



# **DISCOURSES ON LIVY**

**NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI**

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# DISCOURSES ON LIVY

BY  
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ON THE FIRST TEN BOOKS OF TITUS LIVIUS

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Discourses on Livy By Niccolo Machiavelli

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## NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI TO ZANOBI BUONDELMONTI AND TO COSIMO RUCELLAI

GREETINGS.

I send you a present which if it is not equal to the obligations that I have toward you, it is one which without doubt the best that Niccolo Machiavelli has been able to offer you. Because in it I have expressed what I know and what I have learned through a long experience and a continuing study of the things of the world. And neither you nor others being able to desire more of me, I have not offered you more. You may well complain of the poverty of my endeavor since these narrations of mine are poor, and of the fallacy of [my] judgement when I deceive myself in many parts of my discussion. Which being so, I do not know which of us should be less obligated to the other, either I to you who have forced me to write that which by myself I would not have written, or you to me that having written I have not satisfied you. Accept this, therefore, in that manner that all things are taken from friends, where always the intention of the sender is more than the quality of the thing that is sent. And believe me I obtain satisfaction from this when I think that even if I should have been deceived on many occasions, I know I have not erred on this one in having selected you, to whom above all other of my friends I address [dedicate] these Discourses; as much because in doing this it appears to me I have shown some gratitude for the benefits I have received, as well because it appears to me I have departed from the common usage of those writers, who usually [always] address [dedicate] their works to some Prince, and blinded by ambition and avarice laud him for all his virtuous qualities when they should be censuring him for all his shameful parts. Whence I, so as not to incur this error, have selected, not those who are Princes, but those who by their infinite good qualities would merit to be such; [and] not to those who could load me with rank, honors, and riches, but to those who although unable to would want to do so. For men, when they want to judge rightly, should esteem those who are generous, not those who are able to be so; and likewise those who govern a

Kingdom, not those who can but have not the knowledge. And writers lauded more Hiero of Syracuse when he was a private citizen than Perseus the Macedonian when he was King, for to Hiero nothing was lacking to be a Prince than the Principality, and the other did not possess any part of the King than the Kingdom. Enjoy this, therefore, whether good or bad, that you yourselves have wanted; and if you should continue in this error that these thoughts of mine are acceptable, I shall not fail to continue the rest of the history according as I promised you in the beginning. Farewell.

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# FIRST BOOK

## PREFACE

When I consider how much honor is attributed to antiquity, and how many times, not to mention many other examples, a fragment of an antique statue has been bought at a great price in order to have it near to one, honoring his house, being able to have it imitated by those who delight in those arts, and how they then strive with all industry to present them in all their work: and when I see, on the other hand, the works of greatest virtue which Historians indicate have been accomplished by ancient Kingdoms and Republics, by Kings, Captains, Citizens, Lawgivers, and others who have worked themselves hard for their country, to be more readily admired than imitated, or rather so much neglected by everyone in every respect that no sign of that ancient virtue remains, I cannot otherwise than wonder and at the same time be sad: and so much more when I see in the civil differences that arise between Citizens, or in the maladies which men incur, they always have recourse to those judgments or to those remedies that have been judged or instituted by the ancients. For the civil laws are nothing else but the decisions given by the ancient Jurisconsults, which reduced to a system presently teach our Jurisconsults to judge and also what is medicine if not the experience had by the ancient Doctors, [and] on which the present Doctors base their judgments? None the less in the instituting of Republics, in maintaining of States, in the governing of Kingdoms, in organizing an army and conducting a war, in [giving] judgment for Subjects, in expanding the Empire, there will not be found either Prince, or Republic, or Captain, or Citizen, who has recourse to the examples of the ancients. Which I am persuaded arises not so much from the weakness to which the present education has brought the world, or from that evil which an ambitious indolence has created in many Christian Provinces and Cities, than from not having a real understanding of history, and from not drawing that [real] sense from its reading, or benefiting from the spirit which is contained in it. whence it arises that they who read take infinitely more pleasure in knowing the variety of incidents that are contained in them, without ever thinking of imitating them, believing the imitation not only difficult, but impossible: as if heaven, the sun, the elements, and men should have changed the order of

their motions and power, from what they were anciently. Wanting, therefore, to draw men from this error, I have judged it necessary to write upon all those books of Titus Livy which, because of the malignity of the times, have been prevented [from coming to us], in order that I might judge by comparing ancient and modern events what is necessary for their better understanding, so that those who may read these Discourses of mine may be able to derive that usefulness for which the understanding of History ought to be sought. And although this enterprise may be difficult, none the less, aided by those who have advised me to begin carrying this load, I believe I can carry it so that there will remain for others a short way to bring it to its destined place [end].

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## CHAPTER 1. WHAT HAVE GENERALLY BEEN THE BEGINNINGS OF SOME CITIES, AND WHAT WAS THAT OF ROME

Those who read what the beginning of the City of Rome was, and of her Law-givers and how it was organized, do not wonder that so much virtue had been maintained for so many centuries in that City, and that afterward there should have been born that Empire to which that Republic was joined. And wanting first to discuss its birth, I say that all Cities are built either by men born in the place where they build it or by foreigners. The first case occurs when it appears to the inhabitants that they do not live securely when dispersed into many and small parties, each unable by himself both because of the location and the small number to resist attacks of those who should assault them, and they are not in time (the enemy coming) in waiting for their defense: or if they should be, they must abandon many of their refuges, and thus they would quickly become the prey of their enemies: so much that in order to avoid these dangers, moved either by themselves or by some one among them of greater authority, they restrict themselves to live together in a place selected by them, more convenient to live in and more easy to defend. Of these, among others, have been Athens and Venice: the first under the authority of Theseus was built by the dispersed inhabitants for like reasons: the other built by many people [who] had come to certain small islands situated at the head of the Adriatic Sea, in order to escape those wars which every day were arising in Italy because of the coming of new barbarians after the decline of that Roman Empire, began among themselves, without any particular Prince who should organize them, to live under those laws which appeared to them best suited in maintaining it [their new state]. In this they succeeded happily because of the long peace which the site gave to them [for] that sea not having issue, where those people who were afflicting Italy, not having ships with which they could invest them; so that from a small beginning they were enabled to come to that greatness which they now have.

The second case, when a city is built by foreign forces, is caused by free men and by men who depend on others, such as the Colonies sent either by a Republic or by a Prince to relieve their towns of [excessive] inhabitants or

for the defense of that country which they have newly acquired [and] want to maintain securely and without expense; [thy Roman people built many cities, throughout all their Empire] or they are built by a Prince, not to live there but for his own glory, as was the City of Alexandria built by Alexander. And because these cities at their origin do not have their freedom, it rarely happens that they make great progress and are able to be numbered among the chief Kingdoms. Such was the building of Florence, for [it was built either by the soldiers of Sulla, or perhaps by the inhabitants of the Mountains of Fiesole, who trusting in that long peace which prevailed in the world under Octavian were led to live in the plain along the Arno] it was built under the Roman Empire, and could not in its beginning have any other growth that those which were conceded to her through the courtesy of the Prince.

The builders of Cities are free when any people either under a Prince or by themselves are constrained either by pestilence or by famine or by war to abandon their native country, and seek new homes: These either inhabit the cities that they find in the countries they acquire, as Moses did, or they build new ones, as Eneas did. This is a case where the virtu and fortune of the builder of the edifice is recognized, which is of greater or less wonder according as that man who was the beginner was of greater or less virtu. The virtu of whom is recognized in two ways: the first is in the selection of the site, the other in the establishment of the laws. And because men work either from necessity or from choice: and because it is seen here that virtu is greater where choice has less authority [results from necessity], it is [something] to be considered whether it would be better for the building of a city to select sterile places, so that men constrained to be industrious and less occupied with idleness, should live more united, where, because of the poverty of the site, they should have less cause for discord, as happened at Ragusa and in many other cities built in similar places; which selection would without doubt be more wise and more useful if men would be content to live of their own [possessions], and not want to seek to command that of others.

However, as men are not able to make themselves secure except through power, it is necessary to avoid this sterility of country and locate it in very

fertile places, where because of the fertility of the site, it can grow, can defend itself from whoever should assault it, and suppress whoever should oppose its aggrandizement. And as to that idleness which the site should encourage, it ought to be arranged that in that necessity the laws should constrain them [to work] where the site does not constrain them [does not do so], and to imitate those who have been wise and have lived in most amenable and most fertile countries, which are apt to making men idle and unable to exercise any virtue: that to obviate those which the amenity of the country may cause through idleness, they imposed the necessity of exercise on those who were to be soldiers: of a kind that, because of such orders, they became better soldiers than [men] in those countries where nature has been harsh and sterile: among which was the Kingdom of Egypt, which notwithstanding that the country was most amenable, that necessity ordained by the laws was so great, that most excellent men resulted therefrom: and if their names had not been extinguished by antiquity, it would be seen that they would have merited more praise than Alexander the Great, and many others of whom memory is still fresh. And whoever had considered the Kingdom of Soldan and the order of the Mamelukes, and of their military [organization] before it was destroyed by Selim the Grand Turk, would have seen there how much the soldiers exercised, and in fact would have known how much they feared that idleness to which the benignity of the country could lead them if they had not obviated it by the strongest laws. I say therefore that the selection of a fertile location in establishing [a city] is more prudent when [the results] of that fertility can be restricted within given limits by laws.

Alexander the Great, wishing to build a city for his glory, Dinocrates, the Architect came to him and showed him how he could do so upon the mountain Athos, which place in addition to being strong, could be arranged in a way that the City would be given human form, which would be a marvelous and rare thing and worthy of his greatness: and Alexander asking him on what the inhabitants would live, he replied that he had not thought of it: at which he laughed, and leaving that mountain as it was, he built Alexandria, where the inhabitants would stay willingly because of the richness of the country and the convenience to the sea and of the Nile.

Whoever should examine, therefore, the building of Rome if he should take Eneas for its first ancestor, will know that that City was built by foreigners: [but] if Romulus, it would have been built by men native to the place, and in any case it would be seen to have been free from the beginning without depending on anyone: it will also be seen [as it will be said below] to what necessity the laws made by Romulus, Numa, and the others had constrained them; so much so that the fertility of the site, the convenience of the sea, the frequent victories, the greatness of the Empire, could not corrupt her for many centuries, and they maintained her full of so much virtu than any other republic has ever been adorned. And because the things achieved by them and that are made notable by Titus Livius, have taken place either through public Councils or private [individuals] either inside or outside the City, I shall begin to discourse upon those things which occurred inside; and as for the public Council, which is worthy of greater annotation, I shall judge, adding all that is dependent on them; with which discourses this fast book, or rather this fast part will be ended.

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## CHAPTER 2. OF THE KINDS OF REPUBLICS THERE ARE, AND OF WHICH WAS THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

I want to place aside the discussion of those cities that had their beginning subject to others, and I will talk of those which have had their beginning far removed from any external servitude, but which [were] initially governed themselves through their own will, either as Republics or as Principalities; which have had [as diverse origins] diverse laws and institutions. For to some, at the beginning or very soon after, their laws were given to them by one [man] and all at one time, as those which were given to the Spartans by Lycurgus: Some have received them by chance, and at several times, according to events, as Rome did. So that a Republic can be called fortunate which by chance has a man so prudent, who gives her laws so ordered that without having need of correcting them, she can live securely under them. And it is seen that Sparta observed hers [laws] for more than eight hundred years without changing them and without any dangerous disturbance: and on the contrary that City has some degree of unhappiness which [not having fallen to a prudent lawmaker] is compelled to reorganize her laws by herself. And she also is more unhappy which has diverged more from her institutions; and that [Republic] is even further from them whose laws lead her away from perfect and true ends entirely outside of the right path; for to those who are in that condition it is almost impossible that by some incident they be set aright. Those others which do not have a perfect constitution, but had made a good beginning, are capable of becoming better, and can become perfect through the occurrence of events. It is very true, however, that they have never been reformed without danger, for the greater number of men never agree to a new law which contemplates a new order for the City, unless the necessity that needs be accomplished is shown to them: and as this necessity cannot arise without some peril, it is an easy thing for the Republic to be ruined before it can be brought to a more perfect constitution. The Republic of Florence gives a proof of this, which because of the incident of Arezzo in [the year] one thousand five hundred and two <sup>1502</sup> was reorganized, [and] it was disorganized by that of Prato in [the year] one thousand five hundred and twelve <sup>1512</sup>.

Wanting therefore to discourse on what were the institutions of the City of Rome and what events brought her to her perfection, I say, that some who have written of Republics say there are [one of] three States [governments] in them called by them Principality [Monarchy], of the Best [Aristocracy], and Popular [Democracy], and that those men who institute [laws] in a City ought to turn to one of these, according as it seems fit to them. Some others [and wiser according to the opinion of many] believe there are six kinds of Governments, of which those are very bad, and those are good in themselves, but may be so easily corrupted that they also become pernicious. Those that are good are three mentioned above: those that are bad, are three others which derive from those [first three], and each is so similar to them that they easily jump from one to the other, for the Principality easily becomes a tyranny, autocracy easily become State of the Few [oligarchies], and the Popular [Democracy] without difficulty is converted into a licentious one [anarchy]. So much so that an organizer of a Republic institutes one of those three States [governments] in a City, he institutes it for only a short time, because there is no remedy which can prevent them from degenerating into their opposite kind, because of the resemblance that virtue and vice have in this instance.

These variations in government among men are born by chance, for at the beginning of the world the inhabitants were few, [and] lived for a time dispersed and like beasts: later as the generations multiplied they gathered together, and in order to be able better to defend themselves they began to seek among themselves the one who was most robust and of greater courage, and made him their head and obeyed him. From this there arose the knowledge of honest and good things; differentiating them from the pernicious and evil; for seeing one man harm his benefactor there arose hate and compassion between men, censuring the ingrates and honoring those who were grateful, and believing also that these same injuries could be done to them, to avoid like evils they were led to make laws, and institute punishments for those who should contravene them; whence came the cognition of justice. Which thing later caused them to select a Prince, not seeking the most stalwart but he who was more prudent and more just. But afterwards when they began to make the Prince by succession and not by election, the heirs quickly degenerated from their fathers, and leaving off

from works of virtue they believed that Princes should have nothing else to do than surpass others in sumptuousness and lasciviousness and in every other kind of delight. So that the Prince began to be hated, and because of this hate he began to fear, and passing therefore from fear to injury, a tyranny quickly arose. From this there arose the beginnings of the ruin and conspiracies; and these conspiracies against the Prince were not made by weak and timid men, but by those who because of their generosity, greatness of spirit, riches, and nobility above the others, could not endure the dishonest life of that prince.

The multitude therefore following the authority of these powerful ones armed itself against the Prince, and having destroyed him, they obeyed them as their liberators. And these holding the name of chief in hatred, constituted a government by themselves, and in the beginning [having in mind the past tyranny] governed themselves according to the laws instituted by them, preferring every common usefulness to their conveniences, and governed and preserved private and public affairs with the greatest diligence. This administration later was handed down to their children, who not knowing the changeability of fortune [for] never having experienced bad [fortune], and not wanting to remain content with civil equality, they turned to avarice, ambition, violation of women, caused that aristocratic government [of the Best] to become an oligarchic government [of the Few] regardless of all civil rights: so that in a short time the same thing happened to them as it did to the Tyrant, for the multitude disgusted with their government, placed itself under the orders of whoever would in any way plan to attack those Governors, and thus there arose some one who, with the aid of the multitude, destroyed them. And the memory of the Prince and the injuries received from him being yet fresh [and] having destroyed the oligarchic state [of the Few], and not wanting to restore that of the Prince, the [people] turned to the Popular state [Democracy] and they organized that in such a way, that neither the powerful Few nor a Prince should have any authority. And because all States in the beginning receive some reverence, this Popular State maintained itself for a short time, but not for long, especially when that generation that had organized it was extinguished, for they quickly came to that license where neither private men or public men were feared: this was such that every one living in his

own way, a thousand injuries were inflicted every day: so that constrained by necessity either through the suggestion of some good man, or to escape from such license, they once again turn to a Principality; and from this step by step they return to that license both in the manner and for the causes mentioned [previously].

And this is the circle in which all the Republics are governed and will eventually be governed; but rarely do they return to the same [original] governments: for almost no Republic can have so long a life as to be able often to pass through these changes and remain on its feet. But it may well happen that in the troubles besetting a Republic always lacking counsel and strength, it will become subject to a neighboring state which may be better organized than itself: but assuming this does not happen, a Republic would be apt to revolve indefinitely among these governments. I say therefore that all the [previously] mentioned forms are inferior because of the brevity of the existence of those three that are good, and of the malignity of those three that are bad. So that those who make laws prudently having recognized the defects of each, [and] avoiding every one of these forms by itself alone, they selected one [form] that should partake of all, they judging it to be more firm and stable, because when there is in the same City [government] a Principality, an Aristocracy, and a Popular Government [Democracy], one watches the other.<sup>1</sup>

Among those who have merited more praise for having similar constitutions is Lycurgus, who so established his laws in Sparta, that in giving parts to the King, the Aristocracy, and the People, made a state that endured more than eight hundred years, with great praise to himself and tranquillity to that City. The contrary happened to Solon who established the laws in Athens, [and] who by establishing only the Popular [Democratic] state, he gave it such a brief existence that before he died he saw arise the tyranny of Pisistratus: and although after forty years his [the tyrants] heirs were driven out and liberty returned to Athens, for the Popular state was restored according to the ordinances of Solon, it did not last more than a hundred years, yet in order that it be maintained many conventions were made by which the

<sup>1</sup> That is, an Executive, a House of Lords or Senate [originally sitting as a Judiciary], and a Commons or House of Representatives or Legislature each acting to check and balance the other.

insolence of the nobles and the general licentiousness were suppressed, which had not been considered by Solon: none the less because he did not mix it [Popular state] with the power of the Principate and with that of the Aristocracy, Athens lived a very short time as compared to Sparta.

But let us come to Rome, which, notwithstanding that it did not have a Lycurgus who so established it in the beginning that she was not able to exist free for a long time, none the less so many were the incidents that arose in that City because of the disunion that existed between the Plebs and the Senate, so that what the legislator did not do, chance did. For, if Rome did not attain top fortune, it attained the second; if the first institutions were defective, none the less they did not deviate from the straight path which would lead them to perfection, for Romulus and all the other Kings made many and good laws, all conforming to a free existence. But because their objective was to found a Kingdom and not a Republic, when that City became free she lacked many things that were necessary to be established in favor of liberty, which had not been established by those Kings. And although those Kings lost their Empire for the reasons and in the manner discussed, none the less those who drove them out quickly instituted two Consuls who should be in the place of the King, [and] so it happened that while the name [of King] was driven from Rome, the royal power was not; so that the Consuls and the Senate existed in forms mentioned above, that is the Principate and the Aristocracy. There remained only to make a place for Popular government for the reasons to be mentioned below, the people rose against them: so that in order not to lose everything, [the Nobility] was constrained to concede a part of its power to them, and on the other hand the Senate and the Consuls remained with so much authority that they were able to keep their rank in that Republic. And thus was born [the creation] of the Tribunes of the plebs,<sup>2</sup> after which creation the government of that Republic came to be more stable, having a part of all those forms of government. And so favorable was fortune to them that although they passed from a Monarchical government and from an Aristocracy to one of the People [Democracy], by those same degrees and for the same reasons that were discussed above, none the less the Royal

<sup>2</sup> A judiciary

form was never entirely taken away to give authority to the Aristocracy, nor was all the authority of the Aristocrats diminished in order to give it to the People, but it remained shared [between the three] it made the Republic perfect: which perfection resulted from the disunion of the Plebs and the Senate, as we shall discuss at length in the next following chapters.

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### CHAPTER 3. WHAT EVENTS CAUSED THE CREATION OF THE TRIBUNES OF THE PLEBS IN ROME, WHICH MADE THE REPUBLIC MORE PERFECT

As all those have shown who have discussed civil institutions, and as every history is full of examples, it is necessary to whoever arranges to found a Republic and establish laws in it, to presuppose that all men are bad and that they will use their malignity of mind every time they have the opportunity; and if such malignity is hidden for a time, it proceeds from the unknown reason that would not be known because the experience of the contrary had not been seen, but time, which is said to be the father of every truth, will cause it to be discovered. It seemed that in Rome there was a very great harmony between the Plebs and the Senate [the Tarquins having been driven out], and that the nobles had laid aside their haughtiness and had become of a popular spirit, and supportable to everyone even to the lowest. This deception was hidden, nor was the cause seen while the Tarquins lived, whom the nobility feared, and having fear that the maltreated plebs might not side with them [the nobles] they behaved themselves humanely toward them: but as soon as the Tarquins were dead, and that fear left the Nobles, they began to vent upon the plebs that poison which they had kept within their breasts, and in every way they could they offended them: which thing gives testimony to that which was said above that men never act well except through necessity: but where choice abounds and where license may be used, everything is quickly filled with confusion and disorder. It is said therefore that Hunger and Poverty make men industrious, and Laws make them good. And where something by itself works well without law, the law is not necessary: but when that good custom is lacking, the law immediately becomes necessary. Thus the Tarquins being dead through fear of whom the Nobles were kept in restraint, it behooved them [the Nobles] to think of a new order, which would cause the same effect which the Tarquins had caused when they were alive. And therefore after many confusions, tumults, and dangers of troubles, which arose between the Plebs and the Nobility, they came for the security of the Plebs to the creation of the Tribunes, and they were given so much preeminence and so much reputation, that they

then should always be able to be in the middle between the Plebs and the Senate, and obviate the insolence of the Nobles.

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## CHAPTER 4. THAT DISUNION OF THE PLEBS AND THE ROMAN SENATE MADE THAT REPUBLIC FREE AND POWERFUL

I do not want to miss discoursing on these tumults that occurred in Rome from the death of the Tarquins to the creation of the Tribunes; and afterwards I will discourse on some things contrary to the opinions of many who say that Rome was a tumultuous Republic and full of so much confusion, that if good fortune and military virtu had not supplied her defects, she would have been inferior to every other Republic.

I cannot deny that fortune and the military were the causes of the Roman Empire; but it indeed seems to me that this would not happen except when military discipline is good, it happens that where order is good, [and] only rarely there may not be good fortune accompanying. But let us come to the other particulars of that City. I say that those who condemn the tumults between the nobles and the plebs, appear to me to blame those things that were the chief causes for keeping Rome free, and that they paid more attention to the noises and shouts that arose in those tumults than to the good effects they brought forth, and that they did not consider that in every Republic there are two different viewpoints, that of the People and that of the Nobles; and that all the laws that are made in favor of liberty result from their disunion, as may easily be seen to have happened in Rome, for from Tarquin to the Gracchi which was more than three hundred years, the tumults of Rome rarely brought forth exiles, and more rarely blood. Nor is it possible therefore to judge these tumults harmful, nor divisive to a Republic, which in so great a time sent into exile no more than eight or ten of its citizens because of its differences, and put to death only a few, and condemned in money [fined] not very many: nor can a Republic in any way with reason be called disordered where there are so many examples of virtu, for good examples result from good education, good education from good laws, and good laws from those tumults which many inconsiderately condemn; for he who examines well the result of these, will not find that they have brought forth any exile or violence prejudicial to the common good, but laws and institutions in benefit of public liberty. And if anyone should say the means were extraordinary and almost savage, he will see the

People together shouting against the Senate, The Senate against the People, running tumultuously throughout the streets, locking their stores, all the Plebs departing from Rome, all of which [things] alarm only those who read of them; I say, that every City ought to have their own means with which its People can give vent to their ambitions, and especially those Cities which in important matters, want to avail themselves of the People; among which the City of Rome had this method, that when those people wanted to obtain a law, either they did some of the things mentioned before or they would not enroll their names to go to war, so that to placate them it was necessary [for the Senate] in some part to satisfy them: and the desires of a free people rarely are pernicious to liberty, because they arise either from being oppressed or from the suspicion of going to be oppressed. And if these opinions should be false, there is the remedy of haranguing [public assembly], where some upright man springs up who through oratory shows them that they deceive themselves; and the people [as Tullius Cicero says] although they are ignorant, are capable of [appreciating] the truth, and easily give in when the truth is given to them by a trustworthy man.

