, Garibaldi veered south into the mountains, suggesting he was headed away from Palermo and toward the center of Sicily. He later swerved north to reach Palermo from the southeast. The infiltration occurred when some of his troops skulked undetected into Palermo assigned with inspiring an insurrection among the masses. Apparently, Garibaldi's tactics confused only a few in-

habitants of Palermo, but that not-so-august coterie included General Lanza and his confidants.

Garibaldi entered the city. With the critical assistance of rebellious citizens energized by Garibaldi's infiltrators, the thousand controlled most of Palermo within eight hours of conflict. They captured the main prison and liberated its denizens. Street fighting and Bourbon bombardment of the city, which energized the masses and bolstered their resistance, continued for three days. Garibaldi calmly set up headquarters at the city hall, transcribed orders to his troops, smoked cigars, and ignored corpses that were accumulating around him. Bixio was wounded badly but heightened his defiance and demanded to lead an assault on the royal palace. Garibaldi advised him to have his wounds cared for and retire to bed.

Dangerously low on ammunition, Garibaldi rallied the urban dwellers to produce more, while rebellious men took to the streets with their weapons of choice: daggers, knives, iron tools. Women helped construct barricades. After several days, Garibaldi's ammunition was spent, his other resources depleted. He plotted a withdrawal from Palermo and resolved to wage relentless guerrilla attacks from the mountains.

Prior to Garibaldi embarking, Lanza wrote him requesting an immediate cease-fire and the beginning of peace negotiations. Lanza lacked medical supplies and food for his massive army, which labored in extremely cramped conditions. Garibaldi, with nothing to lose and much to gain, agreed. Lanza then received reinforcements of three thousand troops. Still, Lanza kept his word. That afternoon, on a British flagship, Garibaldi met with Lanza's envoys. After considerable bickering, which included Garibaldi alleging that the Bourbons had allowed foreign mercenaries to attack his troops while under a flag of cease-fire, the respective parties agreed to a twenty-hour truce.

That night Lanza, buoyed by the reinforcements, decided to attack Garibaldi at the expiration of the truce. He changed his mind the next morning and offered to extend the truce for seventy-two hours. Lanza was probably swayed by the quality and quantity of the barricades erected in the city, news of other uprisings in Sicily against Bourbon rule, and the respect shown to Garibaldi by the commander of the British squadron at Palermo. At the end of the seventy-two hours and after his envoy had consulted the Bourbon King Francis II (1836–1894) of Naples, Lanza agreed to withdraw from Palermo and capitulate to Garibaldi's thousand and the citizens of Palermo. Through a miraculous combination of unbridled audacity, clever strategy, feckless opposition leadership, an inexperienced monarch, and *Fortuna*'s blessing, Garibaldi had accomplished the seemingly impossible. Reality had suffocated fantasy.[47]

In the words of Riall:

> The kind of warfare which Garibaldi had learnt in South America and had always excelled in—traveling light and fast, using surprise to frighten the enemy, relying on the skill and reckless courage of his officers—was particularly suited to conditions in the empty Sicilian countryside, and to conflict with an enemy which, however well-armed, had already been discouraged and dispersed by peasant resistance, Moreover, as Garibaldi had long realized, motivated volunteers had a huge advantage over more self-interested mercenaries and conscripts in close-combat situations where the main weapon was the bayonet.[48]

The Volturno (1860)

Typically, once Garibaldi recognized that he faced superior forces he took the offensive. Invariably, he would have fortified his troops earlier with a concise, stirring exhortation invoking the themes of death before dishonor, rebellion against tyranny, and sacrifice for glorious ideals. Garibaldi did not command from the rear. He would usually lead the charge, thrusting himself into danger with deranged avidity. Garibaldi especially savored guerrilla attacks in the countryside.[49] He was, however, capable of fighting defensively as illustrated by the Battle of the Volturno in 1860 where, allied with the Piedmont army, Garibaldi's assignment was to take a stand, not retreat, but refrain from his characteristic attacks. Commanding between twenty and thirty thousand troops, Garibaldi fulfilled his assignment, facilitating victory against a larger Bourbon enemy. Because of the size of the forces under his command, he was unable to inspire every soldier personally as was his preferred approach in battle, although his presence was felt at crucial junctures.[50] At the Volturno, Garibaldi deflated three fictions of conventional skepticism: that he was incapable of fighting defensively; that he lacked the discipline to operate within a chain of command; and that he was bereft of the organizational talent to command a large force.

After seizing Palermo, Garibaldi thrashed the Bourbons at Milazzo, then crossed into the mainland, winning two battles at Reggio di Calabria. At the Volturno river, the Bourbons held a strong position. The Royalists, who acquitted themselves well in a series of minor engagements, crafted a complicated attack strategy requiring sharp coordination. By splitting their forces, the Royalists maximized the scope of their effect but only if the timing of the respective factions was precise. Garibaldi, on several occasions in personal danger, held steady, eventually with saber drawn leading a bayonet charge that repelled the enemy. Dividing his own forces, with Bixio commanding five thousand men on his right wing, Pilade Bronzetti (1832–1860) leading a small group on the extreme right, and Giacomo Medici (1817–1882) commanding seven thousand troops on his left wing, Gari-

baldi alternately held ground and launched counterattacks, managing each sector of his army artfully. Gaining reinforcements from the Piedmontese-Sardinian army the following day, Garibaldi led them into action and prior to midday the Bourbons, their last best hope of retaining Naples vaporized, surrendered.

King Francis II retained strong garrisons of over sixty thousand troops at Capua and Gaeta, forces too formidable for Garibaldi to attack. At Ancona, King Vittorio Emmanuele II assumed command of all anti-Bourbon forces and claimed possession of Neapolitan territories. Soon thereafter, Garibaldi, after weeks of political oscillations and trivial accommodations, ceded his conquered provinces to the king and retired, temporarily, to Caprera.[51]

Although Garibaldi typically prevailed militarily, no soldier who engages in combat as often and for as many years as he did remains undefeated. To summarize a few of his most ignominious defeats:

Morazzone (1848)

Garibaldi and remnants of his Uruguayan Italian Legion, fortified by volunteers from northern Italy, marched to Lombardy to assist the provincial government of Milan in its rebellion against Austria. They initially defeated the much larger Austrian army in Luino. At Morazzone, Garibaldi and his officers prevailed in a minor skirmish with an Austrian advance guard. But Austrian forces, equal in number to Garibaldi's troops, but more experienced than the bulk of Garibaldi's men, better rested and nourished, and sporting two cannons, bombarded Morazzone and burned houses on the outskirts of the town. At nightfall, the town remained well-lit because of the fires. The Austrians fired their cannons in rapid succession to lure Garibaldi into thinking their artillery was massive and their troops more numerous than they were. After a six-hour battle, struggling in the burning town, Garibaldi decided to retreat. This decision alone, never Garibaldi's first or second or even tenth choice, indicates the severity of his position.

During the retreat, the Austrians captured some of his wounded men. Worse, of the nearly seven hundred troops with whom he began the battle of Morazzone, only seventy remained at dawn the next day, most having deserted in the face of defeat. By the time Garibaldi reached Switzerland, only thirty stood with him, whom he released from duty. Suffering from a fever, perhaps malaria, Garibaldi soon took refuge at Lugano.

Austria greased up its propaganda machine and mocked Garibaldi's military prowess and his comportment among civilians within the town, as well as his honesty and courage. Most of these charges were inaccurate, unwarranted self-promotion by the victors, but Garibaldi, although not unnumbered, was fooled into thinking he faced a much larger enemy, was forced

into a spiritless nocturnal retreat, and was ingloriously routed. A colossal hole was punctured into his cloak of invincibility.[52]

Aspromonte (1862)

Energized by the slogan "*Roma o Morte*" ("Rome or Death"), Garibaldi, misreading the intentions of King Vittorio Emmanuele II, raised a volunteer army of three thousand to liberate Rome. However, the king, reluctant to agitate the French, resisted the enterprise. The Piedmontese government assigned General Enrico Cialdini (1811–1892) the task of defeating Garibaldi and capturing his volunteers. Cialdini sailed with over thirty thousand men from Genoa to Sicily. Along the way, Cialdini was informed that Garibaldi was on the mainland, in the mountains of Aspromonte. The general ordered Colonel Emilio Pallavicino (1823–1901) to take about four thousand troops and defeat Garibaldi, who had already vowed not to fire on the Italian army.

Although multiple versions of the ensuing events have been chronicled, the most plausible account claims that the Italian army ascended the hill at Aspromonte while firing. Garibaldi ordered his men not to return fire. He remained in at the front of his volunteers, repeating his order to refrain from firing. A bullet from the charging soldiers caromed off a tree and lodged in Garibaldi's right ankle. Almost immediately another bullet struck his left thigh. He remained erect and reiterated his order. However, inexperienced troops on his right wing returned fire. Officers of the Italian army approached Garibaldi, who ordered his men to take them prisoner.

A doctor treated Garibaldi's foot injury once the general could no longer stand. Garibaldi puffed on a cigar and instructed the physician to amputate immediately if necessary. The doctor consulted other surgeons who agreed that was not required. Garibaldi ordered his men to release the captured officers, who were sent back to Pallavicino with an offer to negotiate. Pallavicino soon thereafter arrived, the leaders chatted amicably, and Garibaldi surrendered. He was imprisoned at Spezia but released after his wounds were further treated and healed. His ankle would trouble him for the remainder of his life.

The Italian army suffered five casualties and twenty-four wounded, suggesting that more than a few of Garibaldi's volunteers returned fire. Garibaldi lost seven men while twenty of his troops were wounded.

This is an odd defeat because Garibaldi held the high ground, the better military position had he decided to fight; he clearly was unwilling to engage vigorously the Piedmontese army; and under all descriptions, combat was perfunctory. Moreover, the event blossomed into a public relations triumph for Garibaldi—he received international sympathy and renewed acclaim as an unadulterated patriot. However, the episode underscored the great political divide in Italy between the political left and more conservative and mon-

archical ideologues. If doubts remained whether Italians had not yet been made, whether an intelligible national identity had solidified, the skirmish at Aspromonte furnished the answer.[53]

Mentana (1867)

Garibaldi mounted another campaign to capture Rome. Gathering about eight thousand men, he seized Monte Rotondo. French and papal forces marched to engage him. The Piedmontese army was dispatched to maintain order, but Vittorio Emmanuele II withdrew his troops upon instructions from Louis Napoleon.

At Mentana, papal forces, nine thousand strong, attacked Garibaldi's right flank. Garibaldi ordered his men, around 4,600, to assume defensive positions around and in the village. As his volunteers exuded uneven skill, courage, and resolve, Garibaldi activated two cannons. The effects were palpable: his volunteers stiffened while papal forces withered. As the papal army retreated, Garibaldi sensed victory. But two thousand French troops immediately surfaced to stem his impetus.

Napoleon's dandies were equipped with superior rifles, with range sufficient to allow them to fire from a distance, avoid Garibaldi's muskets, and refrain from a dangerous charge. Within an hour the French had seized the momentum. Garibaldi's volunteers broke ranks and retreated in helter-skelter fashion. Garibaldi was uncharacteristically indecisive. Nightfall ensued and Garibaldi retreated. The following day, the 3,500 defeated Garibaldini surrendered to the Piedmontese army at Ponte di Corese. The Garibaldi volunteers who remained surrendered to the French in the Papal States. The Italian government imprisoned Garibaldi briefly. He was released only after agreeing to return to Caprera and remain there for at least six months.

Although confronting an enemy of greater numerical strength and logistical power, Mentana was a grave defeat for Garibaldi. He obstinately ignored the counsel of Mazzini, many of his former officers, and his closest confidants to await more congenial circumstances before waging his campaign. He inaccurately expected that the Italian army would intervene on his behalf. Many of his volunteers were inadequately trained and poorly equipped. If any further evidence were required, events at Mentana highlighted yet again the political divisions within Italy. Garibaldi would never fully trust King Vittorio Emmanuele II again.[54]

On balance, Garibaldi was a commander of uncommon valor and inspirational power. He typically fought against daunting odds. He often triumphed despite those adverse probabilities. As a guerrilla leader, Garibaldi was an electrifying visionary. He retained a keen sense of honor regarding a particular version of the war convention, that set of normative rules and principles that define proper military conduct during war: "Garibaldi's rules were few

but they were known and they were respected. Looting church property was, within limits, tolerated, but violence was not; and while a man might go into a convent and come out with a pocketful of candles, he could not go into a house and come out with a bottle of wine."[55] In fact, one of his most memorable outbursts occurred at the Battle of Palermo when he recounted a particularly grievous violation of the war convention: the treacheries of foreign mercenaries who, while under a flag of truce, had attacked his forces.[56]

Clearly, however, Garibaldi never questioned the necessity and efficacy of military retaliation in the world that he knew. The advocation of nonviolent resistance and a pacifist way of life would have struck him as dangerously deranged, a failure of the spirit and inexcusable timidity of the will. As Ridley concludes, "[I]t should be sufficient for his reputation as a David who could overcome a Goliath that [Garibaldi] won at San Antonio and in Palermo, where he was outnumbered on the first occasion by about six to one and on the second occasion by nearly twenty to one. . . . He did not deny that he enjoyed the excitement of war, but he never fought except for what he believed was the cause of human freedom."[57]

THE *MEZZOGIORNO* AND THE *RISORGIMENTO*

Southern Italians celebrated few, if any, heroes. Except for their communication with saints who allegedly had the power to rectify certain social wrongs, the oppressed dwellers of the *Mezzogiorno* cast a gravely suspicious eye toward their fellow human beings, alive or dead. Yet Garibaldi was widely venerated among them. Why? He was a Piedmontese, a *straniero*, who spoke of an abstraction called *Italia* that easily eluded most disenfranchised sons and daughters of the *Mezzogiorno*. He embodied an idealistic, romantic socialism, at great variance to the practical orientation of most southern Italians, that often issued in blatantly contradictory political recommendations.[58] He espoused a united Europe, even a united world order, views that would strike southern Italians as freakish and ludicrous. Nevertheless, pictures and relics of Garibaldi were common in southern Italian homes.

Part of that veneration resulted from Garibaldi's personal charisma. Physically attractive and instinctively warm, Garibaldi exuded natural charm. He also cultivated sartorial flair, complete with red shirt, flowing cape or poncho, and carefully groomed long hair and beard. Garibaldi was brave and self-reliant. He retained child-like qualities of being easily flattered and impressed. He was a serious man who lacked a refined sense of humor. He deeply enjoyed the pleasures of the flesh. Like all great leaders, he exemplified extraordinary abilities to remain calm and concentrate on the task at hand during apparent pending disasters. He inspired his men through his example: resolute, courageous, able to swallow self-doubts in times of crisis.

Deeply sensitive to criticism and unwilling to accept guidance, Garibaldi was often stubborn and resentful.[59] He sparked hostilities with equally willful men such as Mazzini and Cavour. But he embodied a certain purity of spirit—whether a result of his hazy political philosophy, his firm conviction of the moral appropriateness of his own military actions, his typical indifference to material aggrandizement, or his visceral understanding that his frequent displays of generosity and inspiration transcended the events that occasioned them—that resonated among his followers: "He appeared as the ideal patriarch, tolerant yet commanding, whose benign features, soft voice and air of unemphatic authority inspired immediate and lasting devotion. He could disappoint [his followers] on occasions, but he rarely disillusioned them."[60]

Garibaldi, then, was a unique blend of naïveté, honesty, and singular conviction: "A hero not afraid to act outside the law, a man of courage and ability, of determination and passion, a simple man given to grandiloquent and apocalyptic announcements, but a man of shining sincerity in a murky and selfish world."[61] Although he evidently was often irritating, he was rarely materially self-aggrandizing. His high ideal of a united Italy, even if hopelessly romantic, echoed with warmth and unadulterated passion.