One ought therefore to be more sparing in blaming the Roman government, and to consider that so many good effects which came from that Republic, were not caused except for the best of reasons: And if the tumults were the cause of creation of Tribunes, they merit the highest praise, for in addition to giving the people a part in administration, they were established for guarding Roman liberty, as will be shown in the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER 5. WHERE THE GUARDING OF LIBERTY IS MORE SECURELY PLACED, EITHER IN THE PEOPLE OR IN THE NOBLES; AND WHICH HAVE THE GREATER REASON TO BECOME TUMULTUOUS EITHER HE WHO WANTS TO ACQUIRE OR HE WHO WANTS TO MAINTAIN

Among the more necessary things instituted by those who have prudently established a Republic, was to establish a guard to liberty, and according as this was well or badly place, that freedom endured a greater or less [period of time]. And because in every Republic there exists the Nobles and the Populace, it may be a matter of doubt in whose hands the guard is better placed. And the Lacedemonians, and in our times the Venetians, placed it in the hands of the Nobles, but that of Rome was placed in the hands of the Plebs. It is necessary therefore to examine which of the Republics had made the better selection. And if we go past the causes and examine every part, and if their results should be examined, the side of the Nobles would be preferred since the liberty of Sparta and Venice had a much longer life than that of Rome: And to come to the reasons, I say [taking up first the part of the Romans] that thing [liberty] which is to be guarded ought to be done by those who have the least desire of usurping it. And without doubt, if the object of the Nobles and of the Ignobles [populace] is considered, it will be seen that the former have a great desire to dominate, and the latter a desire not to be dominated and consequently a greater desire to live free, being less hopeful of usurping it [liberty] than are the Nobles: so that the People placed in charge to guard the liberty of anyone, reasonably will take better care of it; for not being able to take it away themselves, they do not permit others to take it away.

On the other hand, he who defends the Spartan and Venetian arrangement, says that those who placed that guardianship in the hands of the Powerful [Nobles], made two good points: The one, that they satisfy more the ambitions of those who playing a greater part in the Republic, [and] having this club in their hands, have more reason to be content; the other, that they take away a kind of authority from the restless spirit of the People which is the cause of infinite discussions and troubles in a Republic, and apt to bring

the Nobility to some [act of] desperation which in times may result in some bad effects. And they give for an example this selfsame Rome, where the Tribunes of the Plebs having this authority in their hands, [and] the having of one Consul from the Plebs was not enough for them [the People], but that they wanted to have both [the Consuls from the Plebs]. From this they afterward wanted the Censure, the Praetorship, and all the other ranks of the Empire [Government] of the Republic. Nor was this enough for them, but urged on by the same fury they began in time to idolize those men whom they saw adept at beating down the Nobility: whence arose the power of Marius and the ruin of Rome.

And truly whoever should discuss well both of these things could be in doubt as to what kind of men may be more harmful to the Republic, either those who desire to acquire that which they do not have, or those who desire to maintain the honors already acquired. And in the end whoever examines everything skillfully will come to this conclusion: The discussion is either of a Republic which wants to create an Empire, as Rome, or of one which is satisfied to maintain itself. In the first case it is necessary for it to do everything as Rome did; in the second, it can imitate Venice and Sparta, for those reasons why and how as will be described in the succeeding chapter.

But to return to the discussion as to which men are more harmful in a Republic, either those who desire to acquire, or those who fear to lose that which they have acquired, I say that when Marcus Menenius had been made Dictator, and Marcus Fulvius Master of the cavalry, both plebeians, in order to investigate certain conspiracies that had been formed in Capua against Rome, they were also given authority by the people to be able to search out who in Rome from ambition and by extraordinary means should endeavor to attain the Consulate and other houses [offices] of the City. And it appearing to the Nobility that such authority given to the Dictator was directed against them, they spread the word throughout Rome that it was not the Nobles who were seeking the honors for ambition, or by extraordinary means, but the Ignobles [Plebeians] who, trusting neither to their blood [birth] nor in their own virtue, sought to attain those dignities, and they particularly accused the Dictator: And so powerful was this accusation, that Menenius having made a harangue [speech] and complaining of the calumnies spread

against him by the Nobles, he deposed the Dictatorship, and submitted himself to that judgement [of himself] which should be made by the People: And then the cause having been pleaded, he was absolved; at which time there was much discussion as to who was the more ambitious, he who wanted to maintain [his power] or he who wanted to acquire it, since the desires of either the one or the other could be the cause of the greatest tumults. But none the less more frequently they are caused by those who possess [power], for the fear of losing it generates in them the same desires that are in those who want to acquire it, because it does not seem to men to possess securely that which they have, unless they acquire more from others. And, moreover, those who possess much, can make changes with greater power and facility. And what is yet worse, is that their breaking out and ambitious conduct arouses in the breasts of those who do not possess [power] the desire to possess it, either to avenge themselves against them [the former] by despoiling them, or in order to make it possible also for them to partake of those riches and honors which they see are so badly used by the others.

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## CHAPTER 6. WHETHER IT WAS POSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH A GOVERNMENT IN ROME WHICH COULD ELIMINATE THE ENMITY BETWEEN THE POPULACE AND THE SENATE

We have discussed above the effects which were caused by the controversies between the People and the Senate. Now these having continued up to the time of the Gracchi, where they were the cause of the loss of liberty, some might wish that Rome had done the great things that she did without there being that enmity within her. It seems to me therefore a thing worthy of consideration to see whether in Rome there could have been a government [state] established that could have eliminated the aforementioned controversies. And to desire to examine this it is necessary to have recourse to those Republics which have had their liberty for a long time without such enmities and tumults, and to see what [form] of government theirs was, and if it could have been introduced in Rome.

For example, there is Sparta among the ancients, Venice among the modern, [both] having been previously mentioned by me. Sparta created a King with a small Senate which should govern her. Venice did not divide its government by these distinctions, but gave all those who could have a part in the administration [of its government] the name of Gentlemen: In this manner, chance more than prudence gave them [the Venetians] the laws [form of Government], for having taken refuge on those rocks where the City now is, for the reasons mentioned above many of the inhabitants, as they had increased to so great a number, with the desire to live together, so that needing to make laws for themselves, they established a government, [and] came together often in councils to discuss the affairs of the City; when it appeared to them that they had become numerous enough for existing as a commonwealth, they closed the path to all the others who should newly come to live there to take part in their government: And in time finding in that place many inhabitants outside the government, in order to give reputation to those who were governing, they called them Gentlemen, and the others Popolari. This form [of Government] could establish and maintain itself without tumult, because when it was born, whoever then lived in

Venice participated in that government, with which no one could complain: Those who came to live there later, finding the State firm and established did not have cause or opportunity to create a tumult. The cause was not there because nothing had been taken from them. The opportunity was not there because those who ruled kept them in check and did not employ them in affairs where they could pick up authority. In addition to this, those who came to inhabit Venice later were not very many, or of such a great number that these would be a disproportion between those who governed and those who were governed, for the number of Gentlemen were either equal to or greater than the others: so that for these reasons Venice could establish that State and maintain it united.

Sparta, as I have said, being governed by a King and limited Senate could thus maintain itself for a long time because there being few inhabitants in Sparta, and the path having been closed to those who should want to live there, and the laws of Lycurgus having acquired such reputation that their observance removed all the causes for tumults. They were able to live united for a long time, for Lycurgus had established in Sparta more equality of substance and less equality in rank, because equal poverty existed here and the Plebs were lacking ambitious men, as the offices of the City were extended to few Citizens, and were kept distant from the Plebs, nor did the Nobles by not treating them badly ever create in them the desire to want them. This resulted from the Spartan Kings, who, being placed in that Principate and living in the midst of that Nobility, did not have any better means of maintaining their office, than to keep the Plebs defended from every injury: which caused the Plebs neither to fear nor to desire authority, and not having the dominion, nor fear of it, there was eliminated the competition which they might have had with the Nobility, and the cause of tumults, and thus they could live united for a long time. But two things principally caused this union: The one, the inhabitants of Sparta were few, and because of this were able to be governed by a few: The other, that not accepting outsiders in their Republic, they did not have the opportunity either of becoming corrupt or of increasing so much that they should become unsupportable to those few who governed her.

Considering all these things, therefore, it is seen that it was necessary that the legislators of Rome do one of two things in desiring that Rome be as quiet as the above mentioned Republic, either not to employ the Plebs in war like the Venetians, or not to open the door to outsiders like the Spartans, But they did the one and the other, which gave the Plebs strength and increased power and infinite opportunities for tumults. And if the Roman State had come to be more tranquil, it would have resulted that she would have become even more feeble, because there would have been cut off from her the means of being able to attain that greatness which she achieved. So that Rome wanting to remove the causes for tumults, would also take away the causes for expansion. And as in all human affairs, those who examine them will indeed see that it is never possible to avoid one inconvenience but that another one will spring up. If therefore, you want to make a people numerous and armed in order to create a great Empire, you will make it of a kind that you are not able afterward to manage it in your own way: if you keep them either small or disarmed in order to be able to manage them, [and], if you acquire other dominion, you will not be able to hold them, or you will become so mean that you will become prey to whoever assaults you. And therefore, in every one of our decisions, there ought to be considered where the inconveniences are less, and then take up the better proceeding, for there will never be formed anything entirely clear of suspicion. Rome could therefore, like Sparta, have created a Prince for life, and established a limited Senate; but desiring to build a great Empire, she could not, like Sparta, limit the number of her Citizens: which, in creating a King for life and a small number in the Senate, would have been of little benefit in connection with her unity. If anyone therefore should want to establish a new Republic, he should have to consider if he should want it to expand in dominion and power as did Rome, or whether it should remain within narrow limits. In the first case, it is necessary to establish it as Rome, and to give place to tumults and general dissensions as best he can; for without a great number of men, and [those] well armed, no Republic can ever increase, or if it did increase, to maintain itself. In thy second case he may establish her as Sparta and Venice: but because expansion is the poison of such Republics, he ought in every way he can prevent her from making acquisitions, for such acquisitions, based on a weak Republic, are entirely

their ruin, as happened to Sparta and Venice, the first of which having subjected almost all of Greece, showed the weakness of its foundation with the slightest accident; for when there ensued the rebellion of Thebes caused by Pelopidas, the other cities also rebelling, ruined that Republic entirely.

Similarly Venice having occupied a great part of Italy, and the greater part [obtained] not by war but by money and astuteness, when it came to make a test of her strength everything was lost in one engagement. I believe then that to create a Republic which should endure a long time, the better way would be to organize internally like Sparta, or like Venice locate it in a strong place, and of such power that no one should believe he could quickly oppress her: and on the other hand, it should not be so powerful that she should be formidable to her neighbors, and thus she could enjoy its state [independence] for a long time. For there are two reasons why war is made against a Republic: The one, to become lord over her: the other, the fear of being occupied by her. These two means in the above mentioned manner almost entirely removed [the reasons for war], for it is difficult to destroy her, being well organized for her defense, as I presuppose, it will rarely or never happen that one can design to conquer her. If she remains within her limits, and from experience it is seen that there is no ambition in her, it will never happen that someone for fear of her will make war against her: and this would be so much more so if there should be in her constitution or laws [restrictions] that should prohibit her expansion. And without doubt I believe that things could be kept balanced in this way, that there would be the best political existence, and real tranquillity to a City. But all affairs of men being [continually] in motion and never being able to remain stable, it happens that [States] either remain stable or decline: and necessity leads you to do many things which reason will not lead you to do; so that having established a Republic adept at maintaining itself without expanding, and necessity should induce her to expand, her foundations would be taken away and her ruin accomplished more readily. Thus, on the other hand, if Heaven should be so kind that she would never have to make war, the languidness that should arise would make her either effeminate or divided: which two together, or each one by itself, would be cause of her ruin. Not being able, therefore, [as I believe] to balance these things, and to maintain this middle course, it is necessary in organizing a Republic to think of the

more honorable side, and organize her in a way that if necessity should induce her to expand, she may be able to preserve that which she should have acquired. And to return to the first discussion, I believe it is necessary to follow the Roman order and not that of any other Republic [because I do not believe it is possible to find a middle way between one and the other] and to tolerate that enmity that should arise between the People and the Senate, accepting it as an inconvenient necessity in attaining the Roman greatness. Because in addition to the other reasons alleged, where the authority of the Tribunes is shown to be necessary for the guarding of liberty, it is easy to consider the benefit that will come to the Republic from this authority of accusing [judiciary], which among others was committed to the Tribunes, as will be discussed in the following chapter.

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## CHAPTER 7. HOW MUCH THE FACULTY OF ACCUSING [JUDICIARY] IS NECESSARY FOR A REPUBLIC FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF LIBERTY

No more useful and necessary authority can be given to those who are appointed in a City to guard its liberty, as is that of being able to accuse the citizen to the People or to any Magistrate or Council, if he should in any way transgress against the free state. This arrangement makes for two most useful effects for a Republic. The first is, that for fear of being accused, the citizens do not attempt anything against the state, and if they should [make an] attempt they are punished immediately and without regard [to person]. The other is, that it provides a way for giving vent to those moods which in whatever way and against whatever citizens may arise in the City. And when these moods do not provide a means by which they may be vented, they ordinarily have recourse to extra ordinary means that cause the complete ruin of a Republic. And there is nothing which makes a Republic so stable and firm, as organizing it in such a way that changes in the moods which may agitate it have a way prescribed by law for venting themselves. This can be demonstrated by many examples, and especially by that of Coriolanus, which Titus Livius refers to, where he says that the Roman Nobility being irritated against the Plebs, because it seemed to them the Plebs had too much authority concerning the creation of the Tribunes who defended them, and Rome [as happened] experiencing a great scarcity of provisions, and the Senate having sent to Sicily for grain, Coriolanus, enemy of the popular faction, counselled that the time had come [to be able] to castigate the Plebs and take away authority which they had acquired and assumed to the prejudice of the Nobility, by keeping them famished and not distributing the grain: which proposition coming to the ears of the people, caused so great an indignation against Coriolanus, that on coming out of the Senate he would have been killed in a tumultuary way if the Tribunes had not summoned him to appear and defend his cause. From this incident there is to be noted that which was mentioned above, that it is useful and necessary for a Republic with its laws to provide a means of venting that ire which is generally conceived against a citizen, for if these ordinary means do not exist, they will have recourse to extraordinary ones, and without doubt

these produce much worse effects than do the others. For ordinarily when a citizen is oppressed, even if he has received an injustice, little or no disorder ensues in the Republic, because its execution is done by neither private nor foreign forces which are those that ruin public liberty, but is done by public force and arrangement which have their own particular limits, and do not transcend to things that ruin the Republic.

And to corroborate this opinion with examples, among the ancient ones I want this one of Coriolanus to be enough, on which anyone should consider how much evil would have resulted to the Roman Republic if he had been killed in the tumults, for there would have arisen an offense by a private [citizen] against a private [citizen]; which offense generates fear, fear seeks defense, for this defense partisans are procured, from the partisans factions arise in the City, [and] the factions cause their ruin. But the matter being controlled by those who had authority, all those evils which could arise if it were governed by private authority were avoided. We have seen in our time that troubles happened to the Republic of Florence because the multitude was able to give vent to their spirit in an ordinary way against one of her citizens, as befell in the time of Francesco Valori, who was as a Prince in that City [and] who being judged ambitious by many, and a man who wanted by his audacity and animosity to transcend the civil authority, and there being no way in the Republic of being able to resist him except by a faction contrary to his, there resulted that he [Valori] having no fear except from some extraordinary happening, began to enlist supporters who should defend him: On the other hand, those who opposed him not having any regular way or repressing him, thought of extraordinary ways, so that it came to arms. And where [if it were possible to oppose him, Valori, by regular means] his authority would have been extinguished with injury to himself only, but having to extinguish it by extraordinary means, there ensued harm not only to himself, but to many other noble citizens. We could also cite in support of the above mentioned conclusion the incident which ensued in Florence in connection with Piero Soderini, which resulted entirely because there was not in that Republic [means of making] accusations against the ambitions of powerful citizens: for the accusing of a powerful one before eight judges in a Republic is not enough; it is necessary that the judges be many because the few always judge in favor of the few. So that if

such a means had been in existence, they would have accused him [Soderini] of evil while yet alive, and through such means without having the Spanish army [called] to come in, they would have given vent to their feelings; or if he had not done evil they would not have had the audacity to move against him, for fear that they would be accused by him: and thus both sides would have ceased having that desire which was the cause of the trouble.

So that this can be concluded, that whenever it is seen that external forces are called in by a party of men who live in a City, it can be judged to result from its bad organization because there did not exist within that circle of arrangements, a way to be able without extraordinary means to give vent to the malignant moods that arise in men, which can be completely provided by instituting accusations before many judges and giving them reputation [authority]. These things were so well organized in Rome that in so many discussions between the Plebs and the Senate, neither the Senate nor the Plebs nor any particular citizen, ever attempted to avail [himself] of external force, for having the remedy at home it was not necessary to go outside for it. And although the above examples are amply sufficient to prove this, none the less I want to refer to another recital by Titus Livius in his history, which refers to there having been in Chiusi [Clusium], at that time a most noble City of Tuscany, one Lucumones who had violated a sister of Aruntes, and Aruntes not being able to avenge himself because of the power of the violator, went to seek out the French [Gauls] who then ruled in that place which today is called Lombardy, and urged them to come to Chiusi with arms in hand, pointing out to them how they could avenge the injury he had received with advantage to themselves: but if Aruntes could have seen how he could have avenged himself by the provisions of the City, he would not have sought the barbarian forces. But just as these accusations are useful in a Republic, so also are calumnies useless and harmful, as we shall discuss in the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER 8. AS MUCH AS ACCUSATIONS ARE USEFUL TO A REPUBLIC, SO MUCH SO ARE CALUMNIES PERNICIOUS

Notwithstanding that the virtue of Furius Camillus when he was liberating [Rome] from the oppression of the French [Gauls] had caused the Roman citizens to yield him [top honors] without appearing to them to have lost reputation or rank, none the less Manlius Capitolinus was not able to endure that so much honor and glory should be bestowed on him; for it seemed to him he had done as much for the welfare of Rome by having saved the Campidoglio [Capitol], he had merited as much as Camillus, and as for other warlike praises he was not inferior to him. So that filled with envy, he was not able to sow discord among the Fathers [Senators] he turned to the Plebs, sowing various sinister opinions among them. And among other things he said was, that the treasure which had been collected [together] to be given to the French [Gauls], and then was not given to them, had been usurped by private citizens: and if its should be recovered it could be converted to public usefulness, alleviating the plebs from tribute or from some private debt. These words greatly impressed the Plebs, so that Manlius begun to have concourse with them and at his instigation [created] many tumults in the City: This thing displeased the Senate and they deeming it of moment and perilous, created a Dictator who should take cognizance of the case and restrain the rashness of [Manlius]; whereupon the Dictator had him summoned, and they met face to face in public, the Dictator in the midst of the Nobles and Manlius in the midst of the Plebs. Manlius was asked what he had to say concerning who obtained the treasure that he spoke about, for the Senate was as desirous of knowing about it as the Plebs: to which Manlius made no particular reply, but going on in an evasive manner he said, that it was not necessary to tell them that which they already knew, so that the Dictator had him put in prison. And it is to be noted by this text how detestable calumnies are in free Cities and in every other form of government, and that in order to repress them no arrangement made for such a proposition ought to be neglected. Nor can there be a better arrangement to putting an end to these [calumnies] than to open the way for accusations, for accusations are as beneficial to

Republics as calumnies are harmful: and on the other hand there is this difference, that calumnies do not need witnesses nor any other particular confrontation to prove them so that anyone can be calumniated by anyone else, but cannot now be accused, as the accuser has need of positive proof and circumstances that would show the truth of the accusation. Men must make the accusations before the Magistrates, the People, or the Councils: calumnies [are spread] throughout the plaza and lodgings [private dwellings]. These calumnies are practiced more where accusations are used less and where Cities are less constituted to receive them. An establisher of a Republic therefore ought so to organize it that it is possible to accuse every citizen without any fear and without any suspicion: and this being done, and well carried out, he should severely punish the calumniators, who cannot complain if they are punished, they having places open to them to hear the accusations of those who had caluminated them in private. And where this part is not well organized great disorders always follow, for calumnies irritate but do not castigate citizens, and those who have been irritated think of strengthening themselves, easily hating more than fearing the things that are said against them.

This part [as has been said] was well organized in Rome, and has always been poorly organized in our City of Florence. And as in Rome this institution did much good, at Florence this poor order did much evil. And whoever reads the history of this City, will see how many calumnies have been perpetrated in every time against those citizens who occupied themselves in its important affairs. Of one, they said he had robbed money from the Community; of another, that he had not succeeded in an enterprise because of having been corrupted; and of yet another, because of his ambitions had caused such and such inconvenience. Of the things that resulted there sprung up hate on every side, whence it came to divisions, from divisions to Factions [Sects], [and], from Factions to ruin. If in Florence there had been some arrangement for the accusation of citizens and punishment of calumniators, there would not have occurred the infinite troubles that have ensued, for those Citizens who had been either condemned or absolved, could not have harmed the City, and there would have been a much less number accused than there had been calumniated, as it could not have been [as I have said] as easy to accuse as to calumniate any one. And among the

other things that some citizens might employ to achieve greatness have been these calumnies, which employed against powerful citizens who opposed his ambition, did much for them; for by taking up the part of the people, and confirming them the opinion which they had of them [the nobles], he made them his friends.

And although we could refer to many examples, I want to be content with only one. The Florentine army which was besieging Lucca was commanded by Messer Giovanni Guicciardini, their Commissioner. It was due either to his bad management or his bad fortune, that the fall of that City did not ensue. But whatever the case may have been, Messer Giovanni was blamed, alleging he had been corrupted by the Lucchesi: which calumny, being favored by his enemies, brought Messer Giovanni almost to the last desperation. And although, to justify himself because there was no way in that Republic of being able to do so. From which there arose great indignation among the friends of Messer Giovanni, who constituted the greater part of the nobility, and [also] among those who desired to make changes in Florence. This affair, both for this and other similar reasons, grew so, that there resulted the ruin of the Republic.

Manlius Capitolinus was therefore a calumniator and not an accuser; and the Romans showed in this case in point how the calumniators ought to be punished. For they ought to be made to become accusers, and if the accusation proves true either to reward them or not punish them; but if it does not prove true, to punish them as Manlius was punished.

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## CHAPTER 9. HOW IT IS NECESSARY FOR ONE MAN ALONE IN DESIRING TO ORGANIZE A NEW REPUBLIC TO REFORM ITS INSTITUTIONS ENTIRELY OUTSIDE THE ANCIENT ONES

And it may appear perhaps to some that I have gone too far into Roman history, not having yet made any mention of the organizers of this Republic, or of [having regard for] her institutions, her religion, and her military establishment. And therefore, not wanting to keep in suspense the minds of those who want to understand these matters, I say, that many perhaps should judge it a bad example that the founder of a civil society, as Romulus was, should first have killed his brother, then have consented to the death of Titus Tatius, a Sabine, who had been chosen by him to share the Kingdom; because of which it might be judged that the citizens could, from ambition and the desire to rule, with the authority of their Prince, attack those who should be opposed to their authority. Which opinion would be correct, if the object he had in mind in causing that homicide should be considered. But this must be assumed, as a general rule, that it never or rarely occurs that some Republic or Kingdom is well organized from the beginning, or its institutions entirely reformed a new, unless it is arranged by one [individual only]: rather it is necessary that the only one who carries it out should be he who on whose mind such an organization depends. A prudent Organizer of a Republic, therefore, who has in mind to want to promote, not himself, but the common good, and not his own succession but his [common] country, ought to endeavor to have the authority alone: and a wise planner will never reprimand anyone for any extraordinary activity that he should employ either in the establishment of a Kingdom or in constituting a Republic. It is well then, when the deed accuses him, the result should excuse him; and when it is good, as that of Romulus, he will always be excused; for he ought to be reprehended who is violent in order to destroy, and not he who does so for beneficial reasons. He ought, however, to be so prudent and wise that the authority which he has assumed, he will not leave to his heirs [or] any other: for men being more prone to evil than to good, his successor could employ for reasons of ambition that which should be employed for virtuous reasons by him. In

addition to this, even if one is adept at organizing, the thing organized will not endure long if its [administration] remains only on the shoulders of one individual, but it is good when it remains in the care of many, and thus there will be many to sustain it. As the organization of anything cannot be made by many because of the diverse opinions that exist among them, yet having once understood this, they will not agree to forego it. And that Romulus merited to be excused for the death of his brother and that of his companion, and that what he had done he did for the common good and not for his own ambition, is shown by his immediate institution of a Senate with which he should consult, and according to the opinions of which he would make his decision. And whoever considers well the authority which Romulus reserved for himself, will see that he did not reserve anything else other than the command of the army when war was decided upon, and of convening the Senate. This was seen at that time when Rome became free after the driving out of the Tarquins, where there was no other innovation made on the ancient institutions except that in place of an hereditary King there should be two Consuls [elected] each year. Which gives testimony that all the institutions at the origin of that City were more in conformity with a free and civil society than with an absolute and tyrannical one.

Infinite examples could be given in corroboration of the things mentioned above, such as Moses, Lycurgus, Solon, and other founders of Kingdoms and Republics, who were able to formulate laws for the common good [only] by assigning the [necessary] authority to themselves: but I want to omit these as they are already well known. I will refer only to one not so well known, but which should be given consideration by those who desire to be institutors of good laws, [and], this is that of Agis, King of Sparta, who desiring to bring the Spartans back to those limits which the laws of Lycurgus had delimited for them, [and], it seeming to him that by deviating in part from them his City had lost much of that ancient virtue, and consequently her power and dominion, was at once killed by Spartan Ephors as a man who wanted to become a Tyrant. But Cleomenes succeeding him in the Kingdom, there arose in him the same desire from [reading] the records and writings of Agis that he found, in which his thoughts and intentions were seen, [and] he recognized that he could not render this good to his country, unless he should become alone in authority, as it seemed to him he

would not be able because of the ambitions of men to provide the good for the many against the desires of the few: and seizing a convenient opportunity had all the Ephors killed and those who could oppose him: after which he completely restored the laws of Lycurgus. This decision helped to revive Sparta and give to Cleomene that reputation which was [equal] to that of Lycurgus, if it had not been for the power of Macedonia and the weakness of the other Greek Republics. For after this establishment [of the laws] he was soon assaulted by the Macedonians, and finding that by herself [Sparta] was inferior in strength, and not having anyone to whom he could have recourse, he was defeated, and his plans [no matter how just and laudable] remained incompleated. Considering all these things, therefore, I conclude that to establish a Republic it is necessary that one must be alone, and Romulus merits to be excused and not censured for the death of Remus and of Tatius.

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## CHAPTER 10. AS MUCH AS THE FOUNDERS OF REPUBLICS AND KINGDOMS ARE LAUDABLE, SO MUCH ARE THOSE OF A TYRANNY SHAMEFUL

Among all men who have been praised, the most lauded are those who are heads and establishers of Religion. Next after them are those who have founded Republics or Kingdoms. After these are celebrated those who have commanded armies, [and] who have enlarged the [territory] of their Kingdom of those of their country. To these should be added men of letters, and because these are of many fields, they are celebrated according to their degree [of excellence]. To other men, the number of whom is infinite, some degree of praise is given to them as pertain to their art and profession. On the other hand, those men are infamous and destroyers of Religion, dissipators of Kingdoms and Republics, enemies of virtue, of letters, and of every other art which brings usefulness and honor to human generations [mankind], such as are the impious and violent, the ignorant, the idle, the vile and degraded. And no one will ever be so mad or so wise, so wicked or so good, that selecting between these two kinds of men, does not laud what is laudable, and censure what is censurable. None the less, however, nearly all men deceived by a false good or a false glory allow themselves to drift either voluntarily or ignorantly into the ranks of those who merit more censure than praise. And being able to establish either a Kingdom or a Republic with eternal honor to themselves, they turn to Tyranny, nor do they see because of this action how much fame, how much glory, how much honor, security, and tranquil satisfaction of the mind, they lose; and how much infamy, disgrace, censure, danger, and disquiet, they incur. And it is impossible that those who live as private individuals in a Republic, or who by fortune or virtue become Princes, if they read the history and the records of ancient events, would do well living as private citizens in their country to live rather as a Scipio than a Caesar; and those who are Princes, rather as Agesilaus, Timoleon, and Dion, than as Nabis, Phalaris, and Dionysius, because they will see these [latter] to be thoroughly disgraced and those [former] most highly praised. They will also see that Timoleon and the others had no less authority in their country than had Dionysius and Phalaris,

but they will see that they had had greater security for a longer time. Nor is there anyone who deceives himself by the glory of Caesar, he being especially celebrated by writers, for those who praised him were corrupted by his fortune and frightened by the long duration of the Empire which, ruling under his name did not permit that writers should talk of him freely. But whoever wants to know what the writers would have said of him freely, let him observe what they say of Cataline. And so much more is Caesar to be detested, as how much more is he to be censured for that which he did, than he who [just] intends to do evil. He will also see how Brutus was extolled with so many praises; so that not being able to censure him [Caesar] because of his power they extolled his enemy. Let he who has become a Prince in a Republic also consider how much more praise those Emperors merited who, after Rome became an Empire, lived under the laws [and] as good Princes, than those who lived in a contrary manner; and he will also see that it was not necessary for the praetorian soldiers or the multitudes of the legions to defend Titus, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus, and Marcus [Aurelius], because their customs, the good will of the people, and the love of the Senate would defend them. He will also see that the Eastern and Western armies were not sufficient to save Caligula, Nero, Vitellius, and so many other wicked emperors, from those enemies which their bad customs and evil lives had raised up against them.

And if the history of those men should be well considered, it would be very instructive to any Prince in pointing out to him the way to glory or censure, to security or fear. For of the twenty-six who were Emperors from Caesar to Maximinius, sixteen were murdered. Ten died in a natural way; and if among those who were murdered there may have been some good men, such as Galba and Pertinax, they were killed by that corruption that his predecessors had left among the soldiers. And if among those who died in a natural way there were some wicked, such as Severus, it resulted from their very great good fortune and virtue, which two things are found together in few men. He will also learn from this lesson of history how a good Kingdom can be organized, for all, except Titus, were bad: [and] those who succeeded by adoption were all good, such as were those five from Nero to Marcus [Aurelius]. And when the Empire became hereditary, it came to ruin. Let a Prince therefore place himself in the times of Nero and Marcus, and let him

compare them with those which preceded and followed [that period] and afterward let him select in which [of the two] he would want to be born and in which he would want to reign. For in those times governed by good [Emperors], he will see a Prince secure in thy midst of secure citizens, he will see the world full of peace and justice, he will see the Senate with its authority, the Magistrates with their honor, rich citizens enjoying their wealth, nobility and virtue exalted, he will see every quiet and good; and on the other hand [he will see] every rancor, every license, corruption, and ambition extinct; he will see that golden era where everyone can hold and defend whatever opinion he wishes: In the end, he will see the triumph of the world, the Prince full of reverence and glory, the people full of love and security. Then if he will consider the sorrowful times of the other Emperors, he will see the atrocities from war, discords from seditions, cruelty in peace and war, so many Princes slain by the sword, so many civil wars, so many foreign wars, Italy afflicted and full of new misfortunes, her Cities ruined and sacked: He will see Rome burned, the Capitol of its citizens destroyed, the ancient temples desolate, ceremonies corrupted, the City full of adulterers: he will see the sea full of exiles, the shores full of blood. He will see innumerable cruelties take place in Rome, and nobility, riches, honors, and above all virtue, accounted capital crimes. He will see informers rewarded, servants corrupted against the masters, freemen against their patrons, and those who should lack enemies, oppressed by friends. And he will also recognize very well what obligations Rome, Italy, and the world owed to Caesar. And without doubt [if he was born of man], he would be dismayed at every imitation of those evil times, and burning with an immense desire to follow the good. And truly, a Prince seeking the glory of the world ought to desire to possess a corrupt City, not to spoil it entirely like Caesar, but to reorganize it like Romulus. And truly the heavens cannot give man a greater opportunity for glory, nor could man desire a better one. And if to want to organize a City well, it should be necessary to abolish the Principate, he who had failed to [give her good laws] should merit some excuse. But he does not merit any excuse who can hold the Principate and organize it. And in sum, let he to whom the heavens gives the opportunity consider that there are two ways: The one which will make him live securely and render him

glorious after his death, the other which will make him live in continual anxiety and after death leave of himself an eternal infamy.

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## CHAPTER 11. OF THE RELIGIONS OF THE ROMANS

Although Rome had Romulus as its original organizer and, like a daughter, owed her birth and education to him, none the less the heavens, judging that the institutions of Romulus were not sufficient for so great an Empire, put it into the breasts of the Roman Senate to elect Numa Pompilius as successor to Romulus, so that those things that he had omitted, would be instituted by Numa. Who, finding a very ferocious people and wanting to reduce them to civil obedience by the acts of peace, turned to religion as something completely necessary in wanting to maintain a civilization, and he established it in such a manner that for many centuries there never was more fear of God than in that Republic, which facilitated any enterprise which the Senate or those of great Roman men should plan to do. And whoever should discuss the infinite actions of the people of Rome [taken] all together, and of many Romans [individually] by themselves, will see that those citizens feared much more the breaking of an oath than the laws, like those men who esteem more the power of God than that of man, as is manifestly seen in the examples of Scipio and of Manlius Torquatus, for after the defeat that Hannibal had inflicted on the Romans at Cannae, many citizens had gathered together [and] frightened and fearful [and] had agreed to abandon Italy and take themselves to Sicily: when Scipio heard of this, he went to meet them, and with bared sword in hand he constrained them to swear not to abandon their country. Lucius Manlius, father of Titus Manlius, who was later called Torquatus, had been accused by Marcus Pomponius, a Tribune of the Plebs: and before the day of judgment arrived, Titus went to meet Marcus, and threatening to kill him if he did not swear to withdraw the accusation against his father, constrained him to swear, and he [Marcus] from fear of having sworn withdrew the accusation from him [Lucius]. And thus those citizens whom [neither] the love of their country and of its laws could keep in Italy, were kept there by an oath that they were forced to take, and the Tribune put aside the hatred that he had for his father, the injury that his son had done him, and his honor, in order to obey the oath taken; which did not result from anything else than from that religion which Numa had introduced in that City. And whoever considers

well Roman history will see how much Religion served in commanding the armies, in reuniting the plebs, both in keeping men good, and in making the wicked ashamed. So that if it were discussed as to which Prince Rome should be more obligated, Romulus or Numa, I believe that Numa would [rather] attain the higher rank; for where Religion exists it is easily possible to introduce arms, but where there are arms and not religion, it [religion] can only be introduced there with difficulty. And it is seen that for Romulus to institute the Senate and to make the other civil and military arrangements, the authority of God was not necessary, but it was very necessary for Numa, who pretended he had met with a Nymph who advised him of that which he should counsel the people; and all this resulted because he wanted to introduce new ordinances and institutions in that City, and was apprehensive that his authority was not enough. And truly there never was any extraordinary institutor of laws among a people who did not have recourse to God, because otherwise he would not have been accepted; for they [these laws] are very well known by prudent men, but which by themselves do not contain evident reasons capable of persuading others. Wise men who want to remove this difficulty, therefore, have recourse to God. Thus did Lycurgus, thus Solon, thus many others who had the same aims as they.

The Roman people, therefore, admiring his [Numa's] goodness and prudence, yielded to his every decision. It is indeed true that those times were full of Religion, and those men with whom he [Numa] had to work were coarse [which] gave him great facility to pursue his designs, being able easily to impress upon them any new form. And without doubt whoever should want to establish a Republic in the present era, would find it more easy to do so among men of the mountains where there is no civilization, than among those who are used to living in the City, where civilization is corrupt, as a sculptor more easily extracts a beautiful statue from crude marble than of one badly sketched out by others. Considering all this I conclude therefore, that the Religion introduced by Numa was among the chief reasons for the felicity of that City, for it caused good ordinances, good ordinances make good fortune, and from good fortune there arises the happy successes of the enterprises. And as the observance of divine institutions is the cause of the greatness of Republics, so the contempt of it

is the cause of their ruin, for where the fear of God is lacking it will happen that that kingdom will be ruined or that it will be sustained through fear of a Prince, which may supply the want of Religion. And because Princes are short lived, it will happen that that Kingdom will easily fall as he [Prince] fails in virtu. Whence it results that Kingdoms which depend solely on the virtu of one man, are not durable for long, because that virtu fails with the life of that man, and it rarely happens that it is renewed in [his] successor, as Dante prudently says:

Rarely there descends from the branches [father to son]  
Human probity, and this is the will [of the one] who gives it,  
because it is asked alone from him.

The welfare of a Republic or a Kingdom, therefore, is not in having a Prince who governs prudently while he lives, but one who organizes it in a way that, if he should die, it will still maintain itself. And although crude men are more easily persuaded by new ordinances and opinions, yet it is not impossible because of this to persuade civilized men, [and] who presume themselves not to be crude. The people of Florence did not seem either crude or ignorant, none the less Brother Girolamo Savonarola was persuaded that he talked with God. I do not want to judge whether that was true or not, because one ought not to talk of so great a man except with reverence. But I may well say that an infinite [number] believed him without they having seen anything extraordinary which would make them believe, because his life, the doctrine, the subjects he took up were sufficient to make them have faith. Let no one be dismayed, therefore, if he is not able to attain that which had been attained by others, for men [as was said in our preface] are born, live, and die, always in the same way.

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## CHAPTER 12. OF HOW MUCH IMPORTANCE SHOULD BE GIVEN RELIGION; AND HOW ITALY, BECAUSE THE MEDIUM OF THE ROMAN CHURCH WAS LACKING, WAS RUINED

Those Princes or those Republics that want to maintain themselves uncorrupted, have above everything else to maintain uncorrupted the servances of Religion, and hold them always in veneration. For no one can have a better indication of the ruin of a province than to see the divine institutions held in contempt. This is easy to understand, when it is known upon what the Religion of the fatherland is founded; for every Religion has the foundation of its existence on some one of its principal institutions. The life of the Gentile Religion was founded upon the responses of the Oracles and upon the tenets of the Augurs and Aruspices; all their other ceremonies, sacrifices, rites, depended on these. For they readily believed that that God who could predict your future good or evil, should also be able to concede it to you. From this arose their temples, their sacrifices, their supplication, and all the other ceremonies venerating him; for the Oracle of Delphi, the Temple of Jupiter Ammon, and other celebrated Oracles kept the world in admiration and devotion. As soon as these began to speak in the manner of the Potentates, and this falsity was discovered by the people, men became incredulous and disposed to disturb every good institution. The Princes of a Republic or a Kingdom ought therefore to maintain their Republic's religions, and in consequence well and united. And therefore they ought in all things which arise to foster it [even if they should judge them false] to favor and encourage it: and the more prudent they are, and the more they understand natural things, so much more ought they to do this. And because this practice has been observed by wise men, there has arisen the beliefs in the miracles that are celebrated in Religion, however false; for the prudent ones have increased [their importance] from whatever origin they may have derived and their authority gives them credence with the people. There were many of these miracles in Rome, and among others was that [which occurred] when the Roman soldiers were sacking the City of Veienti, some of whom entered the Temple of Juno, and, standing in front of her statue, and saying "WILL YOU COME TO ROME?", it appeared to some that

she had made a sign [of assent], and to others that she had said yes. For these men, being full of Religion, [which T. Livius demonstrated] when they entered the Temple went in without tumult and completely devoted and full of reverence, seemed to hear that response to their question which perhaps they had presupposed: which opinion and belief was favored and magnified by Camillus and by the other Princes of the City.

If the Princes of the Republic had maintained this Christian religion according as it had been established by the founder, the Christian States and Republics would have been more united and much more happy than they are. Nor can any greater conjecture be made of its decline, than to see that those people who are nearer to the Church of Rome, the head of our Religion, have less Religion. And whoever should give consideration to its foundations, and observe how much different present usage is from them, should judge that without doubt her ruin or flagellation [chastisement] is near. And because some are of the opinion that the well-being of Italian affairs depend on the Church of Rome, I want to discuss those reasons against them that occur to me, and I will present two most powerful ones, which according to me are not controvertible. The first is, that by the evil example of that court, this province has lost all devotion and all Religion: so that it brings [with it] infinite troubles and infinite disorders; for where there is Religion every good is presupposed, so too where it is lacking the contrary is presupposed. We Italians therefore have this obligation with the Church and with the Priests of having become bad and without Religion; but we also have a greater one, which is the cause of our ruin. This is that the Church has kept and still keeps this province [country] of ours divided: and Truly any country never was united or happy, except when it gave its obedience entirely to one Republic or one Prince, as has happened to France and Spain. And the reason that Italy is not in the same condition, and is not also governed by one Republic or one Prince, is solely the Church, for having acquired and held temporal Empire, she has not been so powerful or of such virtu that she was able to occupy the rest of Italy and make herself its Prince. And on the other hand, she has not been so weak that the fear of losing her dominion of temporal things has made her unable to call in a power that could defend her against those who had become too powerful in Italy, as was seen anciently by many experiences, when through the

medium of Charles the Great she drove out the Lombards who already were the kings of almost all Italy, and when in our times she took away the power of Venetians with the aid of France; afterwards she drove out the French with the aid of the Swiss. The church therefore not being powerful [enough] to occupy Italy, and not having permitted that another should occupy her, has been the cause why she [Italy] has not been able to be united under one head, but has been under so many Princes and Lords, from which there has resulted so much disunion and so much weakness, that she became prey not only to the powerful Barbarians, but to anyone who should assault her. This we other Italians owe to the Church of Rome, and to none others. And anyone who should want to observe the truth of this more readily through experience, should need to be of such great power that he should be sent to live at the Roman Court, with all the power it has in Italy, over the towns of the Swiss, who today are the only People who live accordingly to ancient customs both as far as Religion and military institutions [are concerned] and he would see that in a little time the evil customs of that Court would cause more disorders in that province [country] than could spring up from any other incident in any other time.

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### CHAPTER 13. HOW THE ROMANS SERVED THEMSELVES OF RELIGION TO ESTABLISH THE CITY AND TO CARRY OUT THEIR ENTERPRISES AND STOP TUMULTS

And it does not appear to me outside my purpose to refer to some examples where the Romans served themselves of Religion in order to reorganize the City and to further their enterprises. And although there are many in [the writings of] Titus Livius, none the less I want to content myself with these. The Roman people having created the Tribunes with Consular Power, and all but one [selected from the] Plebs, and pestilence and famine having occurred there that year, and certain prodigies coming to pass, the Nobles used this occasion of the creation of the new Tribunes, saying that the Gods were angered because Rome had ill-used the majesty of its Empire, and that there was no other remedy to placate the Gods than by returning the election of the Tribunes to its own [original] place; from which there resulted that the Plebs frightened by this Religion created all the Tribunes from the [class of the] Nobles.

It was also seen at the capture of the City of the Veienti, that the Captains of the armies availed themselves of Religion to keep them disposed to an enterprise, when lake Albano had risen astonishingly that year, and the soldiers being weary from the long siege [and] wanted to return to Rome, the Romans insinuated that Apollo and certain other [oracles] had given replies that that year the City of the Veienti should be captured when Lake Albano should overflow: which event made the soldiers endure the weariness of the war and the siege, being taken by this hope of capturing the town, and they remained content to pursue the enterprise so much that Camillus who had been made Dictator captured that City after it had been besieged for ten years. And thus Religion well used was helpful both in the capture of that City and for the restoration of the Tribuneships to the Nobility, that without the said means either would have been accomplished only with difficulty.

I do not want to miss referring to another example to this purpose. Many tumults had arisen in Rome caused by Terentillus the Tribune, [because of]

his wanting to promulgate a certain law for the reasons which will be given in their place below: and among the first remedies that were used by the Nobility was Religion, of which they served themselves in two ways. In the first, they caused the sibylline books to be exhibited, and to give a reply to the City, that through the medium of civil sedition, there was impending that year the danger of [the City] losing its liberty; which thing [although it was discovered by the Tribunes] none the less put so much terror into the breasts of the Plebs that it cooled [their desire] to follow them. The other mode was when one Appius Erdonius with a multitude of bandits and servants numbering four thousand men occupied the Campidoglio [Capitol] by night, so that it was feared that the Equians and Volscians, perpetual enemies of the Roman name, should have come to Rome and attacked her; and the Tribunes because of this did not cease insisting in their pertinacity of promulgating the Terentillan law, saying that that fear was fictitious and not true; [and] one Publius Rubetius, a grave citizen of authority, went out from the Senate, [and] with words partly lovingly and partly menacing, showed them [the people] the danger to the City and the unreasonableness of their demands, so that he constrained the Plebs to swear not to depart from the wishes of the Consul. Whence the Plebs, forced to obey, reoccupied the Campidoglio: but the Consul Publius Valerius being killed in that attack, Titus Quintius was quickly made Consul, who in order not to allow the Plebs to rest, or to give them time to think again of the Terentillan law, commanded them to go out from Rome and go against the Volscians, saying that because of that oath they had taken not to abandon the Consul they were obligated to follow him: to which the Tribunes opposed themselves saying that that oath was given to the dead Consul and not to him. None the less Titus Livius shows that the Plebs for fear of Religion wanted more readily to obey the Consul than believe the Tribunes, saying in favor of the ancient Religion these words: "He feared that the age had not yet come, when the Gods were to be neglected, nor to make interpretations of their oaths and laws to suit themselves." Because of which thing, the Tribunes, apprehensive of their losing all their liberty, made an accord with the Consul to remain in obedience to him and that for one year there should be no discussion of the Terentillan law and the Consuls, on the other hand, should not draw on the Plebs for war outside [of Rome]. And thus Religion enabled

the Senate to overcome that difficulty which without it, they could never overcome.

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## CHAPTER 14. THE ROMANS INTERPRETED THE AUSPICES ACCORDING TO NECESSITY, AND WITH THEIR PRUDENCE MADE A SHOW OF OBSERVING RELIGION, EVEN WHEN THEY WERE FORCED NOT TO OBSERVE IT, AND IF ANYONE RECKLESSLY DISPARAGED IT THEY PUNISHED HIM

The Auguries not only (as was discussed above) were the foundation in good part of the ancient Religion of the Gentiles, but they were also the causes of the well-being of the Roman Republic. Whence the Romans cared more for this than any other institution, and used it in their Consular Comitii, in starting their enterprises, in sending out their armies, in fighting engagements, and in every important activity of theirs, whether civil or military: and they never would go on an expedition unless they had persuaded the soldiers that the Gods promised them the victory. And among the Aruspices there were in the armies certain orders of Aruspices which they called Pollari [guardians of the Sacred Fowls]. And anytime they were ordered to fight an engagement with the enemy they desired these Pollari make their Aruspices; and if the fowls pecked away, they fought with a good augury: if they did not peck away, they abstained from battle. None the less, when reason showed them that a thing ought to be done, notwithstanding the Aruspices should be adverse, they did it anyway: but then they turned these [aruspices] with conditions and in such a manner so adeptly, that it should not appear they were doing so with disparagement to their Religion: which method was used by Consul Papirus in a most important battle which he waged against the Samnites, which afterward left them entirely weak and afflicted. For Papirus being in the field encountered the Samnites, and as victory in battle appeared certain to him, and because of this wanting to come to an engagement, he commanded the Pollari that they make their Aruspices: but the fowls did not peck away, and the Prince of the Pollari seeing the great disposition of the army to fight and the thoughts to win which were in the Captain and all the soldiers, and in order not to take away this opportunity from the army of doing well, reported to the Consul that the Aruspices were proceeding well, so that Papirus ordered

out his squadrons; but some of the Pollari having told certain soldiers that the fowls had not pecked away, they in turn told it to Spurius Papius nephew of the Consul; and when he reported this to the Consul, he [the Consul] quickly replied that he should attend to doing his duty well, and that as to himself and the army the Aruspices were correct, and if the Pollarius had told a lie, it would come back on him to his prejudice. And so that the result should correspond to the prognostication, he commanded his legates that they should place the Pollari in the front ranks of the battle. Whence it resulted that in going against the enemy, a Roman soldier drawing a dart by chance killed the Prince of the Pollari: which thing becoming known, the Consul said that every thing was proceeding well and with the favor of the Gods, for the army through the death of that liar was purged of every blame and of whatever anger [the Gods] should have had against him. And thus by knowing well how to accommodate his designs to the Aruspices, he [Papius] took steps to give battle without his army perceiving that he had in any part neglected the institutions of their Religion.