Moreover, Garibaldi stirred the passions of the peasants in the *Mezzogiorno.* Many southern Italians embraced him as their avenging angel: "the incarnation of their ancient myth of a mighty warrior come to restore justice."[62] His simplicity of spirit and his understanding of their hopes and sorrows, combined with his special military virtues and personal power, permitted Garibaldi to at once transcend yet affirm the common people of the *Mezzogiorno*. It was also clear that Garibaldi's empathy for the south was unfeigned. Throughout his career as a soldier and political deputy, he wrote about the wrongful slighting of Sardinia and the south, the problems of vast disparities of wealth and substandard education, the causes and remedies of brigandage, and the enormous sums wasted on imperialistic ambitions and armaments instead of on the internal needs of Italy.[63]

Perhaps most important, Garibaldi understood and manifested the deeply entrenched southern Italian ritual of *rispetto* ("respect"):

> Garibaldi understood both Mazzini and the south better than Cavour ever did, for the same reason that he had much more knowledge of and sympathy with the common people. Instead of assuming that southerners were idle and corrupt, and instead of trying to impose a cut-and-dried system upon them, he had worked by appealing to their good nature; and this had evoked a far more positive response than greeted his more technically efficient successors. What he gave them was enthusiasm, faith in a cause, and a fine example of self-sacrifice and courage.[64]

Accordingly, through his personal charisma, personification of righteous vengeance, embodiment of military virtue, and instinctive display of *rispetto*,

and through the connivance of political circumstances, Garibaldi achieved the status of secular saint among numerous residents of the *Mezzogiorno*, despite their general lack of zeal for the *Mezzogiorno* as a whole.

The Family Order

The disenfranchised sons and daughters of the *Mezzogiorno* subscribed to an unwritten but deeply ingrained system, *l'ordine della famiglia*, prescribing their relations within and responsibilities to their family, and their appropriate conduct toward those outside the family.[65] *L'ordine della famiglia* apportioned the world into four morally significant spheres of social intimacy. The social group of paramount value was the family. The family consisted not only of immediate members (the nuclear family) but also of relatives often extended to the third or fourth degrees. The exact degree of kinship determined reciprocal duties and privileges. The welfare of the family, taken in this extended sense, was the primary responsibility of each of its members.

The next degree of intimacy was embodied in the system of *comparaggio* that, among other things, served as a limited check and balance over family policies and practices. This sphere can be subdivided into *compare* and *commare*, and *padrini* and *madrine*. The former were literally "coparents," typically one's peers and intimate friends, and often the godparents to one's children. *Padrini* and *madrine*, by contrast, were venerated elders prized for their demonstrated wisdom, prestige, or power. Strikingly, the system of *comparaggio* admitted few vicissitudes: intimate friendships were permanent. Marginal adjustments could be negotiated between the parties, but their intentions to rescind their relationship, even if reciprocal, could not sever what were taken to be enduring bonds.

The third sphere of concern involved *amici di cappello* (those to whom one tips one's hat): friendly acquaintances who remained outside the scope of intimacy. The final, and by far the largest, group is composed of *stranieri* (strangers), everyone, whether known or unknown, who falls outside the three other classes.

L'ordine della famiglia was at once simple and complex, protective yet isolating, humanistic but distrustful. Its simplicity is apparent in the clear-cut demarcations among people: one is either part of the family, an intimate friend, a friendly acquaintance, or a stranger. Little nuance or ambiguity was recognized. Moreover, if one were a member of the family or an intimate acquaintance that relationship was, at least in principle, inalienable and immutable. The complexity of the code manifests itself in the intricate rituals and negotiations deemed suitable for members of the first two classes. For example, fathers were ostensibly entrenched as the powerful leaders of the family to whom obedience was owed, yet wives were expected to assert their dominance in numerous everyday matters, and children, at least sons, were

subtly encouraged to exercise independent judgment, even disobedience, to learn and practice the skill of *furberia* (shrewdness) necessary for worldly success.

The code was clearly protective in that it created, at least in theory, an intimate shield, a zone of security, against the oppressive economic and social structure of the *Mezzogiorno*. But the isolating and parochial implications of the code were equally stark: *stranieri* were neither to be trusted nor consulted; *amici di cappello* were to be regarded at a distance with cool politeness. Not only was there no concept of an international brotherhood and sisterhood; there was little appreciation of those outside one's village.

Still, the code reflected a deep humanism, often demanding strenuous sharing and contributions to joint interests within one's circle of intimates. Such parochialism, however, simultaneously deepened and legitimized existing cynicism toward outsiders. Two striking contemporary evaluations of *l'ordine della famiglia* emanate: dismissal and sentimentalization. Many, probably most, modern appraisers will dismiss the code: here is a clearly primitive code that right-thinking people should now reject straightaway as unsophisticated tribalism emerging from an uneducated people's struggle with oppressive economic and social forces. Are not we fortunate to claim membership in a more progressive polity under more salutary socioeconomic circumstances?

The second contemporary response is sentimentalization: *l'ordine della famiglia* was a better, more spiritually rewarding, historical moment when a code of affection transcended socioeconomic oppression and pointed the way to a true family ethic, a microcosm of successful human relations in existential crisis. What have Westerners gained by purchasing better material conditions with the currency of their souls? Has the disintegration of family values proven perhaps too high a price to pay?

This sense of family was not experienced merely as an impersonal network serving self-interest. Instead, it was felt as constituting a wider subjectivity: one's identity was related directly to social context. Under *l'ordine della famiglia*, a person experienced his or her well-being as part of a larger organic entity—as part of a family in the wider sense sketched above. Peasants in the *Mezzogiorno* had no opportunity to extend their horizons by interacting significantly with those of different backgrounds and outlooks. Lacking the means to communicate with and observe the world outside their village, residents of the *Mezzogiorno* lacked the correlated opportunity to develop a more cosmopolitan moral outlook.

The context is, however, more nuanced. Although it may be tempting to idealize *l'ordine della famiglia* as a bastion of personal virtue in an otherwise heartless atmosphere, such sentimentalization misses part of the picture. It is inaccurate to view the family code as a reaction to the separate and larger social atmosphere; in fact, the family code was partly constitutive of the

larger social arena. Thus, we cannot accurately portray the family code as a blameless victim of wider social ravages. The code itself in a complicated way is both a contributor to and mediator of wider social injustice.

The family code retards wider national and world identifications at the same time it nurtures the extended subjectivity of the family unit; while it poses an obstacle to civic virtue, it confers strict understandings and a workable moral system for family members; as it mocks genuine nationalism and the social welfare, it sanctifies family loyalty as true patriotism; while in times of war the code produces soldiers who are only minimally committed to the national cause, it generates people who, at their best, in peacetime will endure draconian sacrifices and unspeakable dangers for the sake of their immediate and extended families. In this fashion, through narrowly circumscribed spheres of concern, carefully understood burdens and privileges, and assiduously cultivated self-identities, *l'ordine della famiglia* both promotes and represses the cardinal moral virtues.

The moral irony of *l'ordine della famiglia*—its simultaneous promotion in the family and repression on other social levels of the cardinal virtues—is accompanied by a psychological irony: on the one hand, the code provides spiritual sustenance and the foundations of personal identity in an otherwise hostile world; on the other hand, the code facilitates lingering dependencies and helps ensure that the outside world will remain hostile.

Regardless of how we assess *l'ordine della famiglia* today, its moral code arose from, mollified to an extent, but also unwittingly sustained the brutal life prospects of the subjugated denizens of the *Mezzogiorno*. Booker T. Washington, a man who knew slavery firsthand and fought against it, visited Italy and concluded: "The Negro is not the man farthest down. The condition of the coloured farmer in the most backward parts of the Southern States in America, even where he has the least education and the least encouragement, is incomparably better than the condition and opportunities of the agricultural population in Sicily."[66]

Karl Marx, whose scientific socialism was to energize more than 40 percent of the world's population at the height of its influence, once wrote that "[I]n all human history no country or no people have suffered such terrible slavery, conquest and foreign oppression and no country and no people have struggled so strenuously for their emancipation as Sicily and the Sicilians."[67]

Although Sicily provides the most extreme example, much the same conditions could be said to prevail in the other provinces of the *Mezzogiorno*: common people had virtually no chance for upward mobility; only regional loyalties were possible in the absence of a unified Italy; there existed a brutal scarcity of resources; peasants had access only to the most primitive systems of communication and transportation; formal education was woefully inadequate and virtually impossible in a social atmosphere where the maximum number of family hands were required for manual labor; criminals often

brazenly plied their trades, with a wink and a nod from law enforcement officials; and government was accurately perceived as the paramount part of the problem, certainly not as a treasure chest of enlightened solutions.

Over the centuries, the *Mezzogiorno* had been invaded by Vandals, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Spaniards, French, and Normans. After the fall of the Roman Empire, Italy had divided over time into several regional political units. By the late fifteenth century, the time of Machiavelli's call in *The Prince* for Italian unification, there were fifteen recognized political regions. In the late eighteenth century, with the invasion of Napoleon, the map of Italy was reimagined and redrawn. At Napoleon's defeat, the Congress of Vienna in 1815 restored much of the earlier demarcations. For the next forty-five years most of the *Mezzogiorno* continued under the rule of the Bourbons. As outlined earlier, in the 1850s the House of Savoy in the independent state of Piedmont initiated the movement for Italian unification. In the *Mezzogiorno*, where the people's disdain for government had been keenly honed for centuries, the *Risorgimento* was experienced more as an opportunity to retaliate against the current oppressors, the Bourbons, than as a chance for an emotional reunion with central and northern Italians.

The people of the *Mezzogiorno*, tempered by centuries of fragmentation and pernicious hierarchy, could not perceive themselves as part of what they never were; instead, they saw themselves as what they always were and what they seemingly would always be: Sicilians, Neapolitans, Calabrians, Apulians, Campanians, Abruzzese, Lucanians, and the like. More accurately, the people saw themselves as inextricably part of a village or town within these regions; they tended to view even those from other parts of their region with distrust and suspicion, as *stranieri.*

During the ninetieth century, the *Mezzogiorno* embodied mainly rural, agricultural, highly stratified societies. Moreover, the peasants lived in towns, not on the land they worked. The social hierarchy could be categorized roughly as follows: the *galantuomini* were the gentry substantial landowners mainly, but also the few professionals, such as doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, and teachers, who were available. The highest gentry were the *latifondisti*, large estate owners who commanded great respect and deference because they controlled southern Italy's most prized and tangible resource, land. Below the landowners and professionals were the *artigiani*, the artisans, such as skilled craftsmen, businessmen, and service workers, who were not engaged in agricultural labor. Far below the higher classes was the largest group, the *contadini*, all the people who worked the land. Some agricultural workers owned modest amounts of land, but most peasants were landless and had to work the land of others. Also included in this class were sheep and goat herders and fishermen. At the bottom of the class structure were *giornalieri*, day laborers whose employment was always hostage to short-term,

seasonal demands. This class structure thoroughly permeated the social life of the *Mezzogiorno*.

Garibaldi's military success and subsequent adulation by the masses tied in nicely with recurrent social themes of the nineteenth-century *Mezzogiorno*. In this historical situation, Garibaldi emerged as a cultural hero not because of his professed radical social and political ideology—the emancipation of women, the unification of Italy under the rule of a benevolent monarch, the call for a vigorous internationalism, and the transformation of the poorer classes—but because his personal charisma, personification of righteous vengeance, instinctive displays of *rispetto*, and leadership of closely knit guerrillas retaliating against larger, semi-organized military forces represented the vindication of the family writ large.

Predictably, the success of the *Risorgimento* not only brought the *Mezzogiorno* no relief from oppression; it exacerbated social tensions in the south. The peasants in the *Mezzogiorno* were struggling against centuries of political oppression; they were not rebelling in service of establishing "Italia," an abstraction that could not resonate in provinces where only 2 percent of the people even spoke the presumed national language.[68]

Passive Revolution

The *Risorgimento* evolved into what Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937) would later describe as a passive revolution with elements of mass participation limited to regime change.[69] Gramsci contrasted passive revolution with popular political struggle. Conducted mainly through state agency, passive revolutions respond to a perceived crisis by changing the social structure from above. In contrast, popular political struggle requires the active participation of the masses. The differences between active and passive revolutions in this sense are illustrated by Cavour's consistent aspiration to annex more territory continually to Piedmont-Sardinia, a classic case of passive revolution; Mazzini's appeal to cultural elites as the engine of social change, which restricted active revolution too narrowly; and Garibaldi's exhortation for mass participation, an active revolution that political exigencies compelled Garibaldi to relinquish.

For Gramsci, popular political struggle requires a crisis of authority. Revolution must undermine the spiritual power of the ruling classes by penetrating the false appearances tied to the dominant order and by creating a new set of beliefs, cultural attitudes, and social relations. A counter-hegemony must challenge and augur the collapse of the old authority patterns. At early stages of revolt, we can expect mass apathy, cynicism, and confusion as the gap between the promises and the performances of the dominant order widens. Next, we can expect overt, political forms of class struggle: the spread of antiauthoritarian norms, the development of new social relations, antiestab-

lishment subcultures, new language codes, and emerging ways of life. State repression and force may follow. Such a response may serve to quell rebellion if the underlying counter-hegemony is weak or ennoble the rebels by drawing new supporters if the counter-hegemony is strong. Successful revolution requires the unsettling of the old ensemble of relations and the transformation of civil society, which prefigures a new state system built on nonauthoritarian foundations. The revolutionary process will involve lengthy transition periods and much unpredictability.

Gramsci emphasized how all human action is inherently political and how all reflective human beings are intellectuals. Although not necessarily the bearer of special technical knowledge, working-class intellectualism is woven into the fabric of everyday life. Gramsci was also convinced that there exists a general historical process that tends continually to unify the entire human race. Once he combined his inclusive vision of politics, his conviction that history tended to extend high culture, and his belief that all human action is political, his notion of organic intellectuals followed.

Thus, the underclasses must generate their own intellectual base, revolutionary consciousness, and political theories from self-activity. The solution to lagging revolutionary consciousness among workers is not reliance upon a vanguard elite class that seeks to impose a rebellious spirit externally. Nor is the solution blind insistence that revolution is inevitable and working-class consciousness will arise on cue at the appropriate historical moment. The solution is for workers to become revolutionaries through activity at job sites, in homes, and in civil life generally. Gramsci highlights the importance of extending democracy through ideas that translate to social activity. The revolutionary party must be a mass party rooted in everyday existence. It must be an agent of social change that coordinates historical forces already in motion. Most importantly, it cannot be a force of external imposition if it is to prefigure a classless, radically democratic social order. Gramsci understood keenly that political ends are prefigured in the means used to achieve them; revolutionary activity itself must assume the form of the goals to which it aspires if it is to achieve its ends.

Perhaps Gramsci's greatest contribution is the cautionary tale his philosophy embodies for potential revolutionaries. His emphasis on ideological hegemony informs us that genuine political revolution must be preceded or at least accompanied by wider cultural change. Overthrowing an oppressive regime militarily will not automatically expedite the inauguration of the revolutionaries' preferred political structures. The words of Gramsci reverberate in our ears: without a significantly effective historical bloc that might create a counter-hegemonic force, the established ideological hegemony will stymie successful efforts for radical social transformation. Regime change does not translate automatically to salubrious political conversion. That Gramsci learned much from the political and social failures of *Risorgimento*, which

was successful in making Italy but required decades to make Italians, is clear. In Gramscian terms, *Risorgimento* lacked a compelling counter-ideological hegemony that transcended regime change (or liberation from oppression), fostered a genuine national identity, and facilitated salutary social transformation. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the *Mezzogiorno*, where regionalism and factionalism thrived.