Appius Pulcher acted in a contrary fashion in Sicily in the first Punic war; for wanting to give battle to the Carthaginian army, he caused the Pollari to make Aruspices, and when they reported to him that those fowl did not peck away, he said "Let us see if they would drink," and had them thrown into the sea: whence that giving battle he lost the engagement; for which he was condemned at Rome, and Papius honored, not so much for the one having lost and the other having won, but because the one had gone against the Aruspices in a prudent manner, and the other fearfully. Nor did this method of making Aruspices have any other object than to have the soldiers go into battle with confidence, from which confidence almost always victory resulted. Which institution was not only used by the Romans, but by those outsiders; of which it seems to me proper to adduce an example in the following chapter.

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## CHAPTER 15. HOW THE SAMNITES HAD RECOURSE TO RELIGION AS AN EXTREME REMEDY FOR THE THINGS AFFLICTING THEM

The Samnites having been routed many times by the Romans, and having lastly been defeated in Tuscany, and their armies destroyed and Captains killed, and their allies such as the Tuscans, French [Gauls], and Umbrians having also been defeated, so that “They were not able to continue any longer with their own men or with those from outside, yet would not abstain from the war, and instead of giving up the unsuccessful defense of liberty, they would undertake one more attempt at victory before being overcome”.

Whence they decided to make one last try: and since they knew that to want to win it was necessary to induce obstinacy into the courage of the soldiers, and that to induce it there was no better means than Religion, they decided to repeat their ancient sacrifices through the medium of Ovius Paccius their Priest, who arranged it in this form: that a solemn sacrifice being made, [and], in the midst of the slain victims and burning altars make all the heads of the army swear never to abandon the fight; then they summoned the soldiers one by one and in the midst of those altars and surrounded by many centurions with bared swords in their hands, they made them first swear that they would not reveal the things they saw or heard, then with execrable phrases and words full of terror they made them swear and promise the Gods that they would go readily wherever the Emperor should command them, and never to flee in battle, and to kill whomever they should see fleeing; which oath if not observed would be visited on the head of his family and on his descendants. And some of them being frightened, [and] not wanting to swear, were quickly put to death by the centurions: so that the others who followed, terrified by the ferocity of the spectacle, all swore. And in order to make this gathering of theirs more imposing, there being forty thousand men there, they dressed half of them in white clothes with crests and plumes on the helmets, and thus arrayed they took position at Aquilonia: Papirius came against them, who in encouraging his soldiers said, “Those crests cannot inflict wounds, and paint and gilding keep Roman javelins from transfixing shields”.

And to weaken the opinion that his soldiers had of the enemy because of the oath they had taken, he said that it [the oath] was to inspire fear, and not courage, in those [who had taken it], for it made them at the same time fear their own Citizens, their Gods, and their enemies. And coming to the fight, the Samnites were defeated; for the virtue of the Romans, and the fear conceived from the past routs overcame whatever obstinacy they were able to assume by virtue of their Religion and by the oath they had taken.

None the less it is seen that they [the Samnites] did not appear to have any other refuge, nor try other remedies to be able to revive hope and reestablish their lost virtue. Which fully testifies how much confidence can be obtained by means of Religion well used. And although this part might perhaps be rather placed among affairs of outside [peoples], none the less as this refers to one of the most important institutions of the Republic of Rome, it has appeared to me proper to commit this in this place so as not to divide this material and have to return to it many times.

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## CHAPTER 16. A PEOPLE ACCUSTOMED TO LIVING UNDER A PRINCE, IF BY SOME ACCIDENT BECOMES FREE, MAINTAINS ITS LIBERTY WITH DIFFICULTY

Many examples derived from the records of ancient history will show how difficult it is for a people used to living under a Prince to preserve their liberty after they had by some accident acquired it, as Rome acquired it after driving out the Tarquins. And such difficulty is reasonable; because that people is nothing else other than a brute animal, which (although by nature ferocious and wild) has always been brought up in prison and servitude, [and] which later being left by chance free in a field, [and] not being accustomed to [obtain] food or not knowing where to find shelter for refuge, becomes prey to the first one who seeks to enchain it again. This same thing happens to a people, who being accustomed to living under governments of others, not knowing to reason either on public defense or offense, not knowing the Princes or being known by them, return readily under a yoke, which often times is more heavy than that which a short time before had been taken from their necks: and they find themselves in this difficulty, even though the people is not wholly corrupt; for a people where corruption has not entirely taken over, cannot but live at all free even for a very brief time, as will be discussed below: and therefore our discussions concern those people where corruption has not expanded greatly, and where there is more of the good than of the bad [spoiled]. To the above should be added another difficulty, which is that the state which becomes free makes enemy partisans, and not friendly partisans. All those men become its enemy partisans who avail themselves of the tyrannical state, feeding on the riches of the Prince, [and] who when they are deprived of the faculty of thus availing themselves, cannot live content, and some are forced to attempt to reestablish the tyranny so as to recover their authority. It does not (as I have said) acquire friendly partisans, for a free society bestows honors and rewards through the medium of honest and predetermined rules, and outside of which does not honor or reward anyone; and when one receives those honors and rewards as appears to them he merits, he does not consider he has any obligation to repay them: in

addition to this that common usefulness which free society brings with it, is not known by anyone (while he yet possesses it), which is to be able to enjoy his own possessions freely without any suspicion, not being apprehensive of the honor of his womenfolk, or that of his children, and not to fear offer himself; for no one will ever confess himself to have an obligation to one who only does not offend him.

Thus (as was said above) a free state that has newly sprung up comes to have enemy partisans and not friendly partisans. And wanting to remedy this inconvenience and these disorders which the above mentioned difficulties bring with them, there is no remedy more powerful, nor more valid, healthy, and necessary than [was] the killing of the sons of Brutus, who, as history shows, together with other Roman youths were induced to conspire against their country for no other reason than because they could not obtain extraordinary advantages for themselves under the Consuls as under the Kings; so that the liberty of that people appeared to have become their servitude. And whoever undertakes to govern a multitude either by the way of liberty [Republic] or by the way of a Principate, and does not make sure of those who are enemies of that new institution, establishes a short lived state. It is true that I judge those Princes unfelicitous who, to assure their state when the multitude is hostile, have to take extraordinary means; for he who has only a few enemies can easily and without great scandals make sure of them, but he who has the general public hostile to him can never make sure of them, and the more cruelty he uses, so much more weak becomes his Principate; so that the best remedy he has is to seek to make the People friendly. And although this discussion departs from that written above, in speaking of a Prince here and of a Republic there, none the less in order not to have to return again to this matter I want to speak a little more.

A Prince, therefore, wanting to gain over to himself a people who are hostile to him (speaking of those Princes who have become Tyrants in their country), I say that they ought first to look into that which the people desire, and he will find they always desire two things: the one, to avenge themselves against those who are the cause of their slavery: the other, to regain their liberty. The first desire the Prince is able to satisfy entirely, the second in part. As to the first, there is an example in point. When Clearchus,

Tyrant of Heraclea, was in exile, a controversy arose between the people and the Nobles of Heraclea, [and] the Nobles seeing themselves inferior, turned to favor Clearchus, and conspiring with him they placed him in opposition to the disposition of the people of Heraclea, and [thus] took away the liberty from the people. So that Clearchus finding himself between the insolence of the Nobles, whom he could not in any way either content or correct, and the rage of the People who could not endure having lost their liberty, he decided suddenly to free himself from the nuisance of the Nobles, and to win the people over to himself. And on this, taking a convenient opportunity, he cut to pieces all the Nobles, to the extreme satisfaction of the People. And thus, in this way, he satisfied one of the desires people had, that is, to avenge themselves. But as to the desire of the people to regain their liberty, the Prince, not being able to satisfy it, ought to examine what are the reasons that make them desire to be free, and he will find that a small part of them desire to be free in order to command, but all the others, who are an infinite number, desire liberty also as to live in security. For in all Republics in whatever manner organized, there are never more than forty or fifty Citizens of a rank to command, and because this number is small, it is an easy matter to assure oneself of them, either by taking them out of the way, or by giving them a part of so many honors as, according to their condition, ought in good part to content them. The others, to whom it is enough to live in security, are easily satisfied by creating institutions and laws which, together with his power, gives realization to the general security of the people. And when a Prince does this, and the people see that no one breaks such laws by accident, they will begin in a very short time to live in security and contentment. In example for this, there is the Kingdom of France, which lives in security from nothing else other than those Kings being bound by an infinite number of laws in which the security of his people is realized. And whoever organized that state wanted that those Kings should do (in their own way) with the arms and the money as they wanted, but should not be able to dispose of any other thing otherwise than by the laws that were ordained. That Prince, therefore, or that Republic, that does not secure itself at the beginning of its state, should assure itself at the first opportunity, as the Romans did. And he who should allow this to pass will repent too late of not doing that which he ought to have done. The Roman people, therefore,

being not yet corrupted when they recovered their liberty, were able to maintain it, after the sons of Brutus were put to death and the Tarquins destroyed, with all those remedies and institutions which have been discussed at another time. But if that people had been corrupted, there never would have been found valid remedies, in Rome or elsewhere, to maintain it [their liberty], as we shall show in the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER 17. A CORRUPT PEOPLE COMING INTO THEIR LIBERTY CAN MAINTAIN ITSELF FREE ONLY WITH THE GREATEST DIFFICULTY

I judge that it was necessary that Kings should be eliminated in Rome, or [else] that Rome would in a very short time become weak and of no valor; for considering to what [degree of] corruption those Kings had come, if it should have continued so for two or three successions, [and] that that corruption which was in them had begun to spread through its members; [and] as the members had been corrupted it was impossible ever again to reform her [the state]. But losing the head while the torso was sound, they were able easily to return to a free and ordered society. And it ought to be presupposed as a very true matter that a corrupted City which exists under a Prince, even though that Prince with all his lives [family] may be extinguished, can never become free; and that rather it should happen that one Prince destroy the other, for [these people] will never be settled without the creation of a new Lord, who by his goodness together with his virtue will then keep them free: but that liberty will last only during his life time, as happened at different times in Syracuse to Dion and Timoleon, whose virtue while they lived, kept that City free: but when they died, it returned to the ancient Tyranny. But there is no more striking example to be seen than that of Rome, which after the Tarquins had been driven out, was able quickly to resume and maintain that liberty; but after the death of Caesar, Caligula, and Nero, and after the extinction of all the line of Caesar, she could not only never maintain her liberty, but was unable to reestablish it. And so great a difference in events in the same City did not result from anything else other than [the fact that] the Roman People in the time of Tarquin was not yet corrupt, and in the latter time [Caesar's] it became very corrupt. For to keep her sound and disposed to keep away from Kings at that time, it was enough to make them swear that they should never consent that any of them should ever reign in Rome; but in the time of the other [Caesar] the authority of Brutus with all the Eastern legions was not enough to keep her disposed to want to maintain that liberty which he, in imitation of the first Brutus, had restored to her. Which resulted from that corruption which the party of Marius had spread among the people, at the

head of which was Caesar, who was able so to blind the multitude that they did not recognize the yoke which they themselves were placing on their necks.

And although this example of Rome is to be preferred to any other example, none the less on this proposition I want to refer to people known before our times. I say, therefore, that no incident (although grave and violent) can ever restore Milan or Naples to freedom, because those people are entirely corrupt. Which was seen after the death of Filippo Visconti, who, wanting to restore liberty to Milan, did not know how and could not maintain it. It was therefore a great good fortune for Rome that no sooner had these Kings become corrupt than they were driven out, and that before their corruption should pass into the vitals of that City; which corruption was the cause of the infinite tumults which took place in Rome (men having good intentions) [and which] did no harm, but rather benefited the Republic. And this conclusion can be drawn, that where the people is not corrupted, tumults and other troubles do no harm; but where corruption exists, well ordered laws are of no benefit, unless they are administered by one who, with extreme strength, will make them be observed until the people become good [cured]; I do not know if this ever happened, or whether it be possible that it could happen; for it is seen (as I have said a little above) that a City coming to decadence because of the corruption of its people, if it ever happens that she is raised up again, it happens through the virtue of one man who is then living, and not by the virtue of the general public, that the good institutions are sustained: and as soon as such a one is dead, they will return to their pristine habits, as happened at Thebes, which by the virtue of Epaminondas, while he was alive, was able to maintain the form of a Republic and Empire, but after his death returned to its first disorders: the reason is this, that one man cannot live so long that the time will be enough to bring a City back to good habits which for a long time has had evil habits. And if one of very long life or two continuous successors of virtue do not restore it [the state], so one which lacks them (as was said above) is quickly ruined, unless it should be made to be restored through many dangers and much bloodshed. For such corruption and little inclination for a free society result from an inequality that exists in that City; and wanting to bring them

to equality, it is necessary to use the most extraordinary means, which few know or want to use, as will be described in more detail in another place.

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## CHAPTER 18. IN WHAT WAY IN A CORRUPT CITY A FREE STATE CAN BE MAINTAINED, IF THERE IS ONE THERE, OR IF NOT, HOW TO ESTABLISH IT

I believe it is not outside the purpose of this discussion, nor too distant from that written above, to consider whether a free State can be maintained in a City that is corrupted, or, if there had not been one, to be able to establish one. On this matter I say that it is very difficult to do either one or the other: and although it is almost impossible to give rules (because it will be necessary to proceed according to the degrees of corruption), none the less, as it is well to discuss every thing, I do not want to omit this. And I will presuppose a City very corrupt, where such difficulties come to rise very fast, as there are found there neither laws or institutions that should be enough to check a general corruption. For as good customs have need of laws for maintaining themselves, so the laws, to be observed, have need of good customs. In addition to this, the institutions and laws made in a Republic at its origin when men were good, are not afterward more suitable, when they [men] have become evil. And if laws vary according to circumstances and events in a City, its institutions rarely or never vary: which results in the fact that new laws are not enough, for the institutions that remain firm will corrupt it. And in order to make this part better understood, I will tell how the Government was established in Rome, or rather the State, and the laws with which afterwards the Magistrates restrained the Citizens. The institution of the State included the authority of the People, the Senate, thy Tribunes, the Consuls, method of seeking and creating Magistrates, and the method of making laws. These institutions were rarely or never varied by events. The laws that restrained the Citizens varied, such as was the law of the Adulterers, the Sumptuary, that of Ambition, and many others, according as the Citizens from day to day became corrupt. But the institutions of the State becoming firm, although no longer good for the corrupt [people], those laws that were changed were not enough to keep men good, but would have been of benefit if with the changes of the law the institutions should have been modified.

And that it is true that such institutions in a City that had become corrupt were not good, is expressly seen in these two principal points. As to the creation of the Magistracies and the laws, the Roman People did not give the Consulship and other high offices of the City, except to those who asked for them. In the beginning these institutions were good because no one asked for these [offices] except those Citizens who judged themselves worthy, and having a refusal was ignominious: so that in order to judge himself worthy every one worked well. However, this system became pernicious in a corrupt City, for it was not those who had more virtue, but those who had more power, who asked for the Magistracies, and the less powerful (no matter of how much virtue) abstained from asking from fear. This evil did not come on suddenly, but by degrees, as happens with all other evils: for the Romans having subjugated Africa and Asia, and reduced almost all of Greece to their obedience, had become assured of their liberty, nor did they seem to have more enemies who should give them fear. This security, and this weakness of her enemies, caused the Roman people no longer to regard virtue in bestowing the Consulship, but graciousness, drawing to that dignity those who knew better how to handle men, not to those who knew better how to conquer their enemies: afterwards they descended from those who had more graciousness to give it to those who had more power. So that because of the defects of such institutions, the good were entirely excluded from everything. A Tribune or some other Citizen could propose a law to the people on which every Citizen could speak in favor or against it before it should be adopted. This institution was good when the Citizens were good, for it was always well that anyone who intended some good for the public was able to propose it, and it was well that everyone could speak his thoughts on it, so that the people, having listened to all sides, could then select the best. But when the Citizens had become bad such institutions became the worst, for only the powerful proposed laws, [and] not for the common liberty, but for their own power, and everyone for fear of them was not able to speak against them: so that the people came to be deceived or forced into deciding their own ruin.

It was necessary, therefore, if Rome wanted to maintain herself free in her corruption, that she should have made new institutions, just as she had made new laws in the process of her existence, for other institutions and

modes of living ought to be established in a bad people as well as in a good one, nor can the form be the same in a people entirely different. But because these institutions when they are suddenly discovered no longer to be good have to be changed either completely, or little by little as each [defect] is known, I say that both of these two courses are almost impossible. For in the case of wanting to change little by little a prudent man is required who sees this evil from a distance and at its beginning. It is easily probable that no one such as these springs up in a City: and even if one should spring up he is never able to persuade others of that which he intends; for men living in one manner, do not want to change, and the more so as they do not see the evil face to face, but being shown to them as [mere] conjecture.

As to changing these institutions all at once when everyone recognizes they are not good, I say that the defect which is easily recognized is difficult to correct, for to do this it is not enough to use ordinary means, as ordinary means are bad, but it is necessary to come to the extraordinary, such as violence and arms, and before anything else to become Prince of that City, and to be able to dispose of it as he pleases. And as the re-organization of the political life of a City presupposes a good man, and the becoming of a Prince of a Republic by violence presupposes a bad man; for because of this it will be found that it rarely happens that a [good] man wants to become Prince through bad means, even though his objectives be good; or that a bad one, having become Prince, wants to work for good and that it should enter his mind to use for good that authority which he had acquired by evil means. From all the things written above, arises the difficulty or impossibility of maintaining a Republic in a City that has become corrupted, or to establish it there anew. And even if it should have to be created or maintained, it would be necessary to reduce it more to a Royal State [Monarchy] than to a Popular State [Republic], so that those men who because of their insolence cannot be controlled by laws, should be restrained by a Power almost Regal. And to want to make them become good by other means would be either a most cruel enterprise or entirely impossible; as I said above this is what Cleomenes did, who for wanting to be alone [in the Government] killed the Ephors, and if Romulus for the same reasons killed his brother and Titus Tatius, the Sabine, and afterwards they

used their authority well, none the less, it ought to be noted that one and the other of these men did not have their subjects stained with that corruption of which we have discussed in this chapter, and therefore they could desire [good], and desiring it, conform their designs accordingly.

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## CHAPTER 19. A WEAK PRINCE WHO SUCCEEDS AN EXCELLENT PRINCE CAN BE MAINTAINED, BUT ANY KINGDOM CANNOT BE MAINTAINED IF A WEAK ONE IS SUCCEEDED BY ANOTHER WEAK ONE

In considering the virtue and the mode of proceeding of Romulus, of Numa, and of Tullus, the first three Kings of Rome, it will be seen that Rome was favored by the greatest good fortune, having the first King most ferocious and warlike, the next quiet and religious, the third similar in ferocity to Romulus, and a greater lover of war than of peace. For it was necessary in Rome that in the beginning there should spring up an Organizer of civil institutions, but it then indeed was necessary that the other Kings should reassume the virtue of Romulus, otherwise that City would have become effeminate and prey to her neighbors. Whence it can be noted that a successor not having as much virtue as the first, is able to maintain a State which was erected by that man before him and can enjoy his labors; but if it happens either that his life is a long one, or that after him there should not spring up another who should reassume the virtue of the first one, that Kingdom of necessity will be ruined. And so, on the contrary, if two, one after the other, are of great virtue, it will often be seen that they achieve most great things and that they will rise with their fame to the heavens. David without doubt was a man most excellent in arms, in doctrine, and in judgment, and so great was his virtue, that having conquered and beaten down all his neighbors, he left a peaceful Kingdom to this son Solomon, which he was able to preserve with the arts of peace and of war, and he was able happily to enjoy the virtue of his father. But he could not thus leave it to his son Rehoboam, who not being like his grandfather in virtue, or like his father in fortune, remained heir to the sixth part of the Kingdom only with great effort. Bajazet, Sultan of the Turks, although he was more a lover of peace than of war, was able to enjoy the efforts of his father Mahomet, who having like David beaten his neighbors, left him a firm Kingdom and capable of being preserved easily with the arts of peace. But if his own son Soliman, the present lord, had been like his father and not his grandfather, that

Kingdom would have been ruined: but it was seen that this man was to surpass the glory of his grandfather.

I say, therefore, through these examples, that it is possible for a weak Prince succeeding an excellent one to preserve any Kingdom, even if it should not be as that of France, which is maintained by its ancient institutions: and those Princes are weak who are not able to endure war. I conclude, therefore, with this discussion that the virtu of Romulus was so great, that it was able to give time to Numa Pompilius to be able to rule Rome with the arts of peace; but he was succeeded by Tullus, who by his ferocity reassumed the reputation of Romulus; after whom there followed Ancus, so gifted by nature that he was able to use peace and endure war. And first he addressed himself to want to hold the ways of peace, but he soon knew that his neighbors judging him effeminate esteemed him little, so that he decided that if he wanted to maintain Rome he needed to turn to war and imitate Romulus, and not Numa. Let all the Princes who have a State take example from this, that he who imitates Numa may keep it [the State] or not keep it, according as the times and fortune may turn his way; but he who imitates Romulus, and is like him armed with prudence and weapons, will keep it in any case, unless it is taken from him by an obstinate [and] excessive force. And certainly it can be though that, if Rome had not by chance had as her third King a man who had not known how to recover with arms her reputation, she would never then have been able, except with the greatest difficulty, to gain a foothold, nor to achieve the results that she did. And thus as long as she lived under Kings, she was subject to these dangers of being ruined under a weak or bad King.

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**CHAPTER 20. TWO CONTINUOUS SUCCESSIONS OF PRINCES OF VIRTU ACHIEVE GREAT RESULTS; AND THAT WELL ORGANIZED REPUBLICS OF NECESSITY HAVE SUCCESSIONS OF VIRTU; THEREFORE THEIR ACQUISITIONS AND EXPANSIONS ARE GREAT**

After Rome had driven out her Kings, she was no longer exposed to those perils which were mentioned above, resulting from a succession of weak or bad Kings; for the highest [authority] was vested in the Consuls, who came to that Empire not by heredity or deceit or violent ambition, but by free suffrage, and were always most excellent men, from whose virtu and fortune Rome had benefited from time to time, [and] was able to arrive at her ultimate greatness in as many years as she had existed under her Kings. For it is seen that two continuous successions of Princes of virtu are sufficient to acquire the world, as was [the case of] Philip of Macedonia and Alexander the Great. A Republic ought to be able to do so much more, having the means of electing not only two successions, but an infinite number of Princes of great virtu who are successors one after the other: which succession of virtu is always well established in every Republic.