As a dictator of Sicily, Garibaldi was a victim of this quandary. He was torn between his instinctive allegiance to the masses of disenfranchised peasants and the need to solidify political revolution, which required the cooperation of major local landowners. Consequently, several of his social reforms were stymied by the usual Sicilian suspects: the titled aristocracy. Garibaldi was ineffective in navigating the nuances of Sicilian reform. His political talents as a short-term dictator were not comparable to his undeniable military skill in casting off tyrants. In the words of Denis Mack Smith,

> [Garibaldi] gradually introduced Piedmontese laws and institutions. The *lira*, the Piedmontese decimal system and the north-Italian flag were all officially imposed on Sicily by Garibaldi's personal fiat. Instead of reviving the centuries-old Sicilian parliament, he proclaimed the very different Piedmontese parliamentary system. Some Sicilians were surprised and offended that they were not consulted by this northern dictator and that no provision was made for local self-government: suddenly it was beginning to seem as though there was to be no Sicilian autonomy but simply an annexation of Sicily to Piedmont, and their own passive acceptance of this fact was apparently deemed to be self-evident. . . . [H]e set up a "Dictatorship of the Two Sicilies" which recalled the very same connection with the mainland against which they thought they were rebelling.[70]

The new federal government was dominated by Piedmontese, northerners with little knowledge of and limited sympathies for southern problems. The distribution of material resources worsened in the south: taxes levied by the central government were heavier in the south than in the north, whereas allocations from the government to the south were more parsimonious. The areas that suffered the most pressing social problems were not accorded commensurate federal support. Fueled by lack of knowledge, knuckling under to political pressures in the north, and harboring long-standing prejudices against southerners, the new federal government sent its message early and often: the problems of the *Mezzogiorno* were not even on the margins of the national agenda; they had been pushed right off the page. As a result, Garibaldi's stint as political ruler tarnished the eminence he had earned as military redeemer.

Portraying this situation one-dimensionally is dangerously easy: innocent, noble peasants at the mercy of avaricious, unfeeling local land barons and exploitive northern politicians. In fact, much of the problem involved the

deeply entrenched social system in the *Mezzogiorno*, a system in which common people were thoroughly implicated. As with most social situations, the characters in the drama of *Mezzogiorno* are more complex than first supposed.

VALUES AND VIRTUES: A MAN OF HONOR

Garibaldi's signature value was honor, and fulfilling the moral prescriptions of the code he had internalized was his greatest virtue. Although the term "honor" has been used in a variety of contexts throughout history, a reasonable rendering of personal honor can be reconstructed.[71]

A sense of personal honor, which is a measure of an individual's value, obtains if three components are in place:

A *canon of behavior* such that

a. a set of imperatives (the "honor code") constrains an agent's choices and actions;
b. the force of the honor code cannot be destroyed or softened by considerations of expediency, utility, or personal advantage—the pursuit of personal honor and the satisfaction of such considerations are often conflicting aims; and
c. living up to and complying with the honor code often involves personal risk or sacrifice to the agent up to and including death.

An *internalization of the canon of behavior* such that

a. living up to and complying with the honor code, which confers status, is tightly bound to the agent's sense of identity and self-worth;
b. a positive evaluation in that regard is a source of deserved, deepened self-respect and pride; and
c. a negative evaluation, which follows from a known and recognized failure to live up to the honor code, is taken by the agent as disreputable, as manifesting a weakness of character and typically elicits shame, diminished self-respect, and reduced pride.

A principle of redress such that

a. personal honor can be infringed upon by insults, even those that by themselves neither impair the agent's reputation nor diminish the agent's inner worth, but that fail to treat the agent commensurate with his or her merited value; and
b. honor codes typically include an imperative of response: if someone impugns the agent's honor, the agent must respond in the prescribed fashion; otherwise the agent's honor is diminished or destroyed.

An Honor Group

My description captures reasonably a sense of personal honor not tethered to group affiliation or communal identification. Most honor codes, however, arise from such associations with sanctions for behavior determined by the requisite group or community. The honor code, whether connected to group affiliation or purely individual, grounding a sense of personal honor, does not necessarily reflect a society's dominant set of moral principles, policies, and standards. When an honor code arises from a group affiliation the agent has either antecedently chosen or posteriorly accepted (internalized) that code as the agent's own; when the honor code arises from group affiliation the agent judges and evaluates himself or herself in large part in accord with how the agent perceives the way others who are capable—the group members who are qualified to assess—judge and evaluate the agent given the agent's compliance with the honor code, and how the agent judges his or her compliance with the honor code.

A recognition by the group members qualified to assess that the agent deserves a negative evaluation is typically followed by censure up to and including exclusion from group membership unless the agent regains his or her honor. In group settings, to have personal honor is to possess a right to be treated as having a certain value and includes the right to respect and to be treated as an equal within the group; and to lose personal honor is to relinquish those rights by failing to live up to the honor code.

The set of imperatives that structure a person's choices and actions is the honor code that arises from the group to which the person belongs. The nature of the honor code varies in relation to time, place, group, and social setting. In each context, a group tries to capture the meaning of "honor" for a set of values. Sometimes people belong to a group by ratifying what originally were unchosen attachments such as the class into which they are born; the nation in which they were raised; their ethnic, religious, or racial inheritance; and the like. At other times, people choose their group affiliations by entering clubs and teams or pursuing causes with others with whom they share purposes. In all such cases, the group affiliation becomes constitutive of personal identity insofar as it is connected to honor. Although many group affiliations are peripheral to a person's self-image and merely pleasing ways to pass time, what distinguishes an honor group is that ongoing connection to it is critical to a person's sense of self. This is true regardless of whether the person entered the group by choice or first discovered and later ratified his or her affiliation. The importance of "honor," then, is intricately linked to our sense of self and to community. While it is plausible, as I have described above, that a person might conjure an individualistic, unique code of honor applicable only to himself or herself, typically the concept of honor is connected strongly to group or institutional roles. The person crafts his or her

identity within such roles and to separate or be severed from them is to alter the topography of the self. Accordingly, the notion of honor will glisten most brightly in settings that stress communal attachments, institutional roles, and social bonds.

An honor code need not correlate to a nation's rendering of morality. As mentioned, groups try to define "honor" in accord with their own values. As such, "honor" cannot be tied necessarily to the imperatives of conventional morality. Honor among felons is certainly possible.[72] The more important point is that the imperatives of codes of honor not only are often not required by morality or law, but they may also conflict with moral or legal demands. In such cases, the power of honor codes is felt most intensely because their demands upon agents are grave.

In any event, the power of honor codes is designed to trump considerations of expediency and personal advantage. The values embodied by the honor code are taken to have the greatest call upon the agent's allegiance in part because they are most definitive of personal identity. The Italian proverb resonates: *Meglio onore senza vita che vita senza onore* ("Better to die with honor than to live with shame"). To live with shame is to eviscerate and betray the self, deny one's innermost values, and impoverish one's entire life. To die with honor is to enhance one's biography by validating one's inner worth and higher values. Fulfilling the imperatives of an honor code often conflicts sharply with short-term self-interest and preservation. Where the risk or sacrifice to the agent is greatest, the greatest honor is merited. Thus, honor often conflicts with prudence, which weighs risks, tallies and compares advantages and disadvantages, and selects the course of action promising the greater probability of gain.

Those subscribing to an honor code evaluate themselves largely in terms of several vectors: Have I complied with the honor code? How do the group members who are most qualified to assess my compliance with the honor code evaluate my compliance? How does the group judgment influence my evaluation? How does my evaluation influence the group judgment? My behavior will manifest whether I embody the personal qualities that entitle me to honor and qualified group members will recognize my inner worth or lack thereof by their assessments of my compliance with the code. My evaluation of my inner worth will depend greatly on how the relevant others perceive me. My sense of worth and honor does not depend on the perceptions of other people in general. Instead, I trust only those within the honor group, especially those who have proven themselves the most experienced and capable evaluators. I can retain my honor in the face of negative evaluations from outsiders, but I cannot do so when confronted by those I take to be most qualified to judge: those whom I respect as fellow members of our honor group.

Attributes of honor, then, are bound to complex relations and the interplay of several evaluations. No single assessment—whether by the agent or by the honor group—is sufficient. Each assessment is linked closely to other assessments. The overall evaluation embodies the dynamic tension of its constitutive units.

To have conferred and to confer upon oneself a favorable evaluation of one's honor is to cultivate a deserved, deepened self-respect and pride, and a more profound sense of belonging to the honor group: I have lived up to a difficult set of imperatives, a set most other human beings would be unable to fulfill; I have placed principles over narrow self-interest and have renounced the easy path; I have kept the faith with my vows of compliance and thereby proved my worth.

To have conferred and to confer upon oneself a negative evaluation of one's honor is to recognize failure and to lose status: I have failed to live up to the honor code; I have chosen expediency over principle; I have betrayed myself and the honor group; and I have demonstrated the poverty of my spirit. In such cases, the appropriate response is shame, a loss of self-respect and pride, and a weakened sense of belonging to the honor group. My inadequacy and disgrace are evident to those qualified to evaluate my inner worth based on my failure to fulfill the honor code.

Once the group members recognize that a fellow member deserves a negative evaluation, they administer some form of censure up to and including exclusion from group membership unless the agent regains his or her honor. To violate the honor code is to choose to risk forfeiting membership in the group. Depending upon the specific honor code at issue, a disgraced member may be punished or simply banished. Under the most primitive codes, punishment may mean death. Some honor codes permit shamed members to restore their honor through prescribed actions. Other honor codes insist that once honor is lost it is forever gone. Moreover, depending on the nature of the honor code and my connection to it, my loss of honor may also shame my family or the honor group itself.

To have personal honor is to possess a right to be treated as having a certain value and includes the right to respect and to be treated as an equal within the group. To lose personal honor is to relinquish those rights by failing to live up to the honor code. In addition, one's personal honor can be infringed upon by insults, which by themselves neither impair the agent's reputation nor diminish the agent's inner worth, but which fail to treat the agent in a way commensurate with his or her rights. The transgressor has failed in his or her duty to treat the honorable person in accord with that person's value. In such cases, honor codes typically include an imperative of response: if someone impugns the agent's honor, the agent must respond in the prescribed fashion; otherwise the agent's honor is diminished or destroyed.

Why Honor Codes Persist

Reliance upon honor codes, other than in the military, police, criminal organizations, and the like, strikes most contemporary thinkers as anachronistic. The notion of *honor* conjures images of knightly combat; duels arising from perceived insults; ongoing vendettas whose originating causes have been long forgotten; and murders resulting from husbands who have been cuckolded or fathers whose daughters have been sexually violated. Invoking honor recalls class-based societies in which personal identity was closely allied with social roles—times when the only honor available to women centered on retaining chastity. Even the vestiges of honor in paramilitary and criminal enterprises underscore the masculine, violent, antagonistic foundations of such codes. Such vestiges remind us that much of the history of honor is bound to male bravery, machismo, and eagerness to avenge all perceived insults, aspects of social life that may strike us now as out of place. We might well be tempted to conclude that the virtual disappearance of honor codes and invocations of honor are events to be cheered. Are not codes of honor pernicious vestiges of historical periods that have been rightfully eclipsed?

That honor in the past has been most closely associated with patriarchal prerogatives, aristocratic privileges, and violent reprisals is undeniable. But nothing in the concept of *honor* requires such linkages. As stated previously, the history of honor is the effort of various groups to capture the term for a specific set of values and virtues. The case for nurturing a sense of honor is compelling. Allegiance to a notion of honor and cultivating the character traits required to behave in ways consistent with that notion connect a person to wider community. If the values embodied by the notion of honor at issue are worthy, they vivify personal identity and fulfill the human need for intimate bonding with others. A salutary honor code provides imperatives that are not subject to barter or considerations of expediency. Such imperatives infuse life with meaning and purpose. For those who are firmly convinced, as I am, that if there is nothing worth dying for then there is nothing worth living for, a sense of honor frames a person's bedrock convictions. The right to be treated as having a certain worth is most resplendent when it is conditioned on the demonstration of the personal qualities that entitle a person to that right. That others within the honor group—those who share allegiance to the imperatives of the honor code—recognize that a fellow member has the requisite personal qualities reinforces the sense of that person's inner worth. In opposition to the Stoics, how other people judge us does and should matter to our own evaluations and understandings of who we are. In opposition to those with an impoverished sense of self who are vulnerable to all external evaluations, only the judgments of some other people should matter—those who are most qualified to render fair, accurate assessments; those

who are the other people who matter most to us. Popular opinion in and of itself bears little recommendation.

A sense of deserved pride is the reward of fulfilling the requirements of a salutary honor code. Justified pride in our accomplishments and in our personal characters animates the quest for excellence. In its most vibrant contexts and when underwritten by worthy imperatives, the notion of honor underscores the importance of our yearning for community and healthy attachment to institutional roles. Whereas philosophical movements such as existentialism and libertarianism extol the human need for freedom and transcendence, honor groups provide balance by highlighting communal values. Reaching an accommodation within our conflicts between individualism and community is critical for human well-being. An appropriate appreciation for honor can aid that accommodation.

The notion of honor connects the individual to a project that transcends the narrow concerns of the self. People with a sense of honor privilege the imperatives of the honor code and take compliance with those imperatives as one of their higher values. In societies where the yearning for individualism has amplified dangerously into self-indulgence, narcissism, and the pursuit of popularity, the notion of honor provides a communal antidote by championing a sense of duty, sacrifice, and merited reward. Compliance with the imperatives of an honor code can motivate us to act contrary to strictly personal desires in deference to community obligations. Connection to honor codes is thus one way to distance ourselves from a purely atomistic notion of the self.

Accordingly, in my view, a sense of honor and a connection to an honor code are requirements of leading a robustly meaningful, valuable life. The critical questions center on the type of values and virtues that should capture the meaning of "honor" and the appropriate imperatives that should define a beneficial honor code.

Garibaldi's Code

Garibaldi's political values seemingly meander. While under the influence of Mazzini his republicanism glistens; while later negotiating with Cavour and King Vittorio Emmanuele II he aligns himself with monarchy; after becoming disillusioned with monarchical excesses during and subsequent to Italian unification, he veers left and extols a vibrant version of socialism. Some commentators conclude he was politically simple-minded or vacillating.

Such a conclusion is unfair and unwarranted. Garibaldi hankered for the unification of Italy but, like Machiavelli, he recognized when political reality compelled personal adjustments. His favored polity was a republic underwritten by socialist passions. Political exigencies, however, pressed him to

support the monarchy as the most probable mechanism facilitating unification.

Garibaldi's more fundamental values, the ones from which his sense of honor arose, were forged from the overlapping but distinct aspirations of the Saint-Simonians, Mazzini's *La Giovine Italia*, and the Freemasons. From the Saint-Simonians he absorbed or had reinforced convictions such as the equality of the sexes, faith in technological progress as a means of improving social conditions; liberation of women; free love; the need to overthrow oppression wherever it appears; and a cosmopolitan outlook. He was also drawn to the Saint-Simonian notion of an ascetic, selfless leader guiding society. Here, though, Garibaldi's version of that principle accorded more with the ancient Roman conception of a dictator: a six-month appointment of a selfless leader during which constitutional protections were suspended to quell military or domestic emergencies; at the expiration of that period, constitutional government fully returns.

From *La Giovine Italia*, Mazzini's allegiance to personal sacrifice up to and including martyrdom for the cause of Italian unification exhilarated Garibaldi. He also accepted, at least in principle, Mazzini's five political, social, and religious aims. Buoyed by the slogan, "Unity, Independence, Liberty," and motivated by the conviction that the unification of Italy would trigger uprisings in Europe against monarchy, aristocracy, and the temporal authority of clerics, Mazzini summed up his political philosophy in five principles:[73]

1. One republic, undivided across the whole territory of Italy, independent, united, and free.
2. The destruction of the entire upper hierarchy of the clergy and the introduction of a simple parish system.
3. The abolition of all aristocracy and every privilege that is not the result of the eternal law of capacity and action.
4. An unlimited encouragement of public education.
5. The most explicit declaration of the rights of man and the citizen.

The Freemasons, which served as a front for *La Giovine Italia* in South America, reinforced Garibaldi's anticlericalism, his appreciation of the nobility of manual labor, and his robust secular humanism. All three vectors of influence intersected to buttress numerous values Garibaldi gathered from his early voyages: the perfectibility of human beings; the primacy of love; the necessity of individual liberty; the beauty of valor and service for high ideals; anti-commercialism; defiance in the face of oppression; willingness to violate extant laws to overturn a tyrannical status quo; the salutary effects gener-

ated by righteous revolution; patriotic enterprises that precipitated beneficial international outcomes; asceticism as a means to and reflection of self-discipline; the importance of women's liberation; and commitment to principles that resist calculations of expediency and short-term utility. Such values spawn Garibaldi's sense of honor and the specific code to which he subscribed and for which he lived.

Although I am only pondering the conceptual vagaries of honor, Garibaldi lived a life of honor. His code consisted of martial virtues exercised for national liberation and unification movements. Garibaldi recognized the following principles of honor: a moral duty to fight for the freedom of those oppressed by tyrannical regimes; in so doing, people of honor must confront grave dangers and sacrifice amply, up to and including their lives; surrender is unacceptable and retreat is permissible only under extreme necessity; unless extraordinary circumstances direct otherwise, to expect or accept material rewards for successful service rendered pursuant to this code is unworthy and undermines the motivation of duty spawning it; disparagement of patriots of liberation and aspersions cast on their characters must be rebutted, forcibly if necessary; and those who accept this code but later repudiate it through their words and deeds do not merit mercy.

That Garibaldi was humorless, marking himself and his enterprises with inexhaustible gravity, arises from his faith in this honor code as a secular religion. Whereas many philosophers, militarists, politicians, and people of good will could embrace aspects of Garibaldi's code, most would conclude that its founding principle—the supposed moral duty to fight for the freedom of all oppressed people—is in fact supererogatory, a noble aspiration that transcends moral obligation. This is especially the case when we note the extreme moral corollaries that accompany the principle: sacrifices up to and including death; abrogation of material reward for successful service; refusal to allow expediency, personal advantage, or considerations of utility to override the mission; and the scope of the enterprise, which ranges far beyond one's national boundaries: "Wherever an oppressed people struggles against its oppressors, whenever an enslaved people combats for its liberty, my place is in their midst."[74]

Yet for Garibaldi, this honor code reflected and sustained his self-understanding; it captured in general terms his identity. Accordingly, Garibaldi, who accepted the founding principle and the extreme corollaries passionately not merely as supererogatory aspirations but as moral duties, prefigures Nietzsche's conception of the overman as "a Roman Caesar with the soul of Christ." Garibaldi was an extraordinarily gifted guerrilla fighter firm in his conviction that his cause bore higher imprimatur and his honor code functioned as a secular religion that he propagated with messianic avidity. For a comrade to repudiate the code or an enemy to demean those who embrace the code was to arouse piercing reprisals from Garibaldi—betrayal and blasphe-

my are lethal toxins of faith, whether religious or secular. To impugn the honor code or its congregation was to vilify Garibaldi, mock his faith, and ridicule his religion.

Garibaldi was dust and to dust he returned; he was a human being, a mere mortal and not a compendium of legends he inspired or myths he provoked. He manifested a host of typical human peccadillos: he was often obstinate; frequently rigid and unforgiving; sometimes intolerant of approaches to life and social rebellion contrary to his own; invariably theatrical and dramatic, at times inappropriately so; and devoid of a sense of humor. Not temperamentally suited for political finagling, Garibaldi's favorite military strategy mirrored his distinctive spirit: charge straightforwardly with fixed bayonets and glistening resolve. Still, Garibaldi lacked a signature vice. He was not by disposition arrogant, or reflexively envious, or materially greedy, or prone to sloth. Although perhaps indictable in Dante's moral court for excessive lust, Garibaldi generally loved the proper things in an appropriate measure, at least on the secular level. After his death, as an ongoing era of skepticism arose, professional carpers, never in short supply within the scholarly class, have pecked away at the Garibaldian legacy, amplifying his imperfections and deflating his virtuosity. Perhaps I am a guileless pedant, but I choose to distance myself from such undertakings.

Garibaldi understood viscerally the terrors of cosmic meaninglessness and the specter of nihilism. He responded by heightening the intensity of his life. If everything was *ultimately* meaningless then some things must *immediately* be endowed with high value. Rather than being driven by a merciless thanatotic impulse, Garibaldi revered the proposition that if there was no earthly project or conviction worth dying for than there was none worth living for. He had no time to play the fool or crack wise with the corner boys. Garibaldi, instead, danced psychologically with and fought valiantly against the knights of Father Time and the dogs of nihilism, striving mightily to dispatch them all to the Pillars of Hercules, while knowing that his was an impossible task grounded in an implausible vision. Yet he persevered. By earning deserved enduring glory for his national and international services, he closed the circle on the paramount value of ancient Romans and Julius Caesar, although doing so was not his mission. By ferociously encountering and defeating foreign oppressors and contributing magnanimously to the unification of Italy, Garibaldi activated the dreams of Machiavelli and Dante. Most importantly, Garibaldi relished opportunities to risk everything, to lay all on the line for matters of principle and in service of honor. In popular parlance: his mouth wrote brash checks that his ass was all too willing to cash. That a person embodying so large a spirit and so fulsome a soul would galvanize so many of his comrades should register no surprise. Anointing Garibaldi a hero is less an exercise in generosity than a bestowal of merited appreciation.

CONCLUSION

Despite the encomia he earned and the glory that accompanied his military campaigns, a specter of tragedy enveloped Garibaldi throughout his life. He suffered the deaths of his parents, siblings, his first wife Anita, many of his closest comrades in arms, three of his daughters, and several of his grandchildren. His political and military allies were typically wary of the power of his romantic-heroic image, eager to exploit it for their own agendas, but reluctant to recognize Garibaldi and his volunteers appropriately after successful outcomes. Thus, Ridley observes:

> Throughout his life, it had been Garibaldi's fate to fight, in particularly disadvantageous and dangerous circumstances, for the benefit of allies who not only appropriated the gains which Garibaldi had won at so high a price in blood and effort, but also failed to show any trace of gratitude, and gave him nothing but abuse and hatred in return for his services.[75]

To some contemporary thinkers, Garibaldi often seemed to epitomize a death wish: assuming unreasonable risks, sloganizing victory or death, valorizing martyrdom for a high cause, and eulogizing those who endured it. Also, Garibaldi's idealistic craving to establish a unified Italy that mirrored the purity of his vision, a pristine combination of the best of ancient Roman accomplishment and modern Italian possibility, was frustrated by political realities and monarchical prerogatives. His grandest political ambitions during the twilight of his life for human liberation and universal suffrage, the diversion of the Tiber, land reclamation, and extensive public works were greeted by stony indifference. Garibaldi died not in fierce service of human liberation but in his bed in Caprera withering from the pernicious effects of arthritis, bronchitis, and rheumatism. Even his final requests for the disposition of his corpse were stymied by the political exigencies of the monarchy and the reverential demands of the public. To conclude that Garibaldi simultaneously embodied the most brilliant and admirable nationalistic intensity and the most disconcerting and melancholy human frailty is reasonable. In that vein, Pick writes:

> [Garibaldi] stood for the ideal of practical endeavor, moral principle in action, the will realised in world deed. His fortitude in the face of physical and emotional assault became inseparable from the myth: the passion of a man true to himself, wounded, let down, but always indomitable. . . . In his case, the heroic spirit of limitless possibility and achievement was tinged with a melancholic air, connoting a mood of disenchantment and a painful sense of incapacity that resonated with a wider cultural mood of let-down and political disappointment after the making of "Italy." . . . He was a military giant, a man of remarkable stamina, but also a frail, struggling invalid, full of aches, pains and failing creaky bones. . . . His appeal lay both in his strength and power (even

> megalomania), and also in the impotent position into which he was cast. He represented a dogged insistence on the ideal, and the chronic mourning of its loss.[76]

When Garibaldi sensed his time on earth was nearing its conclusion, he vocalized and recorded in his will specific instructions. He desired neither to be entombed nor to be cremated in an oven. Instead, he requested that his corpse be burned in the open air: "Make a fire of acacia—it burns like oil—and put me in my red shirt, my face upturned to the sun. When my body is burned put the ashes into an urn—any pot will do—and place it on the wall behind the tombs of Anita and Rosa. I mean to finish so."[77] Garibaldi even specified the height of the pyre and cautioned his wife, Francesca, to keep his death a secret until these arrangements had been consummated. Garibaldi yearned at death to reaffirm his identity as the rebellious Red Shirt; to deny priests their opportunity to co-opt his corpse into their religious rituals; to reunite spiritually with Anita and Rosa; and to orchestrate a romantic departure. He was enthralled by accounts of the death by drowning of Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822) and his cremation in an open fire at Viareggio, Italy.[78]

At his death, on June 2, 1882, Francesca sought to fulfill his requests. However, the collective power of the monarchy, the clerical class, a coterie of self-anointed good and just citizens, and military dignitaries conspired against the satisfaction of Garibaldi's final wishes. The government and the public cast Garibaldi as their symbolic hero one final time. A passel of rationales for overruling Francesca's enterprise emerged: following Garibaldi's instructions would result in the body burning for too many hours; officials could neither remain at repose for so long a time nor absent themselves without disrespect; the public deserved to pay their respects to the great warrior of *Risorgimento*; priests fretted over the dispositions of Garibaldi's soul should Francesca violate the Church's prohibition against cremation; and the nation of Italy would be further solidified if the mourning of Garibaldi was accompanied by full, proper, public ceremonies.

So it came to pass that Garibaldi was buried with full ritual and public attention near his home at Caprera. Currents of national grieving persisted throughout Italy. Hibbert adds that "And as though in protest at this violation of his wishes, the sky darkened when his body was lowered into the earth, and a strong wind came up, lifting the white dust from the leaves of the olive trees. Then, suddenly and blindingly, the rain poured down; and a vast block of granite, which was later laid over his grave, cracked and broke."[79] Mourners were understandably shaken, some suspecting a message from the divine.

We may imagine the ghost of Machiavelli smirking as, yet again, the designs of so righteous a man disintegrated through the connivance of neces-

sity and *Fortuna*.[80] Not that Niccolò ever needed additional confirmation that in the end all human beings must fail.

NOTES

1. In sketching Garibaldi's life, I consulted Giuseppe Garibaldi, *Autobiography*, trans. A. Werner, with supplement by Jessie White Mario, 3 vols. (London: Walter Smith and Innes, 1889); Christopher Hibbert, *Garibaldi and His Enemies* (London: Penguin Books, 1987); Daniel Pick, *Rome or Death: The Obsessions of General Garibaldi* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2005); Jasper Ridley, *Garibaldi* (London: Phoenix Press, 1974); Lucy Riall, *Garibaldi: Invention of a Hero* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007); Denis Mack Smith, *Garibaldi* (London: Knopf, 1957); Jerome J. Platt, *"Here We Make Italy Or We Die:" The Medals of Giuseppe Garibaldi, The Risorgimento and Modern Italy* (London: Spink, 2017); Ron Field, *Garibaldi: Leadership, Strategy, Conflict* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2011); Raymond Angelo Belliotti, *Seeking Identity: Individualism versus Community in an Ethnic Context* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995).
2. Garibaldi, *Autobiography*, vol. 1, 34.
3. Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 23–26; Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 6; Riall, *Garibaldi*, 38.
4. "It was at this point that Garibaldi was exposed to the unusual ideologies that were to influence him thereafter: "that 'the whole of society ought to strive towards the improvement of the conditions, both moral and physical, of the poorest class'; that the State should be organized into a social hierarchy dominated by a leader, ascetic, simple and selfless; that women should be emancipated and gain entire equality with men; and that the body should be given its due honor as a creation of God and as a source of sexual pleasure." Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 6–7.
5. Gaetano Salvemini, *Mazzini*, ed. and trans. I. M. Rawson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957), 159.
6. Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 28.
7. Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 18.
8. Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 67–68; Pick, *Rome or Death*, 131.
9. Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 199.
10. Smith, *Garibaldi*, 63.
11. Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 149, 334.
12. S. J. Woolf, *The Italian Risorgimento* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1969), 11.
13. The *Mezzogiorno* refers to the regions of Italy south of Rome: Abruzzi and Molise, Campania, Apulia, Basilicata (Lucania), Calabria, and Sicily. Sardinia is sometimes included in the group. "*Mezzogiorno*" literally means "middle of the day" but also bears several rich connotations such as "the land that time forgot" and "where the sun always shines." This region has for centuries been the poorest but most intriguing part of Italy. About 80 percent of the Italian immigrants to the United States came from the *Mezzogiorno*.
14. Paul Hofmann, *That Fine Italian Hand: What Makes the Italians Italian* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1990), 159.
15. Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 363.
16. Roberto Unger, *Passions: An Essay on Personality* (New York: Free Press, 1984), 53–57.
17. Ibid., 24–25.
18. Isaiah Berlin, *The Roots of Romanticism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).
19. Riall, *Garibaldi,* 3, 56.
20. Pick, *Rome or Death*, 116.
21. Raymond Angelo Belliotti, *Roman Philosophy and the Good Life* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 151–52; *Machiavelli's Secret: The Soul of the Statesman* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015), 194–95.

22. Denis Mack Smith, *A History of Sicily: Medieval Sicily: 800–1713* (New York: Dorset Press, 1968), 70–75.
23. Cited in Riall, *Garibaldi*, 65.
24. Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 618–19.
25. Denis Mack Smith, *A History of Sicily: Modern Sicily: After 1713* (New York: Dorset Press, 1968), 89.
26. Riall, *Garibaldi*, 117, 166–67, 179, 182; Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 378–80, 401–3; Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 136, 194.
27. Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 441.
28. Riall, *Garibaldi*, 20–22, 183.
29. Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 486–87.
30. See, for example, Giuseppe Garibaldi, *Scritti e discorsi politici e militari*, 3 vols. (Bologna: Cappelli, 1934); *Edizione Nazionale degli scritti di Giuseppe Garibaldi*, 6 vols. (Bologna: Cappelli, 1932–1937).
31. Garibaldi, *Edizione Nazionale*, vol. 4, 92–94.
32. Garibaldi, *Scritti e discorsi*, vol. 1, 97–98, 103, 11, 127.
33. Ibid., 147.
34. Ibid., 168.
35. Giuseppe Garibaldi, "Garibaldi Prepares Italy's Guerrillas for Battle," in *Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History*, ed. William Safire (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2004), 113, 115.
36. Giuseppe Garibaldi, *Autobiography*, trans. A. Werner, with supplement by Jessie White Mario, vol. 3 (London: Walter Smith and Innes, 1889), 364.
37. Ibid., 368–69.
38. Ibid., 375.
39. Riall, *Garibaldi*, 82; Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 157; Smith, *Modern Sicily*, 437–38.
40. "The *victories*: the fight with the pirates in the Aegean, with the gunboats off Montevideo, Camaqua, first Laguna, Imbituba, Imarui, Santa Vitória, Serra do Espinasso, Taquari, Paraná, the Cerro, Tres Cruces, Colonia, Itapebí, Salto, San Antonio, first and second Daiman, Luino, Rome (30 April), Palestrina, Varese, San Formo, Calatafimi, Palermo, Milazzo, first and second Reggio di Calabria, the Volturno, Bagolino, Monte Rotondo, first Lantenay, Autun, second Dijon. The *defeats*: second Laguna, Curritibanos, San José do Norte, Costa Brava, Morazzone, Villa Corsini, Porta San Pancrazio (21 June), the Aurelian Wall (30 June), Laveno, Tre-Ponti, Monte Suello, Mentana, first Dijon, second Lantenay.*Indecisive*: La Boyada, Machado, Velletri, Bezzecca." (Emphasis added.) Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 636.
41. Cited in Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 203.
42. Ibid., 195–205; Riall, *Garibaldi*, 41.
43. Garibaldi, *Edizione Nazionale*, vol. 4, 70.
44. Ibid., vol. 2, 433.
45. Riall, *Garibaldi*, 209–10; Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 211–18; Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 446–48.
46. Hofmann, *That Fine Italian Hand*, 194.
47. Riall, *Garibaldi*, 210–13; Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 222–37; Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 449–53.
48. Riall, *Garibaldi*, 212.
49. Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 94, 145, 288.
50. Ibid., 497, 499.
51. Riall, *Garibaldi*, 220–22; Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 297–301; Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 496–509. Victor Hugo extolled Garibaldi's service in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870: "France has passed through a terrible trial, whence she issues bleeding and vanquished. France, oppressed in the sight of all Europe, met with cowardice in all Europe. None of the powers of Europe rose up in the defence of France . . . but a man [Garibaldi] intervened, and that man was the power. What did this man possess? His sword. This sword had emancipated one people, it might save another. He came, he fought . . . *Garibaldi was the only general who fought for France and was not conquered*." Garibaldi, *Autobiography*, vol. 3, 421.