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## CHAPTER 21. HOW MUCH BLAME THAT PRINCE AND REPUBLIC MERIT WHO LACK THEIR OWN ARMS

Present Princes and modern Republics, who lack their own soldiers in regard to defense and offense, ought to be ashamed of themselves and to think from the example of Tullus that such a defect exists not because of the lack of men suitable for the military, but that by their own fault they have not known how to make soldiers of their men.<sup>3</sup> For Tullus, after Rome had been at peace forty years, did not find a man (when he succeeded to the Kingdom) who had ever been in war. None the less, planning to make war, he did not think of availing himself of the Samnites, or of the Tuscans, or of others who were accustomed to bear arms, but as a most prudent man decided to avail himself of his own people: And such was his virtue that he was able quickly to make excellent soldiers under his own government. And there is nothing more true than that [truth], if there are no soldiers where there are men, this results from the defect of the Prince, and not from any local or natural defect: of which there is a very recent example: For everyone knows that in recent times the King of England assaulted the kingdom of France, and did not take as soldiers any other than his own people: and because that Kingdom had been for more than thirty years without making war, he did not have either soldiers or a Captain who had ever fought: none the less, he did not hesitate with them to assault a Kingdom full of Captains and good armies, which had been continually under arms in the wars in Italy. All of which resulted from that King being a prudent man and that Kingdom well organized, that in time of peace did not neglect the arrangements of war. The Thebans, Pelopidas and Epaminondas, after having liberated Thebes, and rescued her from the servitude of the Spartan Empire, finding themselves in a City accustomed to servitude, and in the midst of an effeminate people, did not hesitate (so great was their virtue) to put them under arms and with them go to meet the Spartan armies in the field and conquered them: and whoever writes says, that these two in a short time showed that men of war were born not only in Lacedemonia, but in every other place where men are born, as long as there was to be found

<sup>3</sup> Establish a National Army or Militia, rather than rely on Mercenaries

one man who should know how to train them in military service, as is seen [in the case] of Tullus who knew how to train the Romans. And Virgil could not express this thought better, and with other words shows how he adhered to that, when he said: “And Tullus made of These men soldiers”.

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## CHAPTER 22. WHAT IS TO BE NOTED IN THE CASE OF THE THREE ROMAN HORATII AND OF THE THREE ALBAN CURATII

Tullus, King of Rome, and Metius, King of Alba, agreed that that people should be lord of those whose above mentioned three men should overcome [those of] the others. All the Alban Curatii were killed, [and] there remained only one of the Roman Horatii alive, and because of this Metius, King of the Albans, with his subjects, remained subject to the Romans. And when that Horatius returned as conqueror to Rome, meeting his sister who was married to one of the three dead Curatii, and who was weeping over the death of her husband, he killed her. Whence that Horatius, because of this crime, was placed on trial and after much deliberation was freed, more because of thy prayers of his father than because of his own merits. Here three things are to be noted. One, that one should never risk all his fortune with only part of his forces. Next, that in a well organized City, the demerits [crimes] are never rewarded with merits. The third, that proceedings are never wise where one ought to be doubtful of their observance. For being in servitude means much to a City, that it ought never to be believed that any of those Kings or of those People should be content that three of their Citizens should make them subject, as is seen Metius wanted to do, who although immediately after the victory of the Romans confessed himself conquered and promised obedience to Tullus, none the less, in the first expedition in which they were to come against the Veienti, it is seen that he sought to deceive them, as one who sees too late the imprudence of the proceeding undertaken by him. And because this third point has been talked about much, we will talk only of the other two in the following two chapters.

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## CHAPTER 23. THAT ONE OUGHT NOT TO PUT IN PERIL ALL HIS FORTUNE AND ALL HIS FORCES; AND BECAUSE OF THIS THE GUARDING OF PASSES IS OFTEN HARMFUL

It was never judged [to be] a wise proceeding to put into peril all of one's fortune or all of one's forces. This may be done in many ways. One is to do as Tullus and Metius did when they committed all the fortune of their country and the virtue of so many men, as both of these had in their armies, to the virtue and fortune of three of their Citizens, which came to be only a minimum part of the forces of each of them. Nor did they see that because of this proceeding all the labors that their ancestors had endured in the establishment of the Republic in order to have it exist free a long time, and to make her Citizens defenders of their liberty, were as it were made in vain, it being in the power of so few to lose it. Which action [on the part] of those Kings could not be considered worse. This error is also almost always committed by those who (seeing the enemy) plan to hold different places and guard the passes. For almost always this decision will be damaging unless you can thus conveniently keep all your forces [there] in that difficult place. In this case such a procedure is to be taken: but being in a rugged place and not being able to keep all your forces there, the procedure is damaging. I am made to think thusly by the example of those who, when they are assaulted by a powerful enemy, and their country being surrounded by mountains and rugged places, never tried to combat the enemy in the passes and in the mountains, but have gone out to meet them in front of these, or when they did not wish to do that, have awaited him behind these mountains in easy and not-rugged places. And the reason was, as it were, as alleged before; for many men cannot be brought to the guarding of rugged places, not only because it is not possible to live there a long time, but also because being in narrow places capable of [admitting] only a few, it is not possible to sustain an enemy who comes in a large body to hurl himself at you: And it is easy for the enemy to come in large numbers, because his intention is to pass and not stop, while to him who awaits him [the enemy] it is impossible to wait with large numbers, having to quarter himself for a longer time (not knowing when the enemy may attempt to pass) in narrow

and sterile places, as I have said. Having therefore lost that pass that you had presupposed to hold, and in which your people and the army had trusted, there will very often enter in the people and the rest of the forces so much terror that, without being able to test the virtue of those remaining, they are lost; and thus you have lost all your fortune with only part of your forces.

Everyone knows with how much difficulty Hannibal crossed the Alps which divide Lombardy from France, and with how much difficulty he crossed those which divide Lombardy from Tuscany; none the less, the Romans awaited him first on the Ticino and afterwards on the plains of Arezzo; and they wanted rather that their army should be consumed by the enemy in places where they themselves could conquer, than to lead it over the Alps to be destroyed by the malignity of the site. And whoever reads all the histories attentively will find very few Captains of virtue to have held similar passes and for the reasons mentioned, and because they cannot close them all, the mountains being like the fields and having roads not only well known and frequented, but many other which, if not known to outsiders, are well known to the people of the country, with whose aid you will always be brought to any place against the wishes of whoever opposes you. Of this a most recent example in the year one thousand five hundred fifteen <sup>1515</sup> can be cited. When Francis King of France planned to cross into Italy in order to recover the State of Lombardy, the greater foundation of those who opposed his enterprise was that the Swiss would stop him in the mountain passes. And as was seen from this experience, that foundation of theirs was vain, for that King, leaving aside two or three places guarded by them [Swiss], came by another unknown road, and was already in Italy before they were aware of it. So that, frightened, they retreated to Milan, and all the people of Lombardy adhered to the French forces, having been proved wrong in their opinion that the French would be held in the mountains.

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## CHAPTER 24. WELL ORGANIZED REPUBLICS ESTABLISH REWARDS AND PENALTIES FOR THEIR CITIZENS, BUT NEVER COMPENSATE ONE [AT THE EXPENSE] OF THE OTHER

The merits of Horatius had been very great, having by his virtue conquered the Curatii. None the less such a homicide displeased the Romans so much, that he was brought to trial for his life, notwithstanding that his merits were so great and so recent. Which thing, to whoever should consider it only superficially, would seem to be an example of the ingratitude of the people. None the less, whoever should examine it closer, and with better consideration will look for what the orders of the Republic ought to be, will blame that people rather for having absolved him than for having wanted to condemn him: and the reason is this, that no well-ordered Republic ever cancels the misbehavior of its citizens by their merits; and having rewarded one for having acted well, if that same one afterwards acts badly, it castigates him without having regard to any of his good actions. And if these orders are well observed, a City will exist free for a long time; if otherwise, it will quickly be ruined. For if to a citizen who has done some eminent work for the City, there is added to his reputation of that which he acquired, and audacity and confidence of being able to do some wrong without fear of punishment, he will in a short time become so insolent as to put an end to all civil law. But wanting that the punishment for evil actions be feared, it is very necessary to observe rewarding good, as is seen was done by Rome. And although a Republic may be poor and can give only a little, it ought not to abstain from giving that little, because every little gift given to someone in recompense for a good deed, no matter how big [the deed], will always be esteemed very greatly by whoever receives it as an honorable thing. And the history of Horatius Codes and that of Mutius Scaevola are well known; how one held back the enemy on a bridge until it was cut, [and] the other burned his hand having erred in wanting to murder Porsenna, King of the Tuscans. For these two eminent deeds two measures of land were given to each of those men by the public. The history of Manlius Capitolinus is also well known. For having saved the Campidoglio from the Gauls who were besieging it, this man was given a small measure of flour by those who had

been besieged inside with him, which reward (according to the value that was then current in Rome) was great and of quality; [but] when Manlius afterward, either from envy or from his evil nature, moved to raise up sedition in Rome, and seeking to gain over the People to himself, he was, without regard to any of his merits, thrown precipitously from that Campidoglio which he had previously with so much glory saved.

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## CHAPTER 25. WHOEVER WANTS TO REFORM AN ANCIENT STATE INTO A FREE CITY, SHOULD RETAIN AT LEAST A SHADOW OF THE ANCIENT FORMS

He who desires or wants to reform the State [Government] of a City, and wishes that it may be accepted and capable of maintaining itself to everyone's satisfaction, it is necessary for him at least to retain the shadow of ancient forms, so that it does not appear to the people that the institutions have been changed, even though in fact the new institutions should be entirely different from the past ones: for the general mass of men are satisfied with appearances, as if it exists, and many times are moved by the things which appear to be rather than by the things that are. The Romans knew this necessity in the beginning of their free existence, [and] for this reason, had in place of one King created two Consuls, [and] did not want them to have more than twelve Lictors so as not to exceed the number that ministered to the Kings.

In addition to this, an annual sacrifice was made in Rome, which could not be done except by the King in person, and as the Romans wishing that the People should not desire any of the ancient things because of the absence of the King, created a chief for the said sacrifice, whom they called the King of sacrifice, and placed him under the high priest.

So that the people through this means came to be satisfied with that sacrifice and never to have reason, for lack of them, to desire the return of the King. And this ought to be observed by all those who want to abolish an ancient [system of] living in a City and bring it to a new and more liberal [system of] living. For as new things disturb the minds of men, you ought to endeavor that these changes retain as much as possible of the ancient [forms]; and if the magistrates change both in number and in authority and in duration [of term] from the ancients, the names at least ought to be retained.

And this (as I have said) ought to be preserved by whoever wants to organize an absolute power into a Republic or a Kingdom; but he who wants

to establish an absolute power, which by authors is called a Tyranny, ought to change everything, as will be mentioned in the following chapter.

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## CHAPTER 26. A NEW PRINCE IN A CITY OR PROVINCE TAKEN BY HIM OUGHT TO ORGANIZE EVERYTHING ANEW

Whoever becomes Prince either of a City or a State, and more so if his foundations are weak, and does not want to establish a civil system either in the form of a Kingdom or a Republic, [will find] the best remedy he has to hold that Principality is (he being a new Prince) to do everything anew in that State; such as in the City to make new Governors with new titles, with new authority, with new men, [and] make the poor rich, as David did when he became King, who piled good upon the needy, and dismissed the wealthy empty-handed. In addition to this he should build new Cities, destroy old ones, transfer the inhabitants from one place to another, and in sum, not to leave anything unchanged in that Province, [and] so that there should be no rank, nor order, nor status, nor riches, that he who obtains it does not recognize it as coming from him; he should take as his model Philip of Macedonia, father of Alexander, who, by these methods, from a petty King became Prince of Greece. And those who write of him tell how he transferred men from Province to Province, as the Mandrians [Shepherds] move their sheep. These methods are most cruel and hostile to every system of living, not only Christian, but human, and should be avoided by every man; and he should want rather to live as a private individual than as a King at the [expense of the] ruin of men. None the less, he who does not want to take up the first path of good, must, if he wants to maintain himself, follow the latter path of evil. But men take up certain middle paths which are most harmful, for they do not know how to be entirely good or entirely bad, as the following chapter will show by example.

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## CHAPTER 27. VERY RARELY DO MEN KNOW HOW TO BE ENTIRELY GOOD OR ENTIRELY BAD

When Pope Julius II in the year one thousand five hundred and five <sup>1505</sup> went to Bologna to drive the house of Bentivogli out of that State, of which they had held the Principate [of that State] for a hundred years, he wanted also to remove Giovanpagolo Baglioni from Perugia, of which he was Tyrant, [and] to be the one who planned to eliminate all the Tyrants who were occupying the lands of the Church. And having arrived at Perugia with this purpose and decision known to everyone, he did not wait to enter in that City with his army that was protecting him, but entered unarmed, notwithstanding that Giovanpagolo was inside with large forces that he had gathered for defense. And thus, brought by that fury which governed all his actions, with only his simple guard he placed himself in the hands of the enemy, whom he then carried off with him, leaving a governor in that City who should administer it for the Church. The temerity of the Pope and the cowardice of Giovanpagolo were noted by the prudent men who were with the Pope, nor could they understand whence it happened that he [Baglioni] did not with his perpetual fame attack his enemy at once and enrich himself with booty, there being with the Pope all the Cardinals with their valuables. Nor could it be believed that he abstained either from goodness or that his conscience restrained him; for no regard of piety could enter in the heart of a riotous man, who had kept his sister, and had put to death his cousins and nephews in order that he could reign there: but it is concluded that men do not know how to be entirely bad or perfectly good, and that when an evil has some greatness in it or is generous in any part, they do not know how to attempt it.

Thus Giovanpagolo, who did not mind being publicly [called] incestuous and a parricide, did not know how, or to say more correctly, did not dare (even having a justifiable opportunity) to make an enterprise where everyone would have admired his courage and which would have left an eternal memory of himself, being the first who would have shown the Prelates how little esteemed are they who live and reign as they do, and would have done

an act, the greatness of which would have overcome every infamy and every danger that could have resulted from it.

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## CHAPTER 28. FOR WHAT REASONS THE ROMANS WERE LESS UNGRATEFUL TO THEIR CITIZENS THAN THE ATHENIANS

Whoever reads of the things done by Republics will find in all of them some species of ingratitude against their citizens, but he will find less in Rome than in Athens, and perhaps in any other Republic. And in seeking the reasons for this, speaking of Rome and Athens, I believe it was because the Romans had less reason to suspect their citizens than did the Athenians. For in Rome (discussing the time from the expulsion of the Kings up to Sulla and Marius) liberty was never taken away from any of its citizens, so that in that [City] there was no great reason to be suspicious of them, and consequently [no cause] to offend them inconsiderately. The very contrary happened in Athens, for her liberty having been taken away by Pisistratus in her most florid time and under the deception of goodness, so soon then as she became free, remembering the injuries received and her past servitude, she became a harsh avenger not only of the errors of her citizens, but even the shadow of them. From which resulted the exile and death of so many excellent men: From this came the practice of ostracism and every other violence which that City at various times took up against her Nobility. And it is very true what these writers say of that Civil Society, that when they have recovered their liberty, they sting their people more severely than when they have preserved it. Whoever would consider, therefore, what has been said, will not blame Athens for this, nor praise Rome, but he will blame only the necessity resulting from the difference of events which occurred in those Cities. For whoever will consider things carefully, will see that if Rome had had her liberty taken away as it was in Athens, Rome would not have been any more merciful toward her citizens than was the latter. From which a very real conjecture can be made of that which occurred after the expulsion of the Kings against Collatinus and Publius Valerius, of whom the first (although he was found in liberating Rome) was sent into exile for no other reason than for having the name of the Tarquins, and the other having only given suspicion by building a house on Mount Caelius, was also made to be an exile. So that it can be judged (seeing how severe Rome was in these two suspicions) that she would have been ungrateful as Athens was, if she

had been offended by her citizens as she was in her early times and before her expansion. And so as not to have to return again to this matter of ingratitude, I shall say that which will occur in the following chapter.

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## CHAPTER 29. WHICH IS MORE UNGRATEFUL, A PEOPLE OR A PRINCE

It appears to me apropos of the above written matter to discuss with example who practiced this ingratitude more, a People or a Prince. And to discuss this part further, I say that this vice of ingratitude arises either from avarice or from suspicion: For when a People or a Prince has sent out one of its Captains on an important expedition, where that Captain (having won) has acquired great glory, that People or that Prince is bound in turn to reward him: and if in place of a reward they, moved by avarice, either dishonor or offend him, not wanting (held back by this cupidity) to take the trouble, they make an error that has no excuse, but will leave behind for them an eternal infamy. Yet many Princes are found who err in this way. And Cornelius Tacitus tells the reason in this sentence; An injury is more apt to be repaid than a benefit, where gratitude is onerous and exultation is had in revenge. But when they do not reward one; or (to say it better) they offend one, moved not by avarice, but by suspicion, then both the People and Prince merit some excuse. And much is read of this ingratitude shown for such reasons, for that Captain who by his virtue has conquered an Empire for his Lord, overcoming the enemy and filling himself with glory and his soldiers with riches, of necessity acquires so much reputation with his soldiers, with his enemies, and with the Prince's very own subjects, that that victory can be distasteful to that Lord who had sent him. And because the nature of men is ambitious and suspicious, and puts no limits on the fortune of anyone, it is not impossible that the suspicion which is suddenly aroused in the Prince after the victory of his captain, may not by itself have been increased by some of his actions or expressions made insolently. So that the Prince cannot think otherwise than to secure himself: and to do this thinks of either having him die or taking away from him that reputation which he gained among his army and the people, and with all industry show that the victory was not due to the virtue of that [Captain], but by chance and cowardice of the enemy, or by the wisdom of other Captains who had been with him in that action.

After Vespasian, while in Judea, was declared Emperor by his army, Antonius Primus, who was to be found with another army in Illyria, took his side, and

came into Italy against Vitellius who reigned in Rome, and with the greatest virtue routed two armies of Vitellius and occupied Rome, so that through the virtue of Antonius, Mutianus, who had been sent by Vespasian, found everything achieved and all difficulties overcome. The reward which Antonius received was that Mutianus took away from him the command of the army, and little by little reduced his authority in Rome to nothing: so that Antonius went to find Vespasian who was yet in Asia, by whom he was received in such a fashion, that in a brief time, having been reduced to no rank, died almost in despair. And histories are full of such examples.

In our own times anyone now living knows with what industry and virtue Gonsalvo Ferrante, fighting in the Kingdom of Naples for Ferrando King of Aragon against the French, had conquered and won that Kingdom, and was rewarded for his victory by Ferrando, who departed from Aragon and came to Naples, where he first took away from him the command of the armed forces, then took away from him the fortresses, and then took him with him to Spain, where in a short time he died unhonored.

And this suspicion, therefore, is so natural in Princes that they cannot defend themselves against them, and it is impossible for them to show gratitude toward those who, by victory under their ensigns, have made great conquest. And if a Prince cannot defend himself from them, is it not a miracle or something worthy of greater consideration, that a people does not also defend itself; for a City which exists free has two objectives, one conquering, the other maintaining itself free, and it happens that because of excessive love for both of these it makes errors. As to the errors made in conquering, they will be spoken of in their proper place. As to the errors made in maintaining itself free, among others they are those of offending those Citizens whom it ought to reward, and of having suspicion of those in whom it ought to have confidence. And although these things in a Republic already corrupted cause great evils, and which many times rather leads to tyranny, as happened in Rome under Caesar who took by force that which ingratitude denied him, none the less in a Republic not yet corrupted they are the cause of great good, and make for a longer free existence, maintaining itself because the fear of punishment makes men better and less ambitious.

It is true that among all the people who ever had an Empire for reasons discussed above, Rome was the least ungrateful, for it can be said there is no other example of her ingratitude than that of Scipio; for Coriolanus and Camillus were both made exiles because of the injuries that the one and the other had inflicted on the Plebs: But he one was never pardoned for having always preserved a hostile spirit against the People: the other was not only recalled [from exile], but for the rest of his life was adored as a Prince. But the ingratitude shown to Scipio arose from a suspicion that the Citizens begun to have of him that was never had of others, which [suspicion] arose from the greatness of the enemy that Scipio conquered, from the reputation which that victory in such a long and perilous war had given him, from the rapidity of it, from the favor which his youth, his prudence, and his other memorable virtues had acquired for him. These were so many, that for no other reason, the Magistrates of Rome feared his authority, which displeased intelligent men as something unheard of in Rome. And his manner of living appeared so extraordinary that Cato the elder, reputed a saint, was the first to go against him, and to say that a City could not be called free where there was a Citizen who was feared by the Magistrates. So that if the people of Rome in this case followed the opinion of Cato, they merit the excuse that I said above was merited by those People and those Princes who, because of suspicion, are ungrateful. Concluding this discourse, therefore, I say that using this vice of ingratitude for either avarice or suspicion, it will be seen that the People never use it from avarice, and from suspicion much less than do Princes, having less reason for suspicion, as will be told below.

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## CHAPTER 30. WHAT MEANS A PRINCE OR A REPUBLIC OUGHT TO USE TO AVOID THIS VICE OF INGRATITUDE, AND WHAT THAT CAPTAIN OR THAT CITIZEN OUGHT TO DO SO AS NOT TO BE TOUCHED BY IT

A Prince, to avoid the necessity of having to live with suspicion or to be ungrateful, ought to go on his expeditions in person, as those Roman Emperors did in the beginning, as does the Turk in our times, and as those of virtu have done and still do. For winning, the glory and the conquests are all theirs: and when they do not (the glory belonging to others) it does not appear to them to be able to use that conquest unless they extinguish that glory in others which they have not known how to gain for themselves, and to become ungrateful and unjust is without doubt more to their loss than to their gain. But when either through negligence or little prudence they remain idle at home and send a Captain, I have no precept to give them, then, other than that which they know by themselves. But I will say to that Captain, judging that he will not be able to escape the stings of ingratitude, that he must do one of two things: either immediately after the victory he must leave the army and place himself in the hands of the Prince, guarding himself from any insolent and ambitious act, so that he [the Prince] despoiled of every suspicion has reason either to reward him or not to offend him, or if he does not please to do this, to take boldly the contrary side, and take all those means through which he believed that that conquest is his very own and not of his Prince, obtaining for himself the good will of his soldiers and of the subjects, and must make new friendships with his neighbors, occupy the fortresses with his men, corrupt the Princes [Leaders] of his army, and assure himself of those he cannot corrupt, and by these means seek to punish his Lord for that ingratitude that he showed toward him. There are no other ways: but (as was said above) men do not know how to be all bad, or all good. And it always happens that immediately after a victory, he [a Captain] does not want to leave his army, is not able to conduct himself modestly, does not know how to use forceful ends [and] which have in themselves something honorable. So that being undecided, between the delays and indecision, he is destroyed.

As to a Republic wishing to avoid this vice of ingratitude, the same remedy cannot be given as that of a Prince; that is, that it cannot go and not send others on its expeditions, being necessitated to send one of its Citizens. It happens, therefore, that as a remedy, I would tell them to keep to the same means that the Roman Republic used in being less ungrateful than others: which resulted from the methods of its government, for as all the City, both the Nobles and Ignobles [Plebeians] devoted themselves to war, there always sprung up in Rome in every age so many men of virtu and adorned with various victories, that the People did not have cause for being apprehensive of any of them, there being so many and one guarding another. And thus they maintained themselves wholesome and careful not to show any shadow of ambition, nor give reason to the People to harm them as ambitious men; and if they came to the Dictatorship, that greater glory derived rather from their laying it down. And thus, not being able by such methods to generate suspicion, they did not generate ingratitude. So that a Republic that does not want to have cause to be ungrateful ought to govern as Rome did, and a Citizen who wants to avoid its sting ought to observe the limits observed the limits observed by the Roman Citizens.