52. Riall, *Garibaldi*, 71–72; Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 250–52; Pick, *Rome or Death*, 84–86.
53. Riall, *Garibaldi*, 317–29; Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 335–36; Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 538–41; Pick, *Rome or Death*, 100–102.
54. Riall, *Garibaldi*, 350–52; Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 355; Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 588–89; Pick, *Rome or Death*, 102.
55. Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 61.
56. Ibid., 234.
57. Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 636.
58. Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 363.
59. Smith, *Garibaldi*, 175.
60. Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 322.
61. Ibid., 32–33.
62. Ibid., 214–15.
63. Ibid., 363; Smith, *Garibaldi*, 80.
64. Smith, *Garibaldi*, 163.
65. In sketching the general account of the family structure in southern Italy and Sicily, I consulted Richard D. Alba, *Italian Americans: Into the Twilight of Ethnicity* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1985); Luigi Barzini, *The Italians* (New York: Atheneum, 1964); Richard Gambino, *Blood of My Blood* (New York: Anchor Books, 1974); Jerre Mangione and Ben Morreale, *La Storia* (New York: Harper Collins, 1992); Raymond Angelo Belliotti, *Seeking Identity: Individualism versus Community in an Ethnic Context* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995).
66. Booker T. Washington, quoted in Mangione and Morreale, *La Storia*, xv.
67. Karl Marx, quoted in Mangione and Morreale, *La Storia*, 58. Within this oppressive context stood the family structure and its elaborate code of rituals and obligations. Luigi Barzini eloquently summed up the importance of the family: "The Italian family is a stronghold in a hostile land: within its walls and among its members, the individual finds consolation, help, advice, provisions, loans, weapons, allies and accomplices to aid him in his pursuits. No Italian who has a family is ever alone. He finds in it a refuge in which to lick his wounds after a defeat, or an arsenal and a staff for his victorious drives. Scholars have always recognized the Italian family as the only fundamental institution in the country, a spontaneous creation of the national genius, adapted through the centuries to changing conditions, the real foundation of whichever social order prevails. In fact, the law, the State and society function only if they do not directly interfere with the family's supreme interests." *The Italians*, 198.
68. Pick, *Rome or Death*, 80.
69. Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. Quinton Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971); Raymond Angelo Belliotti, *Why Philosophy Matters: 20 Lessons on Living Large* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 100–106.
70. Smith, *Modern Sicily*, 440.
71. In arriving at a general account of the concept of honor, I consulted James Bowman, *Honor: A History* (New York: Encounter Books, 2006); Frank Henderson Stewart, *Honor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Alexander Welsh, *What is Honor?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Belliotti, *Why Philosophy Matters*, 33–46.
72. A criminal enterprise may define "honor" in terms of remaining silent when arrested and thereby protecting fellow criminals from prosecution; always responding, even disproportionately, to perceived slights, insults, and demonstrations of disrespect; manifesting respect to superiors within the enterprise by certain ritualized behaviors and by sharing with them the proceeds of criminal ventures; being careful to never inappropriately address or treat family members within the group; providing material and emotional support to the families of group members who fulfilled the honor code and are incarcerated by the authorities; and observing the rule that received benefits create obligations that must later be fulfilled as an expression of gratitude. In living up to such an honor code, a group member will often transgress conventional morality because of the nature of the honor group. However, the success of honor codes tied to criminal enterprises requires a wider cultural setting that prizes small-scale community and trades upon profound distrust of governmental authority. In the United States, where the rheto-

ric of individualism has always been powerful, criminal honor codes became less successful when law enforcement responded with devices such as immunity from prosecution as a reward for cooperating with the authorities; the witness protection program to safeguard those who cooperate; and the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO). At least as important to dismantling the success of criminal honor codes was a change in the wider social settings: old world small-scale community and family understandings were replaced by new world individualism and freedom from socially imposed roles.

73. Franco della Peruta, *Mazzini e I rivoluzionari italiani. Il "partito d'azione"* (1830–1845) (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1974), 70.

74. Garibaldi, *Autobiography*, vol. 3, 403.

75. Ridley, *Garibaldi*, 605.

76. Pick, *Rome or Death*, 131.

77. Garibaldi, *Autobiography*, vol. 3, 460.

78. Ibid., 459–61.

79. Hibbert, *Garibaldi and Enemies*, 368; Gustavo Sacerdote, *Vita di Garibaldi* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1957), 773–75.

80. Daniel Pick unveils an alternate hypothesis: "[W]ith his outlandishly low-key funeral instructions to his wife, the General seemed intent on providing a final object lesson in the outrageous deviation of his plans, the politically motivated violation of his private intentions. . . . In those final unrealizable and ostensibly humble instructions, we might see an attempt to retain control, to remain true to the downbeat, idiosyncratic style that was his hallmark. . . . There was, as ever, a certain flamboyance even in the forceful modesty. . . . We might detect here a last-ditch demonstration, even an unconscious enactment, of a scenario of frustration that had so often occurred before . . . he was at least half aware of the prospect [that his funeral would include the full pomp and ceremony of the time] and thus became a choreographer of his own, posthumous frustration." *Rome or Death*, 221–22. Or, perhaps, Pick entertains one, maybe two, thoughts too many.Lucy Riall comments that "[Garibaldi's funeral] instructions are interesting for what they tell us about Garibaldi's enduring political attitude to his life and fame. Even in death, he fought for control of his body and of the means of its representation, by seeking to leave the public stage in a political manner and moment of his own choosing." *Garibaldi*, 358.

Why wouldn't so public a figure issue instructions about the disposition of his body at death? Why wouldn't those instructions accord with the values he embodied while alive? Indeed, many ordinary people do likewise. That Garibaldi would choose to reaffirm his anticlericalism; try to deny the government, from which he was alienated, from controlling his final departure; while reiterating his romanticism should register no surprise. If Garibaldi had willingly relinquished his funeral arrangements to church and state, only then would his instructions have been noteworthy and "interesting."

Texts and Their Abbreviations

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI

As is common practice in Machiavelli scholarship, where I have cited from Machiavelli's writings the references in all cases have been given immediately in the text and not in the endnotes. All references are to chapters or sections, not page numbers, unless otherwise stated. For example:

P 18 = *The Prince*, chapter 18

D I 55 = *The Discourses*, Book I, chapter 55

FH I 3 = *Florentine Histories*, Book I, section 3

AW II 45 = *The Art of War*, Book II, page 45 (Wood edition)

Leg. 13.18 = *The Legations*, #13, section 18

Ltr. 247: 1/31/15 = Letter 247: January 31, 1515 (Atkinson and Sices edition)

M 4:1 = *Mandragola*, Act Four, Scene One.

I have used the following abbreviations:

P: *The Prince* in *The Chief Works and Others*. Edited and translated by Allan H. Gilbert. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989.

The Prince in *Selected Political Writings*. Edited and translated by David Wootton. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1994.

D: *Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius ("The Discourses")* in *The Chief Works and Others*. Edited and translated by Allan H. Gilbert. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989.

Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livius ("The Discourses") in *Selected Political Writings*. Edited and translated by David Wootton. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1994.

FH: *Florentine Histories*. Edited and translated by Laura F. Banfield and Harvey C. Mansfield. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988.

AW: *The Art of War.* Edited and translated by Neal Wood. Cambridge, MA: De Capo Press, 1965.

Leg.: *The Legations* in *The Chief Works and Others*. Edited and translated by Allan H. Gilbert. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989.

M: *Mandragola.* Translated by Mera J. Flaumenhaft. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 1981.

Ltr.: *Machiavelli and His Friends: Their Personal Correspondence*. Edited and translated by James B. Atkinson and David Sices. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1996.

The Letters of Machiavelli. Edited and translated by Allan Gilbert, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.

I have followed the same technique with my citations to the work of Francesco Guicciardini and Plato. For example:

C I 29 = "Considerations on the 'Discourses' of Machiavelli," Book I, chapter 29

R C 110 = *Ricordi,* Series C, number 110

R = *Maxims and Reflections (Ricordi).* Edited and translated by Mario Domandi. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972.

C= "Considerations on the 'Discourses' of Machiavelli" in *Selected Writings*. Edited by Cecil Grayson. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1965.

S 292e = Plato's *The Statesman*, Stephanus pagination 292e.

S= "The Statesman" translated by J. B. Skemp, in *Plato: Collected Dialogues*, edited by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973).

DANTE ALIGHIERI

Inferno: I 13.1–36 (*Inferno,* canto XIII, lines 1–36)

Purgatorio: P 26.1–135 (*Purgatorio*, canto XXVI, lines 1–135)

Paradiso: Par. 6.127–142 (*Paradiso*, canto VI, lines 127–142)

Convivio: Conv. 4.3.6 (*Convivio*, book 4, section 3, paragraph 6)

De Vulgari Eloquentia: DVE 1.12.4 (*De Vulgari Eloquentia*, book I, section 12, paragraph 4)

The Letters: E 6.6 (*The Letters*, No. 6, Para. 6)

BRUNETTO LATINI

Li Livres dou Trésor (*The Books of the Treasure*): T 1.37.2–3 (*Trésor*, book I, section 37, paragraph 2–3)

Il Tesoretto (*The Little Treasure*): TO 2859–2864 (*Il Tesoretto*, section 2859–2864)

La Rettorica (*Rhetoric*): R 5 (*La Rettorica*, section 5)

BIBLE

Genesis 19: 1–13 (Genesis, chapter 19, verses 1–13)

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Thus Spoke Zarathustra: Z I "On the Gift-Giving Virtue," 7 (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, book I, "On the Gift-Giving Virtue," section 7)

Ecce Homo: EH, "Preface, 4 (*Ecce Homo*, preface, section 4)

Appendix A

Chronology of Julius Caesar (100 BC–44 BC)

100 BC	Gaius Marius serves sixth consulship. A gifted military reformer and warrior, Marius glistens with ambition and is suspicious of the nobles. His spouse is Julia. Birth of Gaius Julius Caesar, Julia's nephew.
91–88	Italian Social War. Samnites and several southern Italian communities secede and declare war on Rome. Marius assumes control of Roman forces in the north, while Lucius Cornelius Sulla commands the southern theater. Roman citizenship is soon granted to allies of Rome.
88–84	First Mithridatic War. Mithridates VI of Pontus revolts and kills all Romans and Italians—eighty thousand—in his region on a single evening.
88	Lucius Cornelius Sulla (*optimates*) marches on Rome and drives Marius (*populares*) out of the city. Sulla is now the first to march a Roman army against other Romans. Sulla then heads east to fight Mithridates.
87–83	Lucius Cornelius Cinna (*populares*) controls Rome.
87	Marius returns and with Cinna seizes Rome.
86	Marius serves seventh consulship. Marius dies.
85	Sulla signs Treaty of Dardanus with Mithridates.
83	Caesar marries Cornelia, daughter of Cinna.
83	Civil War. Sulla's second march on Rome. He wins.
83–81	Second Mithridatic War.
82–79	Sulla serves as dictator. He writes laws and organizes the state to strengthen the power of senate and weaken the influence of tribunes.
82–81	Sulla carries out proscriptions.
82	Sulla demands that Caesar divorce Cornelia. Caesar refuses and flees Rome to evade Sulla's retribution. He is eventually pardoned because of intercessions from his mother's relatives.
81	Caesar participates in the siege of Mytilene as ordered by Marcus Minucius Thermus, propraetor of the Roman province of Asia. He is awarded the *corona civica* at Mytilene.
80	Caesar, acting as Thermus's legate, travels to the court of King Nicomedes IV, King of Bithynia. He will later be accused of engaging in homosexual relations with the king.
78	Sulla dies. Caesar returns to Rome. Revolt of Marcus Aemlius Lepidus (*populares*) and rebel Italians is suppressed. Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus ("Pompey the Great") assumes military command.
77–72	Pompey defeats Quintus Sertorius, who resists Sullan commanders, in Spain.
77-76	Caesar unsuccessfully prosecutes Gnaeus Cornelius Dolabella and Gaius Antonius Hybrida.
75	Kingdom of Bithynia is bequeathed to Rome.

75-74 Pirates capture Caesar during his voyage to Rhodes, a journey undertaken to advance his studies. He is held in Pharmacussa. Upon his ransom, he returns to slay his captors.

74–63 Third Mithridatic War. After recruiting a small force of soldiers, Caesar participates in this conflict and defeats raiders commanded by one of King Mithridates's military leaders.

73 Caesar returns to Rome and is elected to the college of *pontifices*.

73–71 Slave revolt of Spartacus.

72 Caesar serves as military tribune. He may have served in forces resisting Spartacus.

71 Marcus Licinius Crassus defeats Spartacus. Pompey returns from Spain and aids suppression of slave revolt.

70 Consulships of Crassus and Pompey.

69 Caesar serves as quaestor in Spain under praetor Gaius Antistius Vetus. Caesar's aunt Julia and wife Cornelia both die.

67 Gabinian Law (*Lex Gabinia*) confers extraordinary authority, *imperium infinitum* (power not limited to one province), on Pompey. Caesar supports the law. Caesar marries Pompeia.

66 Pirates, in league with Mithridates, are crushed by Pompey. Manilian Law (*Lex Manilia*) gives Pompey extraordinary command to finish the war against Mithridates. Caesar supports this decree.

65 Caesar serves as curule aedile.

64 Caesar oversees a court considering unpaid debts to the republic owed by Sulla's supporters. Cato leads the investigation.

63 Mithridates dies. Pompey defeats forces of Mithridates and reorganizes the east: Bithynia/Pontus, Cilicia, and Syria are formed or reshaped into provinces. Catilinian conspiracy brews in Rome. Cicero is consul. Caesar is elected *Pontifex Maximus*. He argues in the senate against death sentences for the alleged participants in Catilinian conspiracy.

62 Pompey returns to Rome ostensibly to retire. Caesar serves as praetor. After the scandal arising from Clodius's machinations during a religious feast, Caesar divorces Pompeia.

61 Caesar serves as proprietor in Spain. He reforms the province's administration and leads a strong, successful punitive campaign that establishes his eligibility for a ceremonial triumph in Rome. After returning to Rome, he forgoes a formal triumph in order to run for election as consul.

60 Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus form First Triumvirate.

59–58 Caesar's first consulship. He marries Calpurnia, daughter of Lucius Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus, consul in 58. Pompey marries Julia, Caesar's daughter.

58–49 Caesar conquers Gaul.

58 Caesar's forces defeat the Helvetii, mount campaigns against the Germanic tribes, and defeat Ariovistus, leader of the Suebi.

58 Tribunate of Clodius.

58–57 Cato makes Cyprus a province. Cicero is exiled.

57 Caesar's victory over the Belgae coalition triggers a fifteen-day *supplicatio*, a thanksgiving featuring public prayers and ceremonies, from the Roman senate.

56 Caesar initiates military operations against the Alpine tribes.

56 Conference at Lucca: First Triumvirate mends differences.

55 Pompey and Crassus serve as consuls.

55 Caesar crosses the Rhine and launches campaigns against the Usipetes and the Tencteri, as well as the first expedition to Britain. Another senate decree, this time a twenty-day *supplication*, honors Caesar's victories.

54 Death of Julia, Pompey's wife and Caesar's daughter, in childbirth. Death of Caesar's mother Aurelia.

54 Caesar undertakes a second British expedition resulting in the defeat of Celtic chieftain, Cassivellaunus.

53 Caesar crosses the Rhine a second time, resulting in the defeat of the Eburones, a Celtic-German tribe.

53 Battle of Carrhae: Crassus killed while invading Parthia.

52 Murder of Clodius. Sole consulship of Pompey.

52 After a rare defeat at Gergovia, Caesar crushes a Gallic uprising led by Vercingetorix and captures several Gallic territories.

51 Yet another twenty-day *supplicatio* follows, along with further successful Caesarian campaigns in Gaul, most notably against the Bellovaci.

51–50 Cicero governs Cilicia and Cyprus.

50 Gaius Scribonius Curio, a partisan of Caesar's, presents a proposal in the senate aimed at facilitating peace between Caesar and Pompey. His second rendering is adopted.

49 Curio presents a letter from Caesar to the senate. Cicero returns from Cilicia.

49 Senate issues a senatus consultum ultimum, an emergency decree conferring virtually limitless authority upon magistrates in service of preserving the republic. Caesar's partisan tribunes, Marcus Antonius ("Marc Antony") and Quintus Cassius, flee Rome for Ravenna.

49–45 Civil War between Caesar and Pompey.

49 Caesar crosses the Rubicon. Civil War begins. Pompey evacuates Italy. Consuls and members of senate flee Rome.

49 Caesar occupies Brindisi, then returns to Rome, and subsequently embarks for Massilia.

48 Caesar's second consulship. He also assumes post of dictator. Two weeks after suffering a defeat at Durazzo, Caesar triumphs over Pompey at the climactic Battle of Pharsalus. Pompey sails to Cyprus and is murdered in Egypt.

48–47 Caesar in Alexandria establishes Cleopatra as ruler of Egypt and fathers a son, Caesarion, by her. Caesar engages in a host of land and sea battles.

47–44 Caesar holds successive dictatorships.

47 Caesar suppresses the revolt of the province of Pontus by defeating Pharnaces II in the Battle of Zela (Turkey) (*Veni, Vidi, Vici!*).

46–44 Caesar holds successive consulships.

46 After a near disaster at Ruspina, Caesar wins the Battle of Thapsus (Africa); Cato commits suicide at Utica. Caesar's dictatorship is extended. New "Julian" calendar is introduced. Dedication of *Forum Julium* in Rome. Caesar is celebrated in four triumphs in Rome.

45 Caesar's army defeats remaining Pompeian forces at Battle of Munda (Spain). Upon his return to Rome, Caesar is celebrated in a triumph for his victory over the sons of Pompey.

44 Caesar is named dictator for life, as well as imperator and consul. At the feast of the Lupercalia, he thrice refuses the kingly crown. Caesar plans a series of military campaigns against the Dacians and Parthians. Shortly thereafter, he is assassinated on March 15. Octavius is adopted by terms of Caesar's will and named Octavian; siege of Mutina begins: Octavian versus Marc Antony.

43 Octavian defeats Antony, seizes Rome, and is named consul. He, Antony, and Lepidus form Second Triumvirate. They form a proscription list that leads, among other things, to the death of Cicero.

42 Battles at Philippi: Antony and Octavian defeat Brutus and Cassius. Deification of Julius Caesar.

41–40 Antony meets Cleopatra and sires twins by her.

40 Antony and Octavian redivide their authority within the Roman world. Antony marries Octavia, sister of Octavian.

38 Octavian marries Livia.

37 Second Triumvirate is renewed.

36 But not for long. Sextus Pompey is defeated by Octavian and Lepidus. Lepidus tries unsuccessfully to eliminate Octavian. Lepidus is muscled out of the Triumvirate and is exiled.

34–31 Antony and Octavian maneuver for position.

33 Octavian's second consulship.

32 Antony divorces Octavia.

31 Octavian defeats Antony and Cleopatra at Battle of Actium.

30	Octavian captures Alexandria. Antony and Cleopatra commit suicide. Egypt becomes a Roman province.
27 BC–AD 14	Augustus (Octavian) rules as first Roman emperor.

Appendix B

Chronology of Dante Alighieri (1265–1321)

1265	Dante Alighieri born in Florence.
1266	The popular Florentine guilds and the Guelfs revolt against the Ghibellines. Charles of Anjou defeats and kills Manfred of Sicily in the Battle of Benevento. Ghibellines are ousted from Florence. Charles assumes the duties of *podestà* (chief magistrate) of Florence for twelve years. During his reign, Charles marginalizes the *popul*o. The Guelfs take control of Florence and usher in a peace enduring almost three decades. However, despite the debacle at Benevento, the Ghibellines remain formidable, especially in Siena and Pisa, traditional rivals of Florence.
1269	Charles summons a general assembly of all Lombard cities at Cremona. Some bestow the title *signoria* ("lord" or "de facto sovereign") on him; the others offer him an alliance. Charles anoints himself "imperial vicar." The Church is not amused.
1269	Regolino Tolomei kills and beheads Provenzano Salvani, a Sienese Ghibelline military leader, at the battle of Colle di Val d'Elsa, where the Florentine Guelfs prevail. Provenzano's severed head is affixed to a lance and paraded about the battlefield. His invidious and spiteful aunt, Sapia, rejoices (P 13.106–29).
1272	Dante's mother dies.
1274	As a child, Dante first encounters Beatrice ("Bice") Portinari. She remains the idealized love of his life; Dante fantasizes that Beatrice is the embodiment of human perfection in virtue, beauty, and grace.
1276	Among numerous others, Rinieri da Calboli, a leading political and military figure in Tuscany for almost three decades, participates with the Florentines in an attack on Forli. After some early successes, he is outmaneuvered by Guido da Montefeltro and forced to surrender. Guido spares Rinieri's life but burns down his castle. Rinieri soon reemerges as a Guelf political and military force in Tuscany.
1277	Pope Nicholas III convinces Charles to relinquish the title of imperial vicar. The Visconti family seizes power in Milan. Dante's father arranges a future marriage between his son and Gemma di Manetto Donati.
1280	Annoyed by French power brokers, Pope Nicholas III sends his nephew, Cardinal Malabranca, to Florence. (In the nineteenth canto of *Inferno*, Dante condemns Nicholas with the other simonists to the eighth circle of hell.)
1280	Brunetto Latini acts as a guarantor of the Peace of Cardinal Latino Malabranca Orsini, nephew of Pope Nicholas III. The pact ensures that Ghibellines who had emigrated or had been exiled could return to Florence with political guarantees. (The Uberti family is excluded from this political accommodation.) On the surface, Florence embodies a coalition government, although Guelfs remain the majority party.

1282	Pope Martin IV, aligned with French forces, besieges Forli. Although outnumbered, Guido da Montefeltro commands cleverly, achieves significant victories, and inflicts heavy casualties.
1282	Sicilian Vespers, a successful rebellion against Charles of Anjou, breaks out at Easter. Within a few weeks, more than three thousand French men and women are killed by the rebels, and the government of Charles loses control of the island. For years, various Tuscan and Sicilian cities, in league with several Popes, had schemed against Charles, who proved to be a cruel, avaricious ruler. Although Florence probably was not formally a participant in these intrigues, Brunetto Latini may well have been involved diplomatically in such efforts.
1282	Florence restructures its constitution and establishes the Priorate, a board of six to twelve who are elected for two-month terms during which time they reside within the Torre della Casagna to avoid corrupting vectors. Along with the General Council and the *podestà*, these officials ruled the city. However, the *magnati* (nobles) soon insinuate themselves into dominating positions within the guilds and oversee the election of priors.
1283	Forli finally falls to papal and French forces; most of Romagna submits to papal rule within three years. Guido da Montefeltro retreats to Piedmont to savor past triumphs, reassess defeat, and reemerge as a military leader.
1283	Dante marries Gemma di Manetto Donati, a pairing arranged by Dante's father at least six years earlier. The couple eventually produces two sons, a daughter, and, possibly, a fourth child. Dante meets Guido Cavalcanti, who becomes his best friend, and becomes a protégé of Brunetto Latini, prominent Florentine scholar and civil servant.
1284–1285	Brunetto Latini serves as president of the Tuscan League of Florence, Genoa, and Lucca against Pisa. From this period until 1292, he advises on constitutional issues and matters of diplomacy, as well as continuing to speak forcefully on the virtues of republican liberty.
1287	Brunetto is a prior of Florence (August–October). Dante travels to the prestigious University of Bologna, to study rhetoric and the techniques of style. Beatrice marries Simone dei Bardi, part of a wealthy banking family.
1288	Guido da Montefeltro is excommunicated by the pope, mainly due to his military successes against papal forces. He returns as commander of the Pisan Ghibellines, who battle Florence over the next five years.

1289 As member of the war council against Arezzo, Brunetto Latini is chosen public orator (*arringatore*) to urge war against Arezzo; he also serves as *dittatore*. Florence and its Guelf allies defeat Arezzian Ghibellines in the battle of Campaldino. Dante participates on the side of the victors. Florence reforms its constitution. Later that year, Dante participates in the successful siege of the Pisan fortress of Caprona. (Both events are chronicled in *Commedia*: the pilgrim meets Buonconte da Montefeltro, who died bravely at Campaldino, in the fifth canto of *Purgatorio*; in the twenty-first canto of *Inferno*, the pilgrim recalls the surrender of the fortress of Caprona.)

1290 Beatrice Portinari dies. The event deepens Dante's idealized love for her. He compiles numerous poems, some written in her honor, all inspired by her, adds commentaries, and calls the collection *Vita nuova*. The relationship between love and reason is a recurring theme.

1292 Guido da Montefeltro and the Pisans defeat Florence. As master of Urbino, Guido da Montefeltro defends successfully against the aggression of Malatestino, *podestà* of Cesena.

1293 Pisa and Florence agree to a peace treaty. Guido parades through Florentine territory after the signing of the treaty and is received with great honor. The effects of the wars against Arezzo and Pisa beleaguer Florence. Officials had mismanaged the city's finances and political corruption had become embarrassing. A prosperous merchant with noble lineage and deep populist sympathies, Giano della Bella, emerges. Giano develops ordinances that exclude from the priorate all those who do not perform a trade within a guild and establishes a new post to oversee the behavior of the *magnati*. However, Giano represses the nobles too zealously and is soon forced into exile.

1294 Brunetto Latini dies. Boniface VIII becomes pope.

1294 (circa) Dante enters public service after becoming a member of the Guild of Physicians and Apothecaries. He serves on the council for the election of city priors and on the Council of the Hundred, which oversees financial and paramount civic concerns.

1296 Pope Boniface VIII rescinds the excommunication order and admits Guido da Montefeltro back into the Church. Guido enters the Franciscan order and removes himself from secular affairs.

1296 The exiled Guelfs of Forli, along with allies from Rimini and Ravenna, gain temporary control of Forli. Shortly thereafter, they are soundly defeated by Ghibellines returning from other military skirmishes. Among the defeated Guelfs killed is Rinieri da Calboli.

1297 Pope Boniface VIII is embattled by the Colonna family, who question his legitimacy as pope, in the hilltop fortress of Palestrina.

1298 Boniface seeks the counsel of Guido, who, convinced that the pope has granted him absolution in advance, advises him to promise much, but fulfill little. Acting on Guido's advice to falsely promise, Boniface lures the Colonna into submission and stalks them through Italy thereafter. Guido da Montefeltro dies later that year.

1300 Florence divided between the *guelfi neri* and *guelfi bianchi*. Dante serves as a prior from June 15 to August 15. In late June, the leaders of both the *neri* and *bianchi* factions are expelled from Florence. Guido Cavalcanti, Dante's best friend, is among those exiled. Guido dies in August on a journey from Sarzana to Florence, where he hoped to return.

1300 Pope Boniface VIII invites Charles of Valois to Italy to defeat the white Guelfs. Boniface pledges religious and political security to all who identify with and aid his imperial designs. The priors of Florence, including Dante, resist Boniface's overtures and schemes. The pope excommunicates those who oppose him. Dante is an exception because his term of service is about to expire.

1301 Boniface calls upon Charles of Valois, brother of the King of France, to aid his master plan of controlling Sicily and defeating his political opponents in Florence. As the army of Charles nears Florence, Dante is one of three envoys dispatched by the *bianchi* to outline the treacheries of the Blacks and to plead with the pope to alter his plans. After preliminary discussions, two of the Florentine envoys are excused; only Dante is detained. Charles marches into Florence.

1301 The Blacks overcome the Whites and exile the vanquished, including Dante, who, in absentia, is fined and sentenced to two years of exile from Florence, as well as declared permanently ineligible to hold public office.

1302 Dante does not bother to answer the charges levied against him, which range from taking bribes to embezzlement to disturbing the peace. An additional sentence is imposed: if Dante returns to Florence he will be burned alive at the stake. Dante places major responsibility of his political demise on the contrivances of Pope Boniface VIII. The *neri* control Florence.

1302–1321	Dante wanders about Italy for the next two decades. At various times, he appears in Verona, the University of Bologna, Padua, Lunigiana, Casentino, and Ravenna. He writes *Convivio*, a treatise designed to celebrate his love for philosophy, probably between 1304 and 1308; *De vulgari eloquentia*, a scholarly analysis of the Italian vernacular, around 1303 and 1304, or perhaps much later; *De monarchia*, which argues that secular monarchy is required for international welfare and is written in honor of Henry VII's adventurism, probably around 1312; and *Commedia* from about 1311–1321. After his exile, it becomes clear that Dante soon subscribes to a Principle of Dual Governance.
1303	Pope Boniface VIII dies. Pope Benedict XI is elected to replace him. Dante resides in Verona with the della Scala family.
1304	Civil riots result in the (partial) burning of Florence. Pope Benedict XI appoints Cardinal Niccolò da Prato pacificator of Tuscany. Dante writes the cardinal on behalf of Florentine exiles pledging not to initiate insurrections that might undermine the prelate's mission. The cardinal enters Florence but is unsuccessful. He departs Florence, which is placed under ecclesiastic censure. Soon thereafter, Pope Benedict XI dies. Dante resides in Bologna where he befriends another exiled poet, Cino da Pistoia.
1305	Election of Pope Clement V. Dante wanders to Lungiana under the protection of the Malaspina family.
1306	At Sarzana, Dante serves as a representative of the Malaspini in their dispute with the bishop of Luni.
1308	Henry of Luxemburg elected Holy Roman Emperor.
1309	Death of the King of Naples, Charles II. His son, Robert, succeeds him. Clement V moves the papacy to Avignon.
1310	Pope Clement V summons Henry VII of Luxemburg to reunite church and state and to establish order and stability within Italy. Most Florentines oppose the militaristic venture, whereas the exiled Dante applauds the possibility of strong, secular, imperial guidance in Italy. Florence allies with King Robert of Naples and Guelf stronghold cities in Tuscany and Lombardy to oppose Henry's advance.
1311	Henry receives the iron crown of Lombardy. Genoa bestows absolute authority upon Henry for twenty years. A general Guelf uprising against Henry, who squashes rebellions in Cremona and Lodi and besieges Brescia, ensues. Cangrande della Scala takes possession of Vicenza on behalf of Henry and is later named Imperial Vicar of Verona.
1312	Dante moves to Verona as a guest of Cangrande della Scala. Cangrande appointed Imperial Vicar of Vicenza. Henry is crowned by the pope in Rome and initiates a siege of Florence. Guelfs in Tuscany and Romagna reinforce the Florentines, but do not engage imperial forces. A few weeks later, Henry withdraws the siege on Florence, which foments rebellion at Padua, Genoa, and Lodi. Henry journeys to San Casciano.