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## **CHAPTER 31. THAT ROMAN CAPTAINS WERE NEVER EXTRAORDINARILY PUNISHED FOR ERRORS COMMITTED; NOR WERE THEY YET PUNISHED WHEN, BY THEIR IGNORANCE OR BAD PROCEEDINGS UNDERTAKEN BY THEM, HARM ENSUED TO THE REPUBLIC**

The Romans were (as we discussed above) not only less ungrateful than other Republics, but were even more merciful and considerate in punishing their Captains of the armies than any other. For if their error had been from malice, they castigated them humanely: if it was through ignorance, they did not punish them but rewarded and honored them. This manner of proceeding was well considered by them, for they judged that it was of great importance to those who commanded their armies to have their minds free and prompt and without any outside regard as to how they took up their duties, that they did not want to add anything, which in itself was difficult and dangerous, believing that if these were added no one would be able to operate with virtu. For instance, they sent an army into Greece against Philip of Macedonia, and into Italy against those people who first overcame them. This Captain who was placed in charge of such an expedition would be deeply concerned of all the cares that go on behind those activities, which are grave and very important. Now, if to such cares should be added the many examples of the Romans who had been crucified or otherwise put to death for having lost the engagement, it would be impossible for that Captain, among such suspicions, to be able to proceed vigorously. Judging, therefore, that the ignominy of having lost would be a great punishment for such a one, they did not want to frighten him with other greater penalties.

As to errors committed through ignorance, here is an example. Sergius and Virginius were besieging Veii, each in charge of part of the army, of which Sergius was on the side whence the Tuscans could come, and Virginius on the other side. It happened that Sergius being assaulted by the Faliscans among other people, preferred being routed and put to flight before sending to Virginius for help: And on the other hand, Virginius waiting for

him [Sergius] to be humiliated, would rather see the dishonor of his country and the ruin of the army, than to succor him. A truly bad case, and worthy to be noted, and of creating a poor conjecture of the Roman Republic, if both of them had not been castigated. It is true that where another Republic would have punished them with a capital penalty, it [Rome] punished them with a monetary fine. Which was done, not because their errors merited greater punishment, but because the Romans wanted in this case, for the reasons already mentioned, to maintain their ancient customs.

As to errors [committed] through ignorance, there is no more striking example than that of Varro, through whose temerity the Romans were routed at Cannae by Hannibal, where that Republic was brought in danger of its liberty, none the less because it was ignorance and not malice, they not only did not castigate him, but honored him, and on his return to Rome, the whole Senatorial order went to meet him, [and] not being able to thank him for the battle, they thanked him for returning to Rome and for not having despaired of Roman affairs.

When Papirus Cursor wanted to have Fabius put to death for having, against his command, combatted with the Samnites, among the other reasons which were assigned by the father of Fabius against the obstinacy of the Dictator was this, that in any defeat of its Captains, the Roman People never did that which Papirus in victory wanted to do.

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## CHAPTER 32. A REPUBLIC OR A PRINCE OUGHT NOT TO DEFER BENEFITING MEN IN THEIR NECESSITY

Although the Romans succeeded happily in being liberal to people, yet when danger came upon them from Porsenna coming to assault Rome in order to restore thy Tarquins, the Senate apprehensive of the plebs who might want to accept the Kings than to sustain a war, in order to assure themselves [of the plebs], relieved them of the salt gabelle and all other taxes, saying that the poor did much for the public benefit if they reared their children, and that because of this benefice that people should submit itself to endure siege, famine, and war: let no one who trusts in this example defer in gaming the people over to himself until the time of danger, for it will not succeed for him as it succeeded for the Romans; for the people in general will judge not to have gotten that benefit from you, but from your adversaries, and becoming afraid that once the necessity is past, you would take back from them that which by force you gave them, they will have no obligation to you. And the reason why this proceeding turned out well for the Romans was because the State was new, and not yet firm, and that the people had seen that other laws had been made before for their benefit, such as that of the appeal to the Plebs: so that they could persuade themselves that that good which was done, was not caused so much by the coming of the enemy as much as the disposition of the Senate to benefit them: In addition to this the memory of the Kings, by whom they had been ill-used and injured in many ways, was fresh. And as similar occasions rarely occur, so it rarely occurs that similar remedies do good. Therefore Republics as well as Princes ought to think ahead what adversities may befall them, and of which men in adverse times they may have need of, and then act toward them as they might judge necessary (supposing some case) to live. And he who governs himself otherwise, whether Prince or Republic, and especially a Prince, and then on this fact believes that if danger comes upon him, he may regain the people for himself by benefits, deceives himself, because he not only does not assure himself, but accelerates his ruin.

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### CHAPTER 33. WHEN AN EVIL HAS SPRUNG UP EITHER WITHIN A STATE OR AGAINST A STATE, IT IS A MORE SALUTARY PROCEEDING TO TEMPORIZE WITH IT THAN TO ATTACK IT RASHLY

The Roman Republic growing in reputation, strength, and empire, its neighbors which at first had not thought how much harm that new Republic would be able to bring to them, commenced (but too late) to recognize their error, and wanting to remedy that which at first they had not remedied, they [arranged] for forty peoples [tribes] to conspire against Rome: whence the Romans among the usual remedies made by them in urgent perils, wanted to create a Dictator, that is, to give power to one man who, without any consultation, should be able to decide, and without any appeal should be able to execute his decisions: This remedy which formerly was useful and a means of overcoming imminent perils, was also always most useful in all those incidents which sprung up at any time against the Republic in the expansion of the Empire. On which subject it will first be discussed, that when an evil springs up either within a Republic or against a Republic, whether from intrinsic or extrinsic causes, and has become so great that it begins to make [everyone] afraid, it is a much more safe procedure to temporize with it than to try to extinguish it. For almost always those who try to crush it, make its force greater, and make that evil which is suspected from it to be accelerated. And incidents similar to these arise more frequently in a Republic from intrinsic and extrinsic causes, as it often occurs that it allows a Citizen more power than is reasonable, or the corrupting of a law is begun which is the nerve and life of a free society: and this error is allowed to run so far, that it is a more harmful procedure to want to remedy it than to let it go on. And it is so much more difficult to recognize these evils when they first arise, as it seems more natural to men always to favor the beginning of things: And such favors are accorded more to those accomplishments which have in them some virtu or are done by young men, than to any other thing: for if some young noble is seen to spring up in a Republic who has in him some extraordinary virtu, the eyes of all the Citizens begin to turn toward him, and they agree without regard [to consequences] to honor him: so that if there is any stitch of ambition in him,

the assemblage of favors which nature and these incidents give him, he will soon come to a place that when the Citizens see their error, they will have few remedies to stop him, and they wanting so much to employ that which they have, do nothing other than to accelerate his power.

Of this many examples can be cited, but I want to give only one of our City [of Florence]. Cosimo De'Medici, from whom the house of Medici in our City owed the beginning of its greatness, came into such reputation by the favor which his prudence and the ignorance of the other Citizens gave him, that he begun to bring fear to the State, so that the other Citizens judged it dangerous to offend him and still more dangerous to allow him to go on. But Niccolo Da Uzzano living in those times, who was held to be a man most expert in civil affairs, and having made the first error in not recognizing the dangers that could arise from the reputation of Cosimo, never permitted while he lived that a second [error] be made, that is, that it should be attempted [to want] to destroy him, judging that such an attempt would be the ruin of their State, as in fact was seen after his death; for those Citizens [who remained] not observing these counsels of his, made themselves strong against Cosimo and drove him out of Florence. Whence there resulted that, his party resentful of this injury, a little later called him back and made him Prince of the Republic, to which rank he could never have ascended without that manifest opposition. This same thing happened in Rome to Caesar who was favored by Pompey and the others for his virtue; which favor a little while later was converted to fear: to which Cicero gives testimony, saying that Pompey had too late begun to fear Caesar. Which fear caused them to think of remedies, and the remedies they took accelerated the ruin of the Republic.

I say, therefore, that since it is difficult to recognize these evils when they spring up, this difficulty caused by the deception which things give in the beginning, it is the wiser proceeding to temporize with them when they are recognized than to oppose them. For by temporizing with them, they will either extinguish themselves, or the evil will at least be deferred for a longer time. And Princes ought to open their eyes to all these things which they plan to do away with, and be careful by their strength and drive not to increase them instead of decreasing them, and not believe that by blowing

at a thing, it can be done away with, or rather to suffocate the plant by blowing on it. But the force of the evil ought to be well considered, and when they see themselves sufficient to oppose it, to attack it without regard [to consequences], otherwise they should let it be, and in no way attempt it. For it will happen as was discussed above, and as it did happen to the neighbors of Rome, to whom after Rome had grown so much in power, it was more salutary to seek to placate her and hold her back with methods of peace, than with methods of war to make her think of new institutions and new defenses. For their conspiracy did nothing other than to make them united, more stalwart, and to think of new ways by which in a short time they expanded their power: Among which was the creation of a Dictator, by which new institution they not only overcame the imminent dangers, but was the cause of obviating infinite evils in which, without that remedy, that Republic would have been involved.

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**CHAPTER 34. THE DICTATORIAL AUTHORITY DID GOOD AND NOT HARM TO THE ROMAN REPUBLIC; AND THAT THE AUTHORITY WHICH CITIZENS TAKE AWAY, NOT THOSE ARE GIVEN THEM BY FREE SUFFRAGE, ARE PERNICIOUS TO CIVIL SOCIETY**

Those Romans who introduced into that City the method of creating a Dictator have been condemned by some writers, as something that was in time the cause of tyranny in Rome; alleging that the first tyrant who existed in that City commanded her under this title of Dictator, saying if it had not been for this, Caesar could not under any public [title] have imposed his tyranny. Which thing was not well examined by those who held this opinion and was believed beyond all reason. For it was not the name or the rank of Dictator that placed Rome in servitude, but it was the authority taken by the Citizens to perpetuate themselves in the Empire [government]: and if the title of Dictator did not exist in Rome, they would have taken another; for it is power that easily acquires a name, not a name power. And it is seen that the Dictatorship while it was given according to public orders and not by individual authority, always did good to the City. For it is the Magistrates who are made and the authority that is given by irregular means that do injury to Republics, not those that come in the regular way. As is seen ensued in Rome where in so much passage of time no Dictator did anything that was not good for the Republic. For which there are very evident reasons: First, because if a Citizen would want to [offend and ] take up authority in an irregular manner, it must happen that he have many qualities which he can never have in an uncorrupted Republic, for he needs to be very rich and to have many adherents and partisans, which he cannot have where the laws are observed: and even if he should have them, such men are so formidable that free suffrage would not support them. In addition to this, a Dictator was made for a [limited] time and not in perpetuity, and only to remove the cause for which he was created; and his authority extended only in being able to decide by himself the ways of meeting that urgent peril, [and] to do things without consultation, and to punish anyone without appeal; but he could do nothing to diminish [the power] of the State, such as would have been the taking away of authority from the Senate or the

people, to destroy the ancient institutions of the City and the making of new ones. So that taking together the short time of the Dictatorship and the limited authority that he had, and the Roman People uncorrupted, it was impossible that he should exceed his limits and harm the City: but from experience it is seen that it [City] always benefited by him.

And truly, among the other Roman institutions, this is one that merits to be considered and counted among those which were the cause of the greatness of so great an Empire: For without a similar institution, the Cities would have avoided such extraordinary hazards only with difficulty; for the customary orders of the Republic move to slowly (no council or Magistrate being able by himself to do anything, but in many cases having to act together) that the assembling together of opinions takes so much time; and remedies are most dangerous when they have to apply to some situation which cannot await time. And therefore Republics ought to have a similar method among their institutions. And the Venetian Republic (which among modern Republics is excellent) has reserved authority to a small group [few] of citizens so that in urgent necessities they can decide on all matters without wider consultation. For when a similar method is lacking in a Republic, either observing the institutions [strictly] will ruin her, or in order not to ruin her, it will be necessary to break them. And in a Republic, it should never happen that it be governed by extraordinary methods. For although the extraordinary method would do well at that time, none the less the example does evil, for if a usage is established of breaking institutions for good objectives, then under that pretext they will be broken for evil ones. So that no Republic will be perfect, unless it has provided for everything with laws, and provided a remedy for every incident, and fixed the method of governing it. And therefore concluding I say, that those Republics which in urgent perils do not have resort either to a Dictatorship or a similar authority, will always be ruined in grave incidents. And it is to be noted in this new institution how the method of electing him was wisely provided by the Romans. For the creation of a Dictator being of some discredit to the Consuls, as the Chiefs of the City had to come to the same obedience as others, [and] wanting that the authority for such election should remain in the consuls, believing that if an incident should arise that Rome would have need of this Regal power, by doing this voluntarily by

themselves [Consuls], it would reflect on them less. For the wounds and every other evil that men inflict on themselves spontaneously and by choice, pain less in the long run than do those that are inflicted by others. In later times, however, the Romans, in place of a Dictator, used to give such authority to the Consul, in these words: Let the Consuls see that the Republic suffers no detriment. But to return to our subject, I conclude, that the neighbors of Rome seeking to oppress her, caused her to institute methods not only enabling her to defend herself, but enabling her with more strength, better counsels, and greater authority to attack them.

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## CHAPTER 35. THE REASON WHY THE CREATION OF THE DECENVIRS IN ROME WAS HARMFUL TO THE LIBERTY OF THAT REPUBLIC, NOTWITHSTANDING THAT IT WAS CREATED BY PUBLIC AND FREE SUFFRAGE

The election of the Ten citizens [Decemvirs] created by the Roman people to make the laws in Rome, who in time became Tyrants, and without any regard took away her liberty, appears to be contrary to what was discussed above, that that authority which is taken by violence, not that which is given by suffrage, harms the Republics. Here, however, the methods of giving authority and the time for which it is given, ought to be considered. For when free authority is given for a long time (calling a long time a year or more) it is always dangerous and will produce effects either good or bad, according as those upon whom it is conferred are good or bad. And if the authority given to the Ten and that which the Dictators have are considered, it will be seen beyond comparison that that of the Ten is greater. For when a Dictator was created there remained the Tribunes, Consuls, [and] the Senate, with all their authority, and the Dictator could not take it away from them; and even if he should have been able to remove anyone from the Consulship, or from the Senate, he could not suppress the Senatorial order and make new laws. So that the Senate, the Consuls, and the Tribunes, remaining with their authority, came to be as his guard to prevent him from going off from the right road. But in the creation of the Ten all the contrary occurred, for they annulled the Consuls and the Tribunes, and they were given authority to make laws and do every other thing as the Roman People had. So that, finding themselves alone, without Consuls, without Tribunes, without the appeal to the People, and because of this not having anyone to observe them, moved by the ambitions of Appius, they were able in the second year to become insolent. And because of this, it ought to be noted that when [we said] an authority given by free suffrage never harmed any Republic, it presupposed that a People is never led to give it except with limited powers and for limited times: but when either from having been deceived or for some other reason it happens that they are induced to give it imprudently and in the way in which the Roman people gave it to the Ten,

it will always happen as it did to them [Romans]. This is easily proven, considering the reasons that kept the Dictators good and that made the Ten bad: and considering also how those Republics which have been kept well ordered have done in giving authority for a long [period of] time, as the Spartans gave to their King, and how the Venetians give to their Doges; for it will be seen in both these methods, guardians were appointed who watched that the Kings [and the Doges] could not ill use that authority. Nor is it of any benefit in this case that the people are not corrupted, for an absolute authority in a very brief time corrupts the people, and makes friends and partisans for itself. Nor is it harmful either to be poor or not to have relatives, for riches and every other favor quickly will run after power, as we will discuss in detail in the creation of the said Ten.

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## CHAPTER 36. CITIZENS WHO HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE HIGHER HONORS OUGHT NOT TO DISDAIN THE LESSER

The Romans had made Marcus Fabius and C. Manlius Consuls, and had won a glorious engagement against the Veienti and the Etruscans, in which, however, Quintus Fabius brother of the Consul, who the previous year had himself been Consul, was killed. Here, then, ought to be considered how much the institutions of that City were adept at making her great, and how much the other Republics deceived themselves in deviating [themselves] from her methods. For although the Romans were great lovers of glory, none the less they did not esteem it a dishonorable thing to obey presently those whom at another time they had commanded, and to serve in that army of which they had been Princes. Which custom is contrary to the opinion, orders, and practices of the Citizen of our times: and in Venice this error still holds that a Citizen having had a high rank would be ashamed to accept a lesser, and the City consents to them what she cannot change. Which thing, however honorable it should be for a private [citizen] is entirely useless for the public. For a Republic ought to have more hope, and more confidence in a Citizen who descends from a high rank to govern a lesser, than in one who rises from a lower rank to govern a higher one. For the latter cannot reasonably be relied upon unless he is surrounded by men, who are of such respectability or of such virtue, that his inexperience can be moderated by their counsel and authority. And if in Rome there had been the same customs as are in Venice, and other modern Republics and Kingdoms, where he who had at one time been Consul should never want to enter the army except as Consul, there would have arisen infinite things prejudicial to a free society, both because of the errors that new men would make, and because of their ambition which they could have indulged in more freely, not having men around them in whose presence they should be afraid to err, and thus they would have come to be more unrestrained, which would have resulted entirely to the detriment of the public.

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## CHAPTER 37. WHAT TROUBLES THE AGRARIAN LAW BROUGHT FORTH IN ROME; AND HOW TROUBLESOME IT IS TO MAKE A LAW IN A REPUBLIC WHICH GREATLY REGARDS THE PAST BUT CONTRARY TO THE ANCIENT CUSTOMS OF THE CITY

It was the verdict of ancient writers that men afflict themselves in evil and weary themselves in the good, and that the same effects result from both of these passions. For whenever men are not obliged to fight from necessity, they fight from ambition; which is so powerful in human breasts, that it never leaves them no matter to what rank they rise. The reason is that nature has so created men that they are able to desire everything but are not able to attain everything: so that the desire being always greater than the acquisition, there results discontent with the possession and little satisfaction to themselves from it. From this arises the changes in their fortunes; for as men desire, some to have more, some in fear of losing their acquisition, there ensues enmity and war, from which results the ruin of that province and the elevation of another. I have made this discussion because it was not enough for the Roman Plebs to secure themselves from the Nobles through the creation of the Tribunes, to which [desire] they were constrained by necessity, that they soon (having obtained that) began to fight from ambition and to want to divide with the Nobles their honors and possessions, as things more esteemed by men. From this there arose the plague that brought forth the contentions about the Agrarian law, and in the end was the cause of the destruction of the Roman Republic. And because well-ordered Republics have to keep the public [State] rich and its Citizens poor, it was apparent that there was some defect in that law in the City of Rome, which either was now drawn in the beginning in such a way that it required to be redrawn every day, or that it was so long deferred in the making that it became troublesome in regard to the past, or if it had been well ordered in the beginning, it had become corrupted in its application. So that whatever way it may have been, this law could never be spoken of in Rome without that City going upside down [from turmoil]. This law had two principal articles. Through the first it provided that each Citizen could not possess more than so many jugeri of land, through the other that

the fields which were taken from the enemy should be divided among the Roman people. This, therefore, came to make two strong offenses against the Nobles, for those who possessed more land than the law permitted (of whom the Nobles were the greater part) had to be deprived of it, and by dividing the possessions of the enemy among the Plebs, it deprived them [Nobles] that means of enriching themselves. Since this offense came to be against the powerful men, and who thought that by going against it they were defending the public, whenever (as I have said) this was brought up, that City would go upside-down, and the Nobles with patience and industry temporized, either by calling out the army, or by having that Tribune who proposed it opposed by another Tribune, or sometimes by yielding in part, or even by sending a Colony to that place that was to be distributed, as happened in the countryside of Antium, about which a dispute spring up from this law; a Colony drawn from Rome was sent to that place, to whom the said countryside was assigned. Concerning which Titus Livius used a notable remark, saying that it was difficult to find in Rome one who would give his name to go to the said Colony; so much more ready were the Plebs to defend the things in Rome than to possess them in Antium.

This mood concerning this law thus troubled them for a time, so that the Romans begun to conduct their armies to the extreme parts of Italy, or outside of Italy, after which time it appeared that things settled down. This resulted because the fields that the enemies of Rome possessed being far removed from the eyes of the Plebs, and in a place where it was not easy to cultivate them, became less desirable; and also the Romans were less disposed to punish their enemies in such a way, and even when they deprived them of some land from their countryside, they distributed Colonies there. So that for these reasons this law remained, as it were, dormant up to the time of the Gracchi, by whom it being revived, wholly ruined the liberty of Rome; for it found the power of its adversaries redoubled, and because of this [revival] so much hate developed between the Plebs and the Senate, that it came to arms and bloodshed beyond every civil limit and custom. So that the public Magistrates not being able to remedy them, nor either faction having further confidence in them, recourse was had to private remedies, and each of thy factions decided to appoint a chief [for themselves] who would defend them. In these troubles and

disorders the Plebs came and turned to Marius with his reputations, so that they made him Consul four times; and with few intervening intervals that his Consulship continued so that he was able by himself to make himself Consul another three times. Against which plague thy Nobility, not having any remedy, turned their favor to Sulla, and having made him Head of their party, arrived at civil war, and after much bloodshed and changes of fortune, the Nobility remained superior. Later, in the time of Caesar and Pompey, these moods were revived, for Caesar making himself Head of the party of Marius, and Pompey of that of Sulla; [and] coming to arms Caesar remained superior, who became the first Tyrant in Rome, so that City was never again free.

Such, therefore, was the beginning and the end of the Agrarian law. And although elsewhere we showed that the enmity in Rome between the Senate and the Plebs should maintain Rome free, because it gave rise to those laws which favored liberty, and therefore the result of this Agrarian law may seem different from such a conclusion, I say that I do not on that account change my opinion, for so great is the ambition of the Nobles, that if it is not beaten down in various ways and means in a City, it will soon bring that City to ruin.

So that if the contentions about the Agrarian law took three hundred years in bringing Rome to servitude, she would perhaps have been brought to servitude much sooner if the Plebs with this law and their other desires had not always restrained the ambitions of the Nobles. It is also to be seen from this how much more men esteem property than honors, for the Roman Nobility, always yielded without extraordinary trouble to the Plebs in the matter of honors, but when it came to property, so great was its obstinacy in defending it, that the Plebs in order to give vent to their appetites had recourse to those extraordinary proceedings which were discussed above. The movers of these disorders were the Gracchi, whose intentions should be praised more than their prudence. For to want to remove an abuse that has grown up in a Republic, and enact a retrospective law for this, is a badly considered proceeding, and (as was discussed above at length) does nothing else than to accelerate that evil which leads to that abuse; but by

temporizing with it, either the evil comes much later, or by itself in time (before its end comes) it will extinguish itself.

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## CHAPTER 38. WEAK REPUBLICS ARE IRRESOLUTE AND DO NOT KNOW HOW TO DECIDE; AND IF THEY TAKE UP ANY PROCEEDING, IT RESULTS MORE FROM NECESSITY THAN FROM ELECTION

Because of a very great pestilence occurring in Rome, it appeared to the Volscians and the Equeans that the time had come for them to be able to attack Rome, these two people raised a large army and assaulted the Latins and the Ernicians, and their country being laid waste, the Latins and Ernicians were constrained to make it [to be] known to Rome, and pray that they might be defended by the Romans, but the Romans being afflicted by the pestilence, answered them that they should take up the proceeding of defending themselves with arms, for they were not able to defend them. In which is recognized the generosity and prudence of that Senate, that in every circumstance they always wanted to be the one that should be Prince of [make] the decisions which her subjects had to take; nor were they ever ashamed to decide something contrary to their mode of living or to other decisions previously made by them, whenever necessity should compel them. I say this, because at other times the same them, whenever necessity should compel them. I say this, because at other times the same Senate had forbidden the said people to arm and defend themselves, so that to a less prudent Senate it would then have seemed to them a falling from their dignity to concede to them this defense. But that [Senate] always judged things as they ought to be judged, and always took the less objectionable proceeding as the better; for they knew the evil of not being able to defend their subjects, and they knew also the evil of letting them arm themselves without them [the Romans], for the reasons given and many others that are understood: none the less knowing that they [thy Latins and Ernicians] had in any case armed themselves from necessity, having the enemy upon them, they took the honorable course and decided to let them do what had to be done with their permission, so that having once disobeyed from necessity, they might not accustom themselves to disobeying from choice.