1313	Henry meanders to Poggibonsi, then to Pisa, where he issues a proclamation against Florence that removes all its privileges. He leaves Pisa to confront King Robert of Naples, whom Florence has entrusted to lead its forces. Henry VII becomes ill on this journey and he dies near Siena; his armies disperse. Tuscan despots consolidate their power in the wake. The Visconti rule Milan, Scaligeri in Verona, Carraresi in Padua, and Uguccione da Faggiuola in Lucca. The Ghibellines continue the struggle in Pisa, Lucca, and elsewhere. The Florentines compose a self-celebratory letter to their allies in which they disparage Henry VII.
1314	Pope Clement V dies. Louis IV elected emperor. Papacy is vacant until 1316 when Pope John XXII is elected.
1315	Uguccione wins numerous victories over the Guelfs in Lombardy and Tuscany. Florence grants a general amnesty to its people, mainly Guelfs, in exile on condition that they pay a fine and publicly repent. Dante refuses, preferring exile to a dishonorable return to his native soil. In response, his death sentence is reaffirmed and extended to his sons. At Montecatini, Uguccione defeats Florentine and Tuscan Guelf forces.
1316	Florence proclaims another amnesty to certain of its exiled citizens, but those expelled in 1302, including Dante, are excluded.
1317	Cangrande successfully leads the Ghibelline forces of Lombardy against Cremona and Padua.
1318	Dante moves to Ravenna as the guest of Guido Novello da Polenta.
1319	Dante is invited to be crowned poet laureate in Bologna. He declines the invitation, stressing that he will accept such an honor only in Florence.
1320	After numerous victories, Cangrande is defeated at Padua by forces commanded by Henry III of Gorizia.
1321	Guido da Polenta dispatches Dante to the doge of Venice to arbitrate an ongoing feud. During his return to Ravenna, Dante contracts a fever, probably malaria. Dante Alighieri dies and is entombed in the church of San Pier Maggiore in Ravenna. At numerous times thereafter, Florence requests that Ravenna return Dante's remains to his native city. Ravenna refuses. Fearing Florentine treachery, the Franciscans hide Dante's remains in a wall, where they are rediscovered only in 1865.
1373	Florence commissions Giovanni Boccaccio to give a series of lectures on Dante at the Santo Stefano church.
1828	Florence adds a memorial to Dante in the basilica of Santa Croce. The tomb is empty. The inscription reads "*Onorate l'altissimo poeta*" ("Honor the loftiest poet"), a line from Dante's *Inferno*, where the pilgrim interacts with Virgil (I 4.80).
2008	After assiduous deliberation and the passage of about seven centuries, the city council of Florence passes a motion that nullifies Dante's sentence of exile and death. Dante's rap sheet is wiped cleaned. Dante's corpse, however, remains in Ravenna.

Appendix C

Chronology of Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527)

1469	Machiavelli is born in Florence to a family of ancient nobility. His father, Bernardo, was a lawyer with republican loyalty who opposed the Medici, the city's hereditary ruling aristocrats.
1475	Bernardo receives a copy of Livy's *History of Rome* as payment for creating the book's index. When he is about seventeen, Niccolò will bind some of his father's books, including Livy's work, a volume that will greatly influence him.
1478	The Pazzi family tries to assassinate Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici. Lorenzo is wounded but survives, while Giuliano is slain. The plot fails, and the power of the Medici solidifies.
1491	Girolamo Savonarola, a Dominican priest, becomes influential in Florence.
1492	Lorenzo the Magnificent dies. Rodrigo Borgia is elected pope, becoming Alexander VI. Cristoforo Columbo sets sail for India. Lorenzo's son Piero heads the Medici.
1494	Charles VIII, King of France, storms into Italy with 25,000 troops. Piero de' Medici relinquishes control of Pisa and Livorno, along with other territories to appease Charles in exchange for his promise to stay out of Florence. The people rebel and drive the Medici out of Florence. A republican government is formed, in which Savonarola is prominent.
1495	Charles enters Naples. At the Battle of Fornovo, the Holy League (Venice, Milan, papal forces, Spain, and imperial forces of the Holy Roman Empire) drives Charles out of Italy.
1497	The republican government of Florence condemns five citizens for conspiracy against the republic. Against constitutional rights to due process and appeal, Savonarola advises that they be summarily executed. He begins to lose much popular support as a result. Charles VIII dies.
1498	Louis XII is now King of France. Savonarola is excommunicated for heresy and burned at the stake. Supported by Marcello Virgilio Adriani, Secretary of the First Chancery, Niccolò enters public service as Chief of the Second Chancery. In this role, he also serves as secretary to the Ten of Liberty and Peace ("the Ten"), a commission that supervises military affairs and foreign relations. Machiavelli is charged with keeping the *Signoria* (government) of Florence abreast of military and international difficulties.
1499	On behalf of the Ten, Machiavelli travels to Piombino to consult with Lord Jacopo IV d'Appiano. A few months later, he journeys to the court of Caterina Sforza Riario in Forli. Cesare Borgia, son of the pope, emerges as a military force in Romagna. Borgia also defeats Forli, which fails to receive aid from Florence. Florence plans to retake Pisa, a long-standing military and political enemy. Florence's mercenaries turn cowardly and refuse to enter a breach in Pisan fortification. Florence soon thereafter executes those leaders for treason.

1500 Bernardo Machiavelli dies. Florence seeks compensation from Louis XII for the poor performance of French troops at Pisa. Niccolò Machiavelli serves for six months as one of the two legates to Louis. Meanwhile, Cesare Borgia defeats Pesaro, Piombino, Rimini, and Faenza.

1501 Machiavelli marries Marietta Corsini. During their marriage, they will produce seven children. Later in the year, Machiavelli will serve as a legate to Siena.

1502 Twice during the year, Machiavelli is dispatched to the court of Cesare Borgia. Florence anoints Piero Soderini as *gonfaloniere* (high magistrate) for life; he is charged with restoring republican institutions. A few of Borgia's chief officers hatch a rebellion against him. Borgia anticipates the plot and executes the perpetrators.

1503 Machiavelli returns to Florence. Pope Alexander VI dies. Machiavelli consults Leonardo da Vinci about a plan to divert the river Arno around Pisa to the sea at Livorno. This is part of a Florentine scheme to regain dominion over Pisa. The project is an unfinished failure, costing Florence around 7,000 ducats.

1503 Giuliano della Rovere becomes Pope Julius II. Cesare Borgia falls ill and after his father dies, he is lured by Rovere's fraudulent promises to support Rovere's bid for the papacy. A longtime enemy of the Borgias, as Pope Alexander, Rovere subverts Cesare's power base. Borgia is taken prisoner, brought to Rome, transported to Spain, where he escapes, and is killed later while fighting in Navarre in 1507.

1504 Machiavelli composes *First Decennial* (a history in verse of events in Florence from 1494 to 1504). Styled in celebration of Dante, Machiavelli crafts his verse in *terza rima* and borrows expressions and phrases from Dante's work. The poem is printed in 1506 by Agostino Vespucci, an assistant to Machiavelli in the chancellery, at Vespucci's expense.

1506 Machiavelli permitted to initiate his favored project, a Florentine citizen militia. He also embarks on another mission to the papal court.

1507 Machiavelli is sent on a mission to the court of Holy Roman Emperor Maximillian I.

1508 Machiavelli is put in charge of the war against Pisa, which had been waged sporadically for over a decade. He directs the sea and land blockage.

1509 Pisa surrenders to Florence. The citizen army, over ten thousand strong, appeared to be a success.

1511 The Holy League of Mantua—led by the Papal States, Spain, some German regions, and some Italian city-states—is formed to oust the French from Italy. Florence, though, is allied closely with France. Soderini opts for neutrality, eventually sending only a token force to France.

1512	The Holy League has largely defeated the French. Just outside of Florence, an elite force of Spanish veterans attack Prato. Machiavelli's large militia is ensconced within the thick walls of a fortress. Spanish artillery assaults the fortress and penetrate its walls. Machiavelli's marauders throw down their weapons and run helter-skelter into the countryside. Over four thousand people are slaughtered in Prato. No obstacle to the Holy League's triumphant entry into Florence remains.
1512	The Holy League returns the Medici to power in Florence. Soderini is deposed and goes into exile. Machiavelli is removed from civic positions and prohibited from leaving Florence for one year. Giovanni de' Medici, the second son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, takes control of Florence.
1513	Machiavelli is imprisoned on (false) charges of conspiracy to commit treason. He is tortured with the *strappado*. Pope Julius II dies. Giovanni is elected Pope Leo X. Leo grants amnesty to those, including Machiavelli, imprisoned on the conspiracy rap. Giuliano de' Medici, youngest son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, rises to become governor of Florence.
1513–1516(?)	Machiavelli writes *The Prince*.
1513–1517	Machiavelli writes *Discourses*.
1514	Machiavelli begins but does not finish *Second Decennial* (a history in verse of events in Florence from 1505 to 1509).
1517–1520	Machiavelli engages in political discussions with friends in the *Orti Orcellari* (walled gardens) of the Rucellai family. Among the interlocutors are Cosimino Rucellai, Luigi Alamanni, Zanobi Buondelmonti, Jacopo Nardi, Battista della Palla, Jacopo da Diacetto, Jacopo Diaccetino, Filippo de' Netli, and Antonfrancesco degli Albizi.
1517	Machiavelli finishes *The Art of War* and *The Golden Ass*.
1519	Machiavelli writes *La Mandragola*. He also presents Cardinal Giulio de' Medici a proposal for a new Florentine constitution.
1520	Machiavelli completes *The Life of Castruccio Castracani*.
1521	Florence appoints Machiavelli as legate to a meeting of friars at Capri. Pope Leo X dies. A Florentine publisher, Giunta, issues *Arte della guerra* (The Art of War), the only one of Machiavelli's books that was published during his life.
1522	Adriaan Boeyens, a Dutch prelate, becomes Pope Hadrian VI. Machiavelli's younger brother Totto, a priest, dies.
1523	Pope Hadrian VI dies. Cardinal Giulio de' Medici becomes Pope Clement VII.

1525	After five years of labor, Machiavelli presents *Florentine Histories* to Pope Clement VII. The work is well received; it concludes at the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent in 1492; and the pope subsidizes the work's continuation. The pope asks Machiavelli to serve as his representative to Romagna and advise Francesco Guicciardini on amassing papal troops there. Machiavelli has a torrid affair with the singer Barbera Raffacanti Salutati and writes *Clizia*.
1526–1527	The pope and the Florentine government consult Machiavelli on a host of matters focused on their military forces. Machiavelli evaluates and reports on these issues; inspects the fortifications of Florence; and is appointed as a member of the Five Administrations of the [Florentine] Walls.
1527	The Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, sacks Rome. For more than a week, Charles's cutthroats murder, rape, loot, ransack, and kidnap. Pope Clement VII retreats to safety. As a direct result of the sack of Rome, the Medici are, once again, expelled from Florence. Machiavelli is convinced that the revitalized republic that emerges would thirst for his services. But Machiavelli is now associated with the Medici, whose benefits he had cadged. No job offer is forthcoming. Machiavelli dies.
1527	Machiavelli is buried in Santa Croce, a Franciscan church in Florence. The epitaph on his tombstone reads, "*Tanto nomini nullum par elogium*" ("To such a name no eulogy is equal").
1559	By this date, the Roman Catholic Church has placed Machiavelli's books, all allegedly contaminated by the evil ostensibly celebrated in *The Prince*, on its Index of Prohibited Books.

Appendix D

Chronology of Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882)

1807	Garibaldi is born in Nizza (Nice) to a family of coastal traders.
1815	Shortly before Napoleon Bonaparte's defeat at Waterloo, the Congress of Vienna realigns the contours of Europe. Among other apportionments, Austria maintains control of northeastern Italy, including Lombardy-Venetia and Ragusa; Austrian Habsburg princes return to control Tuscany and Modena; the Kingdom of Naples is joined by Sicily and the Bourbon Ferdinand IV becomes Ferdinand I (1751–1825) of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies; the pope remains the temporal ruler of the Papal States; the King of Sardinia is restored in Piedmont, Nice, and Savoy and ceded control of Genoa; Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalia are bestowed on Marie Louise (1791–1847), Napoleon's Austrian-born wife; Lucca is carved out for the Bourbons of Parma, who gain reversionary rights to Parma at the death of Marie Louise. All this occurs without any Italian signatories to the Congress's final act.
1815–1871	The Italian *Risorgimento* ("resurgence" or "revival") was an almost six-decade series of military, political, and social events that eventually consolidates the different regions of the Italian peninsula into a unified Kingdom of Italy. The process is triggered by the final act of the Congress of Vienna and is complete when Italian government forces capture the Papal States and Rome emerges as the capital of the Kingdom of Italy.
1824	Garibaldi sails to Odessa.
1831	Ciro Menotti, a tradesman and revolutionary of Modena, naïvely solicits the Duke of Modena as the leader of a revolutionary Italian unification movement. The unscrupulous duke strings Menotti along for a while, but then turns him in to the Austrian authorities, who hang him. In 1840, Garibaldi names his first son Menotti.
1832	Garibaldi is certified as a merchant marine captain.
1833	While at port in Taganrog, Russia, Garibaldi meets Giovanni Battista Cuneo (1809–1875), a member of Giuseppe Mazzini's (1805–1872) *La Giovone Italia*, a revolutionary group devoted to Italian unification under republican government. Garibaldi joins the group and swears an oath to free Italy from foreign dominance and to unify it. Later that year, Garibaldi meets Mazzini in Geneva. Earlier this year, Garibaldi also meets Emile Barrault (1799–1869), a leader of the Saint-Simonians, who instructs him on numerous socialist doctrines: equal distribution of wealth; common ownership of material goods; equality of sexes; faith in advancing technology as a means of improving social conditions; liberation of women from marriage; free love; the need to overthrow oppression wherever it resides; and cosmopolitanism.
1834	He participates in an unsuccessful Mazzinian insurrection at Piedmont. A Genoese court convicts Garibaldi in absentia of treason and sentences him to death. He flees to Marseille and then Brazil via Tunisia.
1835	Garibaldi volunteers as a naval captain for Republic of Rio Grande do Sul, which was trying to secede from Brazil. The adventure ultimately fails. During the conflict, Garibaldi meets Ana Ribeiro da Silva ("Anita").

1836 He works as a merchant sailor. As an exile representing Young Europe, Garibaldi recruits volunteers to return to Italy and fight for unification. Rebels proclaim a republic in Rio Grande do Sul that lasts until 1845.

1837 Fighting for the Republic of Rio Grande do Sul, Garibaldi is captured in the port town of Gualeguay, Argentina, and tortured by the local governor, Major Leonardo Millan.

1839 Anita joins him on his ship and later fights alongside him at the battles of Imbituba and Laguna.

1841 Annoyed by conflict among his South American commanders, Garibaldi and Anita move to Montevideo, Uruguay. He works as a shipbroker and teacher of mathematics and history.

1842 Garibaldi marries Anita. They eventually produce four children. She aids his understanding of South American gaucho culture. He assumes command of the Uruguayan fleet and raises an Italian Legion, the Redshirts, to fight against Argentinian dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas. Garibaldi displays his sartorial emblems—red shirt and poncho—that would distinguish him throughout his life.

1842–1848 Garibaldi's troops defend Montevideo.

1844 He is initiated into a lodge of freemasonry in Montevideo. He sees freemasonry as a network for progressive politics and global union. He is not drawn to the rituals or other pretensions of freemasonry.

1845 The Italian Legion, brandishing a black flag with a volcano at its core, occupies Colonia del Sacramento and Isla Martin Garcia.

1846 Garibaldi and his forces prevail at the Battle of Cerro, then, vastly outnumbered, win the Battle of San Antonio del Santo. He is promoted to the rank of general by the Uruguayan government. Tales and myths of Garibaldi's heroism reach receptive ears in Europe. His experiences in South America teach him the efficacy of guerrilla warfare. Giovanni Maria Mastai Ferretti is elected Pope Pius IX.

1847 Garibaldi offers his services to Pope Pius IX, who gives early indications that he will liberalize the Church.

1848 The appreciative citizens of Montevideo present an inscribed sword ("L' Italia" and "L' Unione") to Garibaldi. An insurrection at Milan against the Austrians takes place. Garibaldi returns to Italy with sixty members of his Italian Legion. Although an ardent anti-cleric throughout his life, Garibaldi is hopeful that the election of Pope Pius IX in 1846 will facilitate Italian unification. Word also reaches him about revolutionary activity in Palermo. Garibaldi offers his services to King Charles Albert (1798–1849) of Piedmont-Sardinia, but the monarch declines, perhaps based on Garibaldi's Genoese conviction in 1834.

1848 Garibaldi and his men travel to Lombardy and assist the provincial government of Milan in their rebellion against Austria. They initially defeat the much larger Austrian army in Luino and Morazzone but are forced later to retreat to Switzerland. Pope Pius IX flees to Gaeta in the Kingdom of Naples.