And although this would appear to be a proceeding that every Republic ought to have taken, none the less weak and ill-advised Republics do not

know how to assume it, nor how to gain honor in a similar necessity. The Duke of Valentino had taken Faenza and made Bologna submit to his terms. Afterwards wanting to return to Rome by way of Tuscany, he sent one of his men to Florence to ask passage for himself and his army. In Florence they consulted how this thing should be managed, but everyone counselled that it not be conceded to them. The Roman way was not followed in this, for the Duke being very well armed, and the Florentines disarmed so that they could not prohibit the passage, it was much more to their honor that it should appear that he [the Duke] passed with their permission than by force; for as it was they had nothing but shame, which would have in part been less if they had managed otherwise. But the worst part that weak Republics have, is to be irresolute; so that all the proceedings they take are taken by force, and if anything good should be done by them, they do it by force and not by their prudence. I want to give two other examples of this which occurred in our times in the State [Government] of our City in the year one thousand five hundred <sup>1500</sup>.

King Louis XII of France having retaken Milan, wanting to restore Pisa in order to obtain the fifty thousand ducats that had been promised him by the Florentines after such restitution, he sent his armies toward Pisa captained by Monsignor De Beaumont, who, although French, was none the less a man in whom the Florentines had great confidence. This Captain placed himself and his army between Cascina and Pisa in order [to go] to assail the walls, where delaying several days to organize themselves for the capture, Pisan Orators [Ambassadors] came to Beaumont and offered to give up the City to the French army, with terms that under the pledge of the King he promise not to put them into the hands of the Florentines until four months after [the surrender]. This proceeding was completely refused by the Florentines, so that after beginning the siege, it followed that [he had to raise it and] he had to retire in shame. Nor was the proceeding refused for any other reason than the mistrust of the faith of the King, into whose hands they had been forced to place themselves because of their weak counsel; and on the other hand, while they did not trust him, neither were they able to see that it would have been easier for the King to restore Pisa to them after he had gone inside the City, and if he did not restore it to expose his mind [perfidy]; but not having [the City] he could promise it to

them and they would be forced to buy that promise: So that it would have been much more useful to them to have consented that Beaumont should have taken it [Pisa] under any promise, as was seen in the subsequent experience in the year MDII <sup>1502</sup> when Arezzo having rebelled, Monsignor Imbault was sent by the King of France to the succor of the Florentines with French forces, who, arriving near Arezzo, soon began to negotiate an accord with the Arentines who were [willing] to give up the town under certain pledges similar to those [asked] by the Pisans. This proposal was rejected in Florence: when Monsignor Imbault learned of this, and it appeared to him that the Florentines little understood him, he began to hold negotiations for the treaty [of surrender] on his own without the participation of the Commissioners so that he could conclude it in his own way; and under it, he entered with his forces into Arezzo, making the Florentines understand that they were fools and did not understand the things of the world: that if they wanted Arezzo, they should let the King know, who was much better able to give it to them with his forces inside that City rather than [with them] outside. In Florence they did not cease abusing and censuring the said Imbault, nor did they stop until they realized that if Beaumont had been like Imbault, they would have had Pisa as [they had] Arezzo.

And so to return to the subject, irresolute Republics never take up good proceedings except by force; for their weakness never allows them to decide where there is any doubt, and if that doubt is not dispelled by some violence which pushes the, they always remain in suspense.

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## CHAPTER 39. THE SAME INCIDENTS OFTEN HAPPEN TO DIFFERENT PEOPLE

And it is easily recognized by those who consider present and ancient affairs that the same desires and passions exist in all Cities and people, and that they always existed. So that to whoever with diligence examines past events, it is an easy thing to foresee the future in any Republic, and to apply those remedies which had been used by the ancients, or, not finding any of those used, to think of new ones from the similarity of events. But as these considerations are neglected or not understood by those who govern, it follows that the same troubles will exist in every time.

The City of Florence, having after the year XCIV <sup>1494</sup> lost part of her Empire, such as Pisa and other lands, was obliged to make war against those who occupied them: and because he who occupied them was powerful, there followed that they spent much in the war without any fruit: from the great spending there resulted great taxes, from the taxes infinite complaints from the people: and as this war was managed by a Magistracy of Ten Citizens who were called the “Ten of the War”, the general public began to hold them in aversion as those who were the cause of the war, and its expenses, and began to persuade themselves that if the said Magistracy were removed, the path for war would be removed: so that if they had to do it [reappoint the Ten] again, they would allow their [terms] to expire without making changes and commit their functions to the Signoria. Which decision was so pernicious that it not only did not end the war as the general public had persuaded itself it would, but removed those who were managing it with prudence, and there followed so great disorders that in addition to Pisa, Arezzo, and many other places were lost: so that the people perceiving their error, [and] that the cause of the malady was the fever and not the doctor, re-established the Magistracy of the Ten.

This same mood had arisen in Rome against the [name of the] Consuls; for that people, seeing one war arise from another, and not ever being able to have any repose, where they should have believed it had arisen from the ambition of neighbors who wanted to oppress them, they thought it had

arisen from the ambition of the Nobles, who, being unable to castigate the Plebs within Rome where they were defended by the power of Tribunate, wanted to lead them outside Rome [where they were] under the Consuls in order to oppress them, [and] where they would not have any aid: And because of this, they thought that it was necessary either to remove the Consuls or somehow to regulate their power, so that they should not have authority over the People either at home or abroad. The first who tried [to introduce] this law was one Terentillus, a Tribune, who proposed that there ought to be created [a Council of] five men who should examine the power of the Consuls and to limit it. This greatly excited the Nobility, as it appeared to them the majesty of the Empire would decline completely, so that no rank in that Republic would remain to the Nobility. None the less, so great was the obstinacy of the Tribunes that the dignity of the Consuls was extinguished: and after some other regulations they were finally content rather to create Tribunes with Consular power than to continue the Consuls, holding so much more in hatred their dignity than their authority. And thus they continued for a long time, until they recognized their error and returned to the Ten as the Florentines [did], [and] also re-established the Consuls.

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## CHAPTER 40. THE CREATION OF THE DECEMVIRATE IN ROME, AND WHAT IS TO BE NOTED IN IT; AND WHERE IT WILL BE CONSIDERED AMONG MANY OTHER THINGS HOW A REPUBLIC CAN BE SAVED OR RUINED BECAUSE OF SIMILAR ACCIDENTS

As I want to discuss in detail the incidents that arose in Rome because of the creation of the Decemvirate, it does not appear to me superfluous to narrate first all that ensued because of such creations, and then to discuss those parts which are notable [actions] in it, which are many and [worthy] of much consideration, both by those who want to maintain a Republic free as well as by those who should plan to subjugate her. For in such a discussion will be seen the many errors made by the Senate and the Plebs prejudicial to liberty, and the many errors made by Appius, Chief of the Decemvirate, prejudicial to that Tyranny which he had intended to have established in Rome. After much discussion between the People and the Nobility concerning the adoption of new laws in Rome through which the liberty of that State should be firmly established, by agreement they sent Spurius Posthumus with two other Citizens to Athens for copies of those laws that Solon gave to that City, so as to be able to base the [new] Roman laws upon them. These men having gone and returned, they arrived at the appointing of the men who should examine and establish the said laws, and they created the Decemvir [Ten Citizens] for a year, among whom Appius Claudius, a sagacious but turbulent man, was appointed. And in order that they might create such laws without any regard [to authority], they removed all the other Magistracies from Rome, and particularly the Tribunes and the Consuls, and also took away the appeal to the people: so that this new Magistracy [of the Ten] became absolute Princes [Masters] of Rome. Next Appius took over to himself all the authority of his other colleagues because of the favor he exercised toward the Plebs; for he had made himself so popular with his demonstrations, that it seemed a wonder that he should have so readily taken on a new nature and new genius, having before that time been held to be a cruel persecutor of the Plebs. These Ten conducted themselves civilly, not having more than ten Lictors who walked before the one who had been placed in charge over them. And although

they had absolute authority, none the less, having to punish a Roman Citizen for homicide, they cited him before [the sight of] the People and made them judge him.

They [The Ten] wrote the laws on ten tablet, and before confirming them exposed them to the public, so that all could read and discuss them, and so that they might know if there was any defect in order to be able to amend them before confirming them. Upon this Appius caused a rumor [to be spread] throughout Rome, that, if to these ten tablets there were to be added two others, perfection would be given to them, so that this opinion gave the People the opportunity to reappoint the Ten for another year: to which the People willingly agreed, as much so as not to reappoint the Consuls, as also because they hoped to remain without Tribunes, who were the judges of their causes, as was said above. Proceedings being taken, therefore, to re-establish it [The Ten], all the Nobility moved to seek these honors, and among the first was Appius: and he showed so much humanity toward the Plebs in asking for it, that he begun to be suspected by his companions: For they could not believe so much graciousness could exist with so much haughtiness. And being apprehensive of opposing him openly, they decided to do it by artifice: and although he was the youngest of them all, they gave him the authority to propose the future Ten to the People, believing that he would observe the limitations of the others of not proposing himself, it being an unaccustomed and ignominious thing in Rome. He in truth changed the impediment into an opportunity, and nominated himself among the first, to the astonishment and displeasure of all the Nobles. He then nominated nine others to his liking. Which new appointments made for another year, begun to show their error to the People and to the Nobility. For Appius quickly put an end to his alien character, and begun to show his innate haughtiness, and in a few days he filled his colleagues with his own spirits. And in order to frighten the people and the Senate, in place of the twelve Lictors, they created one hundred and twenty. For some days the fear was equal [on both sides], but then they begun to disregard the Senate and beat the Plebs, and if any beaten by one [Decemvir] appealed to another, he was treated worse in the appeal than he had in the first instance. So that the Plebs recognizing their error began, full of affliction, to look to the Nobles, And to capture the aura of liberty, where

they had feared servitude, to which condition they had brought the Republic. And this affliction was welcome to the Nobility, That likewise weary of the present, they desired the Consuls. The days that ended the year had come: the two tables of the laws were made, but not published. From this, the Ten took the opportunity to continue their Magistracy, and begun to retain the State through violence and make satellites of the Noble youth, to whom they gave the possessions of those they had condemned: By which gifts these youths were corrupted, and preferred their license to their complete liberty.

It happened at this time that the Sabines and Volscians moved war against the Romans, from the fear of which the Ten Began to discuss the weakness of their State, for without the Senate they could not wage war, and to assemble the Senate seemed to them they would lose their State. But being compelled to they took up this last proceeding, and assembling the Senate, many of the Senators spoke against the haughtiness of the Ten, and in particular Valerius and Horatius: and their authority would have been entirely extinguished except that the Senate, because of envy of the Plebs, was unwilling to show its authority, thinking that if the Ten resigned the magistracy voluntarily, it would be possible that the Tribune of the Plebs might be re-established. Deciding on war, therefore, they sent out two armies, led in part by the said Ten. Appius remained to govern the City: whereupon it happened that he became enamored of Virginia, and wanting to take her off by force, her father Virginius killed her in order to save her from him: whence tumults ensued in Rome and in the armies, which, having come together with the remnants of the Roman Plebs, went to Mount Sacer, where they stayed until the Ten resigned the Magistracy and the Tribunes and Consuls were re-established, and Rome restored to the form of its ancient liberty.

It is to be noted from this text, therefore, that the evil of creating this Tyranny first arose in Rome for the same reasons that give rise to the greater part of Tyrannies in Cities: and this [results] from the too great desire of the people to be free, and from the too great desire of the Nobles to dominate. And if they do not agree to make a law in favor of liberty, but one of the parties throws its [influence] in favor of one man, then a Tyranny

quickly springs up. The People and the Nobles of Rome agreed to create the Ten, and create them with such authority, from the desire which each of the parties had, one to extinguish the Consular office, the other [to extinguish that of] the Tribunate. The Ten having been created, it seemed to the Plebs that Appius had come to [the side of] the People and should beat down the Nobles, [and] the People turned to favor him. And when a People is led to commit this error of giving reputation to one man because he beats down those whom he hates, and if this man is wise, it will always happen that he will become Tyrant of that City. For [together] with the favor of the People he will attend to extinguishing the Nobility, and after they are extinguished he will turn to the oppression of the People until they are also extinguished; and by the time the People recognize they have become enslaved, they will not have any place to seek refuge. This is the path all those have taken who established Tyrannies in Republics: and if Appius had taken this path, his tyranny would have taken on more vitality and would not have been overthrown so readily. But he did everything to the contrary, nor could he have governed more imprudently, that in order to hold the tyranny he made enemies of those who had given it to him and who could maintain it for him, and made friends of those who were not in accord to give it to him and could not maintain it for him; and he lost those who were his friends, and sought to have as friends those who could not be his friends; for although the Nobles desired to tyrannize, yet that part of the Nobility which finds itself outside of the Tyranny is always hostile to the Tyrant; nor can he ever win them all over to him because of the great ambition and avarice that exists in them, the Tyrant not having riches and honors enough to be able to satisfy them all. And thus Appius in leaving the People and attaching himself to the Nobles, made a most obvious error, both for the reasons mentioned above, and because, in wanting to hold a thing [government] by force, the one who does the forcing needs to be more powerful than he who is forced. Whence it arises that those Tyrants who have the general public as friends and the Nobles as enemies, are more secure, because their violence is sustained by a greater force than that of those men who have the People as an enemy and the Nobility as a friend. For with that favor [of the people] the internal forces are enough to sustain him, as they were enough for Nabis, Tyrant of Sparta, when Greece and the Roman People assaulted him; who,

making sure of a few Nobles, and having the People as a friend, he defended himself with them; which he could not do if he had them as an enemy. But the internal forces of the other rank not being enough because there are few friends within it, he must seek [aid] outside. And this may be of three kinds; the one, foreigners as satellites who would guard your person; another, to arm the countryside [and] have them perform the duty that the Plebs should do; the third, to ally oneself with powerful neighbors who would defend you. Whoever has these means and observes them well, although he has the People as his enemy, is able in some way to save himself. But Appius could not accomplish this winning of the countryside over to himself, the countryside and Rome being one and the same thing, and he did not know how to do what he might have done; so that he was ruined at the outset. The Senate and the People made very great errors in this creation of the Decemvirs; for although in that discussion made above of the Dictator, that those Magistrates that are self-constituted, not those whom the People create, are harmful to liberty; none the less the People ought, when they create the Magistrates, do it in such a way that they should have some regard to becoming bad [abusing their power]. But where they should have proposed safeguards for maintaining them good, the Romans removed them, [and] only created the Magistracy [of Ten] in Rome and annulled all the others because of the excessive desire (as we said above) that the Senate had to extinguish the Tribunes, and the Plebs to extinguish the Consuls; this blinded them so that they both contributed to such disorders. For men, as King Ferrando said, often act like certain smaller birds of prey, in whom there is so much desire to pursue their prey to which nature incites them, that they do not observe another larger bird which is above them about to kill them.

It is to be recognized through this discussion, therefore, as we proposed in the beginning, the error which the Roman people made in wanting to save their liberty, and the errors of Appius in wanting to seize the Tyrancy.

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## CHAPTER 41. TO JUMP FROM HUMILITY TO PRIDE AND FROM MERCY TO CRUELTY WITHOUT PROFITABLE MEANS, IS AN IMPRUDENT AND USELESS THING

In addition to other means ill-used by Appius in order to maintain his tyranny, that of jumping from one quality to another was of no little moment. For his astuteness in deceiving the Plebs by simulating to be a man of the People was well used: those means were also well used in which he caused the Ten to be reappointed: that audacity in nominating himself against the expectation of the Nobility was also well used: the naming of colleagues suitable to him was also well used: but in doing this (according as was said above) what he did was not well used in changing his nature so quickly, and from being a friend showing himself to be the enemy of the Plebs, from being humane to being haughty, from easy [of access] to difficult; and to do this so very readily, that without any excuse everyone should know the falseness of his spirit. For whoever at one time has appeared to be good and wants for purposes of his own to become bad, ought to do it by proper means [gradually], and in a way that they should be conducive to the opportunities, so that before his changed nature takes away old favors from him, it may give him some new ones that his authority may not be diminished; otherwise, finding himself discovered and without friends, he will be ruined.

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## CHAPTER 42. HOW EASILY MAN MAY BE CORRUPTED

It should be noted also in the matter of the Decemvirate how easily men are corrupted and make themselves become of a contrary nature, even though [they are] good and well educated; [and], considering how those youths whom Appius had chosen to surround him begun, for the little advantages that followed from it, to be friendly to that tyranny, and that Quintus Fabius, one of the number of the second Ten, being a very good man, [but] blinded by a little ambition and persuaded by the malignity of Appius, changed his good habits into the worst, and became like, him. Which, if well examined, the Legislators of Republics or Kingdoms will more promptly restrain human appetites and take away from them the hope of being able to err with impunity.

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## CHAPTER 43. THOSE WHO COMBAT FOR THEIR OWN GLORY ARE GOOD AND FAITHFUL SOLDIERS

From the above written treatise it also is to be considered what a difference there is between a contented army which combats for its own glory, and that which is ill disposed and which combats for the ambitions of others. For where the Roman armies were usually victorious under the Consuls, they always lost under the Decemvirs. From this example there can be recognized part of the reasons of the uselessness of mercenary soldiers, who have no other reason which keeps them firm but a small stipend which you give to them. Which reason is not, and can never be, enough to make them faithful, nor so much your friends that they be willing to die for you. For in those armies where there is not that affection toward the man for whom they combat which makes them become his partisans, there can never be so much virtu which would be enough to resist even an enemy of little virtu. And because this love cannot arise in any contest except from his own subjects, it is necessary in wanting to keep a State, or to want to maintain a Republic or a Kingdom, that he arm himself with his own subjects, as is seen to have been done by all those others who, with their armies, have made great advances. The Roman armies under the Ten had the same virtu as before: but because there was not in them the same disposition, they did not achieve their usual results. But as soon as the Magistracy of the Ten was extinguished and they began to fight as free men, that same spirit returned in them, and consequently their enterprises had their happy endings according to their ancient custom.

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## CHAPTER 44. A MULTITUDE WITHOUT A HEAD IS USELESS, AND ONE OUGHT NOT TO THREATEN FIRST, AND THEN SEEK AUTHORITY

Because of the incident of Virginia the Roman Pleb was led armed to the sacred mountain [Mons Sacer]. The Senate sent its Ambassadors to ask by what authority they had abandoned their Captains and retired to the Mountains. And so much was the authority of the Senate esteemed that, the Plebs not having their chiefs among them, no one dared to reply. And T. Livius says that they did not lack material to reply, but they did lack someone who should make the reply. Which thing demonstrates in point the uselessness of a multitude without a head. This disorder was recognized by Virginius, and by his order twenty military Tribunes were created who would be their chiefs to reply to and convene with the Senate. And having requested that [the Senators] Valerius and Horatius should be sent to them, to whom they would tell their wants, they [the Senators] would not turn to go unless the Ten first had resigned their Magistracy: and having arrived on the mountain where the Pleb was, these things were demanded of them, that they wanted the re-establishment of the Tribunes of the Plebs, [and] that an appeal to the people from every Magistracy should be allowed, and that all of the Ten should be given up to them as they wanted to burn them alive. Valerius and Horatius lauded the first of their demands: they censured the last as impious, saying; You condone cruelty, yet fall yourselves into cruelty, and counselled them to leave off making mention of the Ten, and to attend to taking from them their authority and power, and that afterwards there would not be lacking the means of satisfying them [their vengeance]. From which it is recognized openly how foolish and little prudent it is to ask for a thing, and to say at first, I want to do evil with it: for one ought not to show his mind, but to want in every way to seek to obtain that which he desires. For it is enough to ask from one his arms, without saying I want to kill you with them; for when you have the arms in your hands then you will be able to satisfy your appetite.

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**CHAPTER 45. IT IS A BAD EXAMPLE NOT TO OBSERVE A LAW THAT HAS BEEN MADE, AND ESPECIALLY BY THE AUTHOR OF IT; AND IT IS MOST HARMFUL TO RENEW EVERY DAY NEW INJURIES IN A CITY AND TO THE ONE WHO GOVERNS IT**

The accord having taken place and Rome restored to its ancient form, Virginius cited Appius before the People to defend his cause. He complied accompanied by many Nobles. Virginius commanded that he be put in prison. Appius begun to shout and appeal to the People. Virginius said that he was not worthy of having that [right of] appeal which he had destroyed, nor to have as defender that People whom he had offended. Appius replied that they [the People] had no [right] to violate that appeal which they had established with so much desire. He was incarcerated, however, and before the day of judgment [came] he killed himself. And although the wicked life of Appius should merit every punishment, none the less it was little consistent to violate the laws, and more so one recently made. For I do not believe there is a worse example in a Republic than to make a law and not to observe it, and much more when it is not observed by those who made it.

Florence, after ninety four <sup>1494</sup>, having had its State [Government] reorganized with the aid of Brother Girolamo Savonarola (whose writings show the doctrine, prudence, and the vertu of his spirit) and among other provisions for the security of the Citizens having had a law enacted which enabled an appeal to the People from the verdicts which the [Council of] Eight and the Signoria should give in cases affecting the State (which passage took more time and was attained with the greatest difficulty); it happened that a little after the confirmation of this [law], five Citizens were condemned to death by the Signoria on account of [acts against] the State, and when they wanted to appeal, they were not permitted to do so and the law was not observed. Which took away from the Brother more reputation than any other incident; for if that [right of] appeal was useful, he should have had it observed: if it was not useful, he ought not to have had it passed. And so much more was this incident noted, inasmuch as the Brother, in so many preachings that he made after that law was broken,

never condemned those who broke it, or excused them, as one who did not want to condemn a thing that suited his purpose, yet was not able to excuse it. This, having uncovered his ambitions and partisan spirit, took away his reputation and caused him many troubles.

A State also offends greatly when every day it renews in the minds of its Citizens new moods because of new injuries which it inflicts on this one and that one, as happened in Rome after the Decemvirate. For all of the Ten and other Citizens were accused and condemned at different times, so that a great fright existed in the Nobility, judging that there would never be an end to such condemnations until all the Nobility was destroyed. And great evils would have been generated in that City, if it had not been foreseen by the Tribune Marcus Duellius, who issued an edict that for one year it would not be licit to cite anyone or to accuse any Roman Citizen; this reassured all the Nobility. Here it is seen how harmful it is to a Republic or to a Prince to keep the minds of their subjects in a state of fear by continuing penalties and suspended offenses. And without doubt no more pernicious order can be held; for men who begin to be apprehensive of having done a capital evil, will secure themselves from perils in every way, and become more audacious and have less regard in attempting new things. It is necessary, therefore, either never to offend any one or to make the offense at a stroke, and afterwards to reassure men and give them cause to quiet and firm the spirit.

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## CHAPTER 46. MEN JUMP FROM ONE AMBITION TO ANOTHER, AND FIRST THEY SEEK NOT TO BE OFFENDED, THEN TO OFFEND OTHERS

The Roman People having recovered their liberty, [and] having returned to their original rank, and having obtained even greater reputation from the many new laws made in corroboration of their power, it appeared reasonable that Rome would for some time become quiet. None the less from experience the contrary was seen, for every day new tumults and new disorders sprung up. And as Titus Livius most prudently renders the cause whence this arose, it does not appear to me outside my purpose to refer in point to his words, where he says that the People or the Nobility always increased their haughtiness when the other was humiliated; and the Plebs remaining quiet within bounds, the young Nobles began to offend them; and the Tribunes were able to make few remedies, because they too were violated. The Nobility, on the other hand, although it seemed to them that their young men were too ferocious, none the less took care to see that if [the law] should be transgressed, it should be transgressed by their own and not by the Plebs. And thus the desire of defending liberty caused each to prevail [raise itself] in proportion as they oppressed the other.