1848–1849 The First Italian War of Independence.

1849 The Austrian Army defeats King Charles Albert at the Battle of Novara. Under Garibaldi's command, republican forces initially defeat the numerically superior French Army at Velletri outside of Rome. There Archille Cantoni saves his life. However, French reinforcements soon arrive and initiate a siege of Rome. Garibaldi defends Rome valiantly and makes his "*Ovunque noi saremo, sarà Roma*" ("Wherever we go, there will be Rome") speech in the Roman assembly. He withdraws from Rome and continues to fight while based in surrounding mountains. Within a few weeks a truce is negotiated, and Garibaldi withdraws from Rome with four thousand troops. The interventions of Austria and France restore the pope's temporal authority.

1849 Garibaldi and his troops arrive at San Marino. They have difficulty finding asylum anywhere in Europe. He reaches Tangier in Morocco, residing with Francesco Carpanetto. However, Anita, pregnant, dies at Comacchio in Romagna on the journey. Most of his men leave him; only around two hundred fifty remain. His perseverance and resolve earn him the sobriquet, "The Hero of Two Worlds."

1850 Garibaldi tries to go back to sea and earn a living as a trader and wayfarer. He travels to New York to purchase a ship, but he lacks sufficient funds. He resides with Antonio Meucci (1808–1889) in Staten Island where he helps Meucci as a candlemaker. Garibaldi delves more deeply into democratic and socialist political theory and action. Cuneo publishes a biography of Garibaldi.

1851 Garibaldi leaves New York with Carpanetto. They first head to Nicaragua and later arrive at Lima, Peru, where Garibaldi becomes a commander of a trading ship. He travels to various ports in the world, including those in Panama, Peru, Tasmania, and the Far East.

1852 Count Camillo Paolo Giulio Benso Cavour (1810–1861) is named Prime Minister in Piedmont.

1853 Garibaldi purchases a ship along with another Italian merchant and sets sail for England. Mazzinian-inspired uprising in Milan.

1854 After a stay in England, where he is warmly received, he is presented with an imprinted sword by workers in Tyneside. Garibaldi sails for Genoa. Using money received as an inheritance from his brother's death, he purchases land in the island of Capera, just off the coast of Sardinia, and begins farming.

1856 Garibaldi visits Cavour in Turin. Attempts unsuccessfully to obtain release of political prisoners incarcerated by Bourbon king of Naples.

1858 Garibaldi meets Cavour again in Turin. Cavour convinces him that Italian unification can occur only under the King of Piedmont-Sardinia and not under Mazzinian republican ideals. Cavour offers Garibaldi the rank of major general in the Piedmontese army.

1859–1861 The Second Italian War of Independence.

1859 Pursuant to Cavour's counsel, Garibaldi forms a volunteer force, *Cacciatori delle Alpi* ("Hunters of the Alps"). Garibaldi captures Varese and San Fermo (Como) and earns a decisive victory over the Austrians in the Austro-Sardinian War. The Villafranca armistice ends the conflict. Piedmont acquires Lombardy. Garibaldi's autobiography is published in New York.

1860 The Treaty of Turin, among other things, cedes Nizza (Nice) and Savoy to Emperor Louis Napoleon (1808–1873) of France as exchange for his military assistance against Austria. Cavour had made this and other arrangements with Napoleon prior to the Austro-Sardinian War and without informing Garibaldi, who was livid and would never fully trust Cavour again. Garibaldi appears at the Piedmontese parliament to protest the ceding of Nice and Savoy. Piedmont merges with Tuscany, Modena, Parma, and surrounding cities to form the United Provinces of Central Italy. Garibaldi marries eighteen-year-old Giuseppina Raimondi. However, he learns directly after the ceremony that she is pregnant with another man's child and leaves her.

1860 Without governmental endorsement, Garibaldi gathers a thousand volunteers (*i Mille*), and with these "Redshirts" lands in Marsala. They soon thump a much larger French army at Calatafimi, boldly employing an uphill bayonet charge. He proclaims himself dictator of Sicily in the name of Vittorio Emmanuele II (1820–1878), the King of Sardinia-Piedmont. He wins Palermo, then earns a stirring victory at Milazzo. Sicily is under his rule. He crosses the Straits of Messina and enters Naples to a hero's welcome. Along with the Piedmont Army, Garibaldi, now commanding almost 30,000 men, helps crush Bourbon troops at the Volturno river, north of Naples.

1860 Although yearning to continue to Rome to liberate the city from papal temporal control and French protection, Garibaldi is prevented from undertaking the venture by King Vittorio Emmanuele II at Castelfidardo. Garibaldi cedes his conquered territories to the King and retires to Caprera. Alexandre Dumas publishes Garibaldi's memoirs in Brussels.

1861 Vittorio Emmanuele II is named King of Italy. Cavour dies.

1861 Civil War breaks out in the United States. Garibaldi offers his services to President Lincoln. Lincoln offers a major general's commission. Garibaldi conditions his acceptance on (1) an abolishment of slavery and (b) appointment as commander in chief of Union forces. These conditions are not and could not be met.

1862 Energized by the slogan "*Roma o Morte*" ("Rome or Death"), Garibaldi raises a volunteer army of three thousand to liberate Rome. However, King Vittorio Emmanuele II again resists the enterprise and his army wounds and captures Garibaldi at Aspromonte. Under orders from Garibaldi not to return fire, his troops are fired upon. Garibaldi is released after his wounds are treated and healed.

1863 Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation. Garibaldi writes him with congratulations and dubs him "The Great Emancipator." Garibaldi resigns from parliament. The Italian capital is moved from Turin to Florence.

1864 Garibaldi enjoys a rousing reception in England.

1866–1870 The Third Italian War of Independence and the Seizure of Rome.

1866 At the outbreak of the Austro-Prussian War, Italy allies itself with Prussia. Garibaldi is wounded again at Suello. Garibaldi raises an army of forty thousand volunteers and battles the Austrians at Bezzecca. Some analysts conclude this was the only Italian victory in the war, while most view it as a heroic but inconclusive contest. Venetia is ceded to Italy. Garibaldi learns that Austria and Italy have reached an armistice. He responds, "*Obbedisco*" ("I obey") and withdraws.

1867 Garibaldi again marches to Rome. French and papal forces defeat Garibaldi at the Battle of Mentana. The Italian government imprisons him briefly. Later in the year, at the League of Peace and Freedom in Geneva, Garibaldi advocates for the abolishment of the papacy.

1870 Garibaldi aids the French Republic against Prussia. After the French garrison is recalled from Rome, the Italian army captures the Papal States and annexes them to Italy. Garibaldi is later elected a member of the French National Assembly.

1871 He supports the Paris Commune and the International Workingmen's Association. Garibaldi proposes a massive alliance of leftist political forces. He organizes a Congress of Unity that advocates for universal suffrage, progressive method of taxation, political reform, mandatory public education, and the abolition of the death penalty. Rome becomes the capital city of Italy.

1872 Mazzini dies in Pisa. Garibaldi's memoirs are published in Italy.

1874 Garibaldi, running as a radical candidate, is elected to the Italian parliament.

1875 Garibaldi arrives in Rome with a plan to divert the Tiber river to prevent floods and the transmission of infectious diseases. He attends parliament and submits his plan. His project is eventually rejected.

1878 Death of King Vittorio Emmanuele II and succession of King Umberto I.

1879	Garibaldi founds the League of Democracy, whose platform includes universal suffrage, emancipation of women, abolition of ecclesiastical property, creation of a standing army, and extensive land reclamation and other public works projects.
1880	After his marriage to Giuseppina Raimondi is annulled, Garibaldi marries Francesca Armosino (1846–1923), his longtime consort. They have three children, all of whom were born prior to their marriage.
1882	After an attack of acute bronchitis, Garibaldi dies at Caprera. He had for years suffered from arthritis and rheumatism. Biographies written by Giuseppe Guerzoni and by Jessie White Mario are published. Twentieth-century British historian Alan J. P. Taylor (1906–1990) concludes that "Garibaldi is the only wholly admirable figure in modern history."

Glossary

Cursus Honorum *and Roman Government*

The *cursus honorum* is the course of honors or the political ladder that a successful Roman politician scaled as he ascended to political power.

Military Tribune: As a precondition of beginning the climb up the *cursus honorum*, aspiring Roman aristocrats served at least eight years in the military. The most ambitious nobles sought service under the greatest commanders of the day. Each legion had six military tribunes who served as commissioned officers. The Tribal Assembly elected twenty-four every year. Beyond that number, army commanders could appoint more.

Quaestor: Fundamentally financial officers who served either the state treasury or with commanders in the field, quaestors held the most junior rank that permitted membership in the senate. Quaestors would assist the consuls in Rome and the governors in the provinces. Twenty in number by Cicero's time, two quaestors stayed in Rome to control the state treasury, while the others were assigned to the provinces to aid provincial governors.

Tribune: An office of the Roman plebeians, tribuneships did not confer senate membership, nor were they, strictly speaking, within the *cursus honorum*. Patricians could not hold this office. Tribunes were elected not by the entire Roman people, but by plebeians constituting the *Concilium Plebis* (plebeian council). Tribunes could propose and veto legislation, and, under extraordinary circumstances, arrest other state officials. The powers of tribunes extended only to the city of Rome and even within the city practical considera-

tions limited their authority: at the expiration of their one-year term of office, uppity tribunes could face stern retribution from vindictive senators.

Aedile: Officials charged with caring for the infrastructure of Rome—its public buildings, roads, bridges, aqueducts, sanitation, and the like—and with staging Rome's public games. Logistical and managerial skills were crucial for this position, which also oversaw trade, markets, and weights and measures. Aediles were four in number and elected annually. The two curule aediles (patrician and plebeian in alternate years) were elected by the Tribal Assembly, while the Plebeian Council elected the two plebeian aediles.

Praetor: These versatile officials could command a province, lead an army, or judge criminal cases. The *praetor peregrines* was charged with the care of foreigners in Rome, including judging legal cases. The *praetor urbanus* was charged with judging civil suits between Roman citizens. If both consuls were absent, the *praetor urbanus* served as temporary head of state. At the expiration of a praetorship, the office holder would typically serve at least one more year as a *proprietor*, a commander of an army or governor of a less significant province.

Consul: Consuls were the chief magistrates of the Roman republic. Two consuls served annually. They were legislators and generals with supreme power. One consul could veto the actions of the other consul. Consuls originally commanded Rome's major armies, but the office evolved into mainly managing civil duties within Rome. Consuls presided over the senate and the assemblies and held wide supervisory powers over other magistrates. Religious functions, though, were controlled by *pontifex maximus* and *rex sacrorum*. Many consuls, upon the expiration of their term of office, commanded provinces as *proconsuls*.

Censors: The final office of a political career typically awarded only to the most honored politicians. Every five years, two censors were elected for an eighteen-month term. Their responsibilities were extensive: they supervised the allocation of public contracts; maintained the roll of voters; counted the number of Roman citizens; maintained the roll of senators; and could axe a senator from membership on moral or economic grounds.

Dictator: In times of military or domestic emergencies, a dictator could be appointed for a term of six months. Constitutional protections would evaporate during this period; the dictator held absolute power. Dictators were often assisted by a *Magister Equitum* ("Master of the Horse"). When the six-month term expired, constitutional government would return. This occasional, short-term office was not an official step on the *cursus honorum*.

Pontifex Maximus: The *pontifex maximus* was the high priest who filled the most important Roman religious position. The office was gradually politicized as the republic developed and was incorporated as an imperial office by Augustus. Although not an official step on the *cursus honorum*, the *pontifex maximus* discharged ritualistic functions and administered *jus divinum* (divine law).

THE SENATE AND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES

Senate: Based on tradition, prestige, and custom, the Roman senate held massive legislative authority. The senate passed decrees that were officially only advisory, but in practice the magistrates almost always accepted them. The major focus of the senate was foreign and military policy, but it also supervised civil administration in Rome. The Constitution of Rome was almost entirely unwritten, unsystematic, and derived mainly from precedent. Accordingly, the personal prestige and social standing of aristocratic senators was critical. Because the senate contained all Romans with political and administrative experience, magistrates nearly always accepted its advice, and its resolutions in practice had the force of law. Only those holding the office of quaestor or a more senior magistrate were typically appointed by the Censor. Once appointed, senators retained membership for life, unless removed by a subsequent Censor on moral or economic grounds.

Tribal Assembly: A consul presided over the *Comitia Tributa*, which was composed of thirty-five tribes. The tribes were geographic subdivisions. Representatives, by majority vote, would elect quaestors, curule aediles, and military tribunes. The Tribal Assembly rarely passed legislation, at least up until the time Julius Caesar took control. The Tribal Assembly could meet only when summoned to do so by a magistrate or tribune. It could vote only on measures placed before it by the presiding consul.

Plebeian Council: The *Concilium Plebis* was organized based on geographical tribes. It elected its own officers, tribunes, and plebeian aediles. This council served as a legislative body, especially after Caesar assumed control of Rome.

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About the Author

Raymond Angelo Belliotti is SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor of Philosophy Emeritus. He received his undergraduate degree from Union College in 1970, after which he was conscripted into the US Army, where he served three years in military intelligence units during the Vietnam War. Upon his discharge, he enrolled at the University of Miami, where he earned his master of arts degree in 1976 and his doctorate in 1977. After teaching at Florida International University and Virginia Commonwealth University, he entered Harvard University as a law student and teaching fellow. After receiving a juris doctorate from Harvard Law School, he practiced law in New York City with the firm of Barrett Smith Schapiro Simon & Armstrong. In 1984, he joined the faculty of the State University of New York. He retired from SUNY in 2018.

Belliotti is the author of twenty-two other books: *Justifying Law* (1992); *Good Sex* (1993); *Seeking Identity* (1995); *Stalking Nietzsche* (1998); *What is the Meaning of Human Life?* (2001); *Happiness is Overrated* (2004); *The Philosophy of Baseball* (2006); *Watching Baseball Seeing Philosophy* (2008); *Niccolò Machiavelli* (2008); *Roman Philosophy and the Good Life* (2009); *Dante's Deadly Sins: Moral Philosophy in Hell* (2011); *Posthumous Harm: Why the Dead are Still Vulnerable* (2011); *Shakespeare and Philosophy* (2012); *Jesus or Nietzsche: How Should We Live Our Lives*? (2013); *Jesus the Radical: The Parables and Modern Morality* (2014); *Why Philosophy Matters: 20 Lessons on Living Large* (2015); *Machiavelli's Secret: The Soul of the Statesman* (2015); *Power: Oppression, Subservience, and Resistance* (2016); *Dostoevsky's Legal and Moral Philosophy: The Trial of Dmitri Karamazov* (2016); *Nietzsche's Will to Power* (2017); *Is Human Life Absurd*? (2019); and *Dante's Inferno* (2020). *Good Sex* and *Power* were both later translated into Korean and published in Asia.

He has also published eighty articles and twenty-five reviews in the areas of ethics, jurisprudence, sexual morality, medicine, politics, education, feminism, sports, Marxism, and legal ethics. These essays have appeared in scholarly journals based in Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Italy, Mexico, South Africa, Sweden, and the United States. Belliotti has also made numerous presentations at philosophical conferences, including the Eighteenth World Congress of Philosophy in England, and has been honored as a featured lecturer on the *Queen Elizabeth 2* ocean liner.

While at SUNY, Belliotti served extensively on campus committees, including as the chairperson of the Department of Philosophy, as the chairperson of the University Senate, and as director of General Education. Belliotti also served as Vice President for Academics for the local United University Professions. For six years he was faculty advisor to two undergraduate student clubs: the Philosophical Society and *Il Circolo Italiano*. Belliotti has been the recipient of the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, the William T. Hagan Young Scholar/Artist Award, the Kasling Lecture Award for Excellence in Research and Scholarship, and the SUNY Foundation Research & Scholarship Recognition Award. He was also a member of the New York State Speakers in the Humanities Program from 2006 to 2014.