And the course of such incidents is, that while men sought not to fear, they begun to make others fear, and that injury which they ward off from themselves, they inflict on another, as if it should be necessary either to offend or to be offended. From this may be seen one way among others in which Republics ruin themselves, and in what way men jump from one ambition to another, and how very true is that sentence which Sallust placed in the mouth of Caesar, That all evil examples have their origin in good beginnings.

Those ambitious Citizens (as was said before) who live in a Republic seek in the first instance not to be able to be harmed, not only by private [citizens], but even by the Magistrates: in order to do this, they seek friendships, and to acquire them either by apparently honest means, or by supplying them money or defending them from the powerful: and as this seems virtuous, everyone is easily deceived and no one takes any remedy against this, until

he, persevering without hindrance, becomes of a kind whom the Citizen fear, and the Magistrates treat with consideration. And when he has risen to that rank, and his greatness not having been obviated at the beginning, it finally comes to be most dangerous in attempting to pit oneself against him, for the reasons which I mentioned above concerning the dangers involved in abating an evil which has already grown much in a City; so that the matter in the end is reduced to this, that you need either to seek to extinguish it with the hazard of sudden ruin, or by allowing it to go on, enter into manifest servitude, unless death or some accident frees you from him.

For when the Citizens and the Magistrates come to the above mentioned limits and become afraid to offend him and his friends, it will not take much effort afterwards to make them judge and offend according to his will. Whence a Republic, among its institutions, ought to have these, to see that its Citizens under an aura of good are not able to do evil, and that they should acquire that reputation which does good and not harm to liberty, as will be discussed by us in its proper place.

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## CHAPTER 47. MEN, ALTHOUGH THEY DECEIVE THEMSELVES IN GENERAL MATTERS DO NOT DECEIVE THEMSELVES IN THE PARTICULARS

The Roman People (as was said above) having become annoyed with the Consular name, and wanting to be able either to choose as Consuls men of the Plebs, or to limit their authority, the Nobility in order not to discredit the Consular authority by either change, took the middle course, and were content that four Tribunes with Consular power be created, who could come from the Plebs as well as from the Nobles. The Plebs were content with this, as it seemed to them to destroy the Consulship and give them a part in the highest ranks. From this a notable case arose, that when it came to the creation of these Tribunes, and they could have selected all Plebs, the Roman people chose all Nobles. Whence Titus Livius says these words: The results of this election show how different minds are when in contention for liberty and for honors, differing according to certain standards when they [have to] make impartial judgments. And in examining whence this can happen, I believe it proceeds from men deceiving themselves in general matters, [and] not so much in particular matters. As a general thing, it appeared to the Roman Pleb that it merited the Consulship because they were the majority in the City, because they bore more of the danger in war, [and] because they were the ones who with their arms maintained Rome free and made it powerful: and this desire seeming to them to be reasonable (as has been said), they turned to obtain this authority by whatever means. But when they had to make a judgment of their particular men, recognized their weaknesses, and judged that none of them should merit that which all together it seemed to them they merited. So that ashamed of them [their own], they had recourse to those who merited it. Of which decision Titus Livius, deservingly admiring it, said these words: Where is there now this modesty and equity, and this loftiness of spirit, which once pervaded all the people?

In corroboration of this there can be cited another notable example which ensued in Capua after Hannibal had defeated the Romans at Cannae: while

all Italy was aroused by this defeat, Capua was still in a state of tumult because of the hatred that existed between the People and the Senate: and Pacovius Calanus finding himself at that time in the supreme Magistracy, and recognizing the peril to which that City was exposed because of the tumults, endeavored through his rank to reconcile the Plebs with the Nobility: and having come to this decision, he had the Senate assemble, and narrated to them the hatred which the People had against them, and the dangers to which they were exposed of being killed by them, if the City was given up to Hannibal, as the power of the Romans was afflicted: afterwards he added that if they wanted to leave the managing of this matter to him, he would do so in a way that they would be united together; but, as he wanted to do so, he would lock them inside the palace, and by seemingly giving the people the power to castigate them he would save them. The Senate yielded to this thought, and he called the people to talk to them; and having shut up the Senate in the palace, [and] said to them that the time had come to be able to subdue the haughtiness of the Nobility and avenge themselves for the injuries received from them [the Senate], having them all shut up under his custody: but because he believed they would not want their City to remain without a government, it would be necessary (if they wanted to kill the old Senators) to create new ones. And, therefore, he had put all the names of the Senators into a bourse and would begin to draw them in their presence, and that one after another of those drawn would die after they should find his successor. And beginning to draw one, at his name, there was raised a very great noise, calling him haughty, cruel and arrogant: but when Pacovius requested that they make the exchange, the haranguing completely stopped: and after some time one of the Plebs was nominated, at whose name some begun to whistle, some to laugh, some to speak ill in one way and some in another: and thus there followed one after the other, that all those who were named were judged by them unworthy of the Senatorial rank: so that Pacovius taking this occasion said: Since you judge that this City would be badly off without a Senate, and you cannot agree to make the exchange of Senators, I think it would be well if you reconciled together, because the fear in which the Senators have been has so humbled them that you will now find in them that humanity which you seek for elsewhere. And they agreeing to this, there ensued the union of

these orders, and they discovered, when they were constrained to come to the particulars, the deception.

After one thousand four hundred fourteen<sup>1414</sup> when the Princes of the City had been driven from Florence, and no other government having been instituted, but rather a certain ambitious license, and public affairs going from bad to worse, many of the populari seeing the ruin of the City and not understanding the cause, they blamed the ambitions of some powerful one who would feed the disorders in order to be able to make a State to his own liking and take away their liberty: and there were those who went through the loggias and the plazas speaking ill of many Citizens, and threatening them that if they should ever find themselves [members] of the Signoria, they would uncover this deceit of theirs and would castigate them. It often happened that ones like these did ascend to the supreme Magistracy, and when they had risen to that position and saw things more closely, they recognized whence disorders arose, and the dangers that hung over them, and the difficulty of remedying them. And seeing that the times and not the men were causing the disorders, they quickly were of another mind and acted otherwise, because the knowledge of things in particular had taken away that deception which, in the general consideration, they had presupposed. So that those who at first (when he was a private citizen) heard him speak, and afterwards saw them remain quiet in the supreme Magistracy, believed that this resulted not by the more real knowledge of things, but from their having been perverted and corrupted by the Nobles. And as this happened to many men and many times, there arose among them a proverb, which said: These men have one mind in the plaza and another in the palace. Considering, therefore, all that has been discussed, it is seen that the quickest possible way to open the eyes of the People, is by finding a way (seeing that a generality deceives them) in which they should have to descend to particulars, as did Pacovius in Capua and the Senate in Rome. I believe also that it can be concluded that no prudent man ought ever to disregard popular judgment in particular matters, [such as] the distribution of dignities and honors, for in this only the People do not deceive themselves, and if they do some times, it will be rare when they deceive themselves more often than do the few men who have to make such distributions. Nor does it seem to me to be superfluous to show in the

following chapter the order which the Senate held in order to deceive the People in its distributions.

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**CHAPTER 48. WHOEVER WANTS A MAGISTRACY NOT TO BE GIVEN TO A VILE OR WICKED ONE, WILL HAVE IT ASKED BY A MAN MORE VILE AND MORE WICKED, OR BY ONE MORE NOBLE AND MORE GOOD**

When the [Roman] Senate became apprehensive that the Tribunes with Consular power should be created from plebeian men, they took one of two courses: either they caused the more reputable men of Rome to be designated, or by suitable means they [surely] corrupted some sordid and most ignoble Plebeians, who mixed with the plebeians of better quality who usually asked for these offices, so that even they should ask for them. This latter course caused the Plebs to be ashamed of themselves to give it to the latter, and the first [course] made them ashamed to take it away from the former. All of which confirms the proposition of the preceding discussion, where it is shown that the people deceive themselves in general matters, but they do not deceive themselves in particular matters.

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## CHAPTER 49. IF THOSE CITIES WHICH HAD THEIR BEGINNING FREE AS ROME, HAVE HAD DIFFICULTY IN FINDING LAWS THAT WOULD MAINTAIN THEM, THOSE THAT HAD THEIR BEGINNING IN SERVITUDE HAVE ALMOST AN IMPOSSIBILITY

How difficult it is in establishing a Republic to provide all those laws that should maintain her free, is very well shown by the progress of the Roman Republic, which notwithstanding that it was established with many laws, first by Romulus, and afterwards by Numa, by Tullus Hostilius, and by Servius, and lastly by the Ten Citizens created for such a purpose, none the less in managing that City new needs were always discovered and it was necessary to create new ordinances; as happened when they created the Censors, who were one of those provisions that aided in keeping Rome free during the time she existed in liberty. For having become arbiters of the customs of Rome, they were the most potent cause why the Romans had retarded the further corruption of themselves. In the creation of this Magistracy they indeed made one error at the start, creating them for five years: but a short time later it was corrected by the prudence of the Dictator Mamercus, who, through new laws, reduced the said Magistracy to eighteen months: which the Censors who were then [aging] in office took so badly, that they deprived Mamercus from [treating with] the Senate: which thing was greatly censured both by the Plebs and the Fathers: and as history does not show whether Mamercus was able to defend himself against this, it must be assumed either that history is defective, or that the institutions of Rome in this part were good; for it is not well that a Republic should be so constituted that a Citizen in order to promulgate a law conforming to a free society could be oppressed without any remedy.

But returning to the beginning of this discussion I say, that for creating such a new Magistracy it ought to be considered that, if those Cities which had their beginnings in liberty but become corrupt by themselves, like Rome, have great difficulty in finding good laws for maintaining themselves free, it is not to be wondered at if those which had their beginnings in servitude find it, not difficult, but impossible ever to organize themselves so that they

are able to live securely and quietly; this, as is seen, happened to the City of Florence which, for having had its beginnings subject to the Roman Empire, and having always existed under the government of others, remained subject for a long time and without any thought to [freeing] itself: afterward when the opportunity arrived for her to breathe free, she began to make her institutions, which being mixed with ancient ones that were bad, could not be good: and thus she had gone on managing herself for two hundred years of which there exists a true record, without ever having a State [Government] by which she could truly be called a Republic. And these difficulties which existed in her, have always existed in those Cities that have had beginnings similar to hers. And although many times ample authority was given by public and free suffrage to a few Citizens to be able to reform her, yet they have never organized her for the common good, but always in favor of their own party: which made not for order, but for major disorders in that City. And to come to some particular example I say, that among other things that have to be considered by an establisher of a Republic is to examine into whose hands he places the authority of blood [death] over its own Citizens. This was well constituted in Rome, for there one could ordinarily appeal to the People; and even if an important event should occur where the deferring of an execution through the medium of an appeal should be dangerous, they had recourse to the Dictator, who executed it immediately: to which refuge they never had recourse except in necessity. But Florence and other Cities born as she was (in servitude) had this authority placed in a foreigner, who, sent by a Prince performed such an office. When they afterwards came into liberty, they kept this authority in a foreigner, whom they called Captain. Which (because he was able easily to be corrupted by powerful Citizens) was a pernicious thing. But afterwards changing itself through the changes of governments which they organized, they created the Eight Citizens who should perform the office of that Captain. Which arrangement from bad became worse, for the reasons mentioned at other times, that the few were always ministers of the few and more powerful [citizens].

The City of Venice is guarded from that [abuse], which has [a Council] of Ten Citizens who are able to punish any Citizen without appeal. And as this was not enough to punish the powerful even though they had the authority,

they established [the Council] of Forty: And in addition the Council of the Pregadi (which is the highest council) had the power to castigate them. So that lacking an accuser, there was not lacking a judge to keep powerful men in check. It is no wonder, therefore, seeing that in Rome [laws] were made by herself with many prudent men, new causes sprung up every day for which she had to make new laws to maintain her free existence, which, if, in other Cities which had disordered beginnings, such difficulties sprung up, they could never reorganize themselves.

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## CHAPTER 50. A COUNCIL OR MAGISTRATE OUGHT NOT TO BE ABLE TO STOP THE ACTIVITIES OF A CITY

When T. Quintus Cincinnatus and Gnaeus Julius Mentus were Consuls in Rome, being disunited, they stopped all the activities of that Republic. When the Senate saw this, they advised the creation of a Dictator, in order that he do that which, because of their [Consuls] discords, they could not do. But the Consuls disagreeing on every other thing, were in accord only on this: not to want to create a Dictator. So that the Senate not having any other remedy had recourse to the aid of the Tribunes, who, with the authority of the Senate, forced the Consuls to obey. Here first is to be noted the usefulness of the Tribunes, who were not only useful in restraining the ambitions which the powerful had against the Plebs, but also that which they employed among themselves. The other, that there ought never to be established in a City the ability of a few to interrupt any of its decisions which are ordinarily necessary in maintaining the Republic. For instance, if you give authority to a Council to make a distribution of honors and offices, or to a Magistracy the administration of a business, it is proper either to impose on them the necessity that they must do it in any case, or to arrange that if they did not want to do it themselves, that another can and ought to do it: otherwise this constitution would be defective and dangerous, as was seen it was in Rome, if the authority of the Tribunes could not have been opposed to the obstinacy of those Consuls.

In the Venetian Republic, the grand Council distributes the honors and offices. It sometimes happened that the general public, either from contempt or from some false suggestions, did not create the successors to the Magistrates of the City and to those who administered their outside Empire. This resulted in a very great disorder, because suddenly both the subject lands and the City itself lacked their legitimate judges, nor could they obtain anything if the majority of that council were not satisfied or deceived. And this inconvenience would have brought that City to a bad end if it had not been foreseen by the prudent Citizens, who taking a convenient opportunity made a law that all the Magistrates who are or should be inside or outside the City should never vacate their offices until exchanges with

their successors were made. And thus was removed from that council the evil of being able with peril to the Republic to stop public activities.

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## CHAPTER 51. A REPUBLIC OR A PRINCE OUGHT TO FEIGN TO DO THROUGH LIBERALITY, THAT WHICH NECESSITY CONSTRAINS THEM

Prudent men always make the best of things in their actions, although necessity should constrain them to do them in any case. This prudence was well employed by the Roman Senate when they decided that a public stipend be given to the fighting men, it having been the military custom of them maintaining their own selves. But the Senate seeing that war could not be made for any length of time in this manner, and, because of this, they could neither besiege towns nor lead armies to a distance, and judging it to be necessary to be able to do the one and the other, decided that the said stipends be given: but they did it in such a way that they made the best of that which necessity constrained them to do; and this present was so accepted by the Plebs, that Rome went upside down with joy; for it seemed to them to be a great benefit which they never hoped to have, and which they would never have sought by themselves. And although the Tribunes endeavored to cancel this decree, showing that it was something that aggravated and not lightened the burden (it being necessary to impose tributes to pay this stipend), none the less they could not do much to keep the Plebs from accepting it: which was further increased by the Senate by the method by which they assigned the tributes, for those that were imposed on the Nobles were more serious and larger, and the first [required] to be paid.

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## CHAPTER 52. TO REPRIMAND THE INSOLENCE OF A POWERFUL ONE WHO SPRINGS UP IN A REPUBLIC, THERE IS NO MORE SECURE AND LESS TROUBLESOME WAY THAN TO FORESTALL HIM THOSE WAYS BY WHICH HE COMES TO POWER

It will be seen from the above written discourse, how much credit the Nobility had acquired with the Plebs because of the demonstrations made to their benefit, both by the stipends ordered, as well also as the method of imposing the tributes. If the Nobility had maintained themselves in this order they would have removed every cause for tumult in that City, and this would have taken away from the Tribunes that credit which they had with the Plebs, and consequently their authority. And, truly, there cannot exist in a Republic, and especially in those that are corrupt, a better method, less troublesome and more easily opposed to the ambitions of any Citizen, than to forestall him those ways by which he observes to be the paths to attain the rank he designates. Which method, if it had been employed against Cosimo De'Medici, would have been a much better procedure for his adversaries than to have driven him out of Florence: for if those Citizens who were competing against him had taken his style of favoring the People, they would have succeeded without tumult and without violence in drawing from his hands the arms which he availed himself of most.

Piero Soderini had made a reputation for himself in the City of Florence alone by favoring the General Public; this among the People gave him the reputation as a lover of liberty in the City. And certainly it would have been an easier and more honest thing for those Citizens who envied him for his greatness, [and] less dangerous and less harmful to the Republic, for them to have forestalled him in the ways by which he made himself great, than to want to oppose him in such a way that with his ruin, all the rest of the Republic should be ruined; for if they had taken away from his hands those arms which made him strong (which they could have done easily) they could have opposed him in all the councils and all the public deliberations boldly and without suspicion. And if anyone should reply that if those Citizens who hated Piero made an error in not forestalling him the ways with which he

gained reputation for himself among the People, Piero also made an error in not forestalling him those ways by which his adversaries made him be feared: for which Piero merits to be excused, as much because it was difficult for him to have done so, as also because it was not honest for him: For the means with which he was attacked were to favor the Medici, with which favors they beat him and, in the end, ruined him. Piero, therefore, could not honestly take up this part in order that he could destroy that liberty by his good name, to which he had been put in charge to guard: Moreover, these favors not being able to be done suddenly and secretly, would have been most dangerous for Piero; for whenever he should be discovered to be a friend of the Medici, he would have become suspect and hated by the People: whence there arose more opportunities to his enemies to attack him than they had before.

In every proceeding, therefore, men ought to consider the defects and perils which it [presents], and not to undertake it if it should be more dangerous than useful, notwithstanding the result should conform to their decision: for to do otherwise in this case it would happen to them as it happened to Tullius [Cicero], who, wanting to take away the favors from Marcantonio, increased them for him: for Marcantonio having been judged an enemy of the Senate, and having gathered together that great army in good part from the soldiers who had been followers of Caesar's party, Tullius, in order to deprive him of those soldiers advised the Senate to give authority to Octavian and send him with the army and the Consuls against him [Antony] and join the latter [Octavian], and thus Marcantonio remaining bereft of favor, would easily be destroyed. Which [thing] turned out to the contrary, for Marcantonio won over Octavian to himself, who, leaving Tullius and the Senate, joined him. Which [thing] brought about the complete destruction of the party of the Aristocracy [Patricians]. Which was easy to foresee, and that which Tullius advised should not have been believed, but should have kept account always that name which, with so much glory, had destroyed his enemies and acquired for him the Principality of Rome, and they ought never to have believed they could expect anything from his supporters favorable to liberty.

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## CHAPTER 53. THE PEOPLE MANY TIMES DESIRE THEIR RUIN, DECEIVED BY A FALSE SPECIES OF GOOD: AND HOW GREAT HOPES AND STRONG PROMISES EASILY MOVE THEM

After conquering the City of the Veienti, there entered into the Roman People the idea that it would be a useful thing for the City of Rome if one half of the Romans should go and live at Veii, arguing that because that City was rich in countryside, full of buildings, and near to Rome, it could enrich the half of the Roman Citizens and not disturb any civil activities because of the nearness of the location. Which thing appeared to the Senate and the wiser Romans so useless and so harmful, that they said freely they would rather suffer death than consent to such a decision. So that this subject coming up for debate, the Plebs were so excited against the Senate that it would have come to arms and bloodshed if the Senate had not made itself a shield of some old and esteemed Citizens, reverence for whom restrained the Plebs so that they did not proceed any further with their insolence. Here, two things are to be noted. The first, that many times, deceived by a false illusion of good, the People desire their own ruin, and unless they are made aware of what is bad and what is good by someone in whom they have faith, the Republic is subjected to infinite dangers and damage. And if chance causes People not to have faith in anyone (as occurs sometimes, having been deceived before either by events or by men), their ruin comes of necessity. And Dante says of his proposition in the discussion he makes in *De Monarchia* [On Monarchy], that the People many times shout, Life to their death and death to their life. From this unbelief it sometimes happens in Republics that good proceedings are not undertaken, as was said above of the Venetians who, when assaulted by so many enemies could not undertake a procedure of gaining some of them over to themselves by giving to them things taken from others; because of this war was moved against them and a conspiracy of [other] Princes made against them, before their ruin had come.

Considering therefore what is easy and what is difficult to persuade a People to, this distinction can be made: either that which you have to persuade

them to represents at first sight a gain or a loss, or truly it appears a courageous or cowardly proceeding: and if, in the things that are placed in front of the people, there is seen a gain even though it is concealed under a loss, and if it appears courageous even though it is hidden beneath the ruin of the Republic, it will always be easy to persuade the multitude to it: and thus it will always be difficult to persuade them of those proceedings where either some usefulness or loss is apparent, even though the welfare and benefit [of the Republic] were hidden under it. This that I have said is confirmed by infinite examples, Roman and foreign, modern and ancient.

For, from this, there arose the evil opinion that sprung up in Rome of Fabius Maximus, who could not persuade the Roman people that it was useless to that Republic to proceed slowly in that war, and to sustain the attack of Hannibal without engaging in battle, because that people judged this proceeding cowardly, and did not see what usefulness there should be in that, and Fabius did not have sufficient cause to demonstrate it to them: and the People are so blinded on these ideas of bravery, that although the Roman People had made that error of giving authority to the Master of the horse of Fabius to enable him to engage in battle, even though Fabius did not want to, and that because of this authority the Roman camp would have been broken up except for the prudence of Fabius which remedied it; this experience was not enough for them, for they afterwards made Varro Consul, not for any of his merits but for having promised throughout all the plazas and public places of Rome to rout Hannibal anytime he should be given the authority. From this came the battle and defeat of Cannae, and almost caused the ruin of Rome. I want to cite on this proposition another Roman example. Hannibal had been in Italy eight or ten years, had filled this province with killings of Romans, when M. Centenius Penula came to the Senate, a very base man (none the less he had some rank in the military), and offered them that if they gave him authority to be able to raise an army of volunteers in any place in Italy he wished, he would in a very short time give them Hannibal, either taken or dead. The demands of this man appeared foolish to the Senate: none the less thinking that if they should deny him this, his request would be later known by the People, that there might arise some tumult, envy, and ill will against the Senatorial order, they conceded it to him; desiring rather to put in danger all those who followed

him than to cause new indignation to spring up among the People, knowing how much a like proceeding would be accepted and how difficult it would be to dissuade them. This man, therefore, with an unorganized and undisciplined multitude went to meet Hannibal, and he no sooner had come to the encounter than he, with all his followers, were routed and killed.

In Greece in the City of Athens, Nicias, a most serious and prudent man, never could persuade that people that it would not be good to go and assault Sicily, so that this decision taken against the will of the wise caused the complete ruin of Athens. When Scipio was made Consul and desired the province of Africa, he promised to everyone the ruin of Carthage; when the Senate did not agree to this because of the verdict of Fabius Maximus, he threatened to bring it before the People, as he very well knew that such decisions were liked by the People.

On this proposition an example can be given of our own City, as it was when Messer Ercole Bentivogli, commander of the Florentine forces, together with Antonio Giacomini, after having defeated Bartolomeo D'Alvino at San Vincenti, went to besiege Pisa: which enterprise was decided upon by the People on the brave promises of Messer Ercole, although many of the wise Citizens censured it: none the less there was no remedy, being pushed by that desire of the general public which was based on the brave promises of the commander.

I say, therefore, that there is no easier way to ruin a Republic where the People have authority, than to involve them in a brave enterprise: because where the People are of any importance, they will always accept them, nor will there be anyone of contrary opinion who will know any remedy. But if the ruin of the City results from this, there also and more often results the ruin of the particular Citizens who are in charge of such enterprises: for the People having expected victory, if defeat comes, they do not blame fortune or the impotence of those who commanded, but their wickedness and ignorance, but most of the times they either kill or imprison them, or exile them, as happened to infinite Carthaginian Captains and to many Athenians. Nor do any victories that they might have had in the past benefit them, because they are all cancelled by the present defeat, as happened to our Antonio Giacomini, who, not having conquered Pisa as he promised and the

People expected, fell into such popular disgrace that, notwithstanding his past infinite good works, he [was allowed to] live more because of the humanity of those who had authority who defended him from the People than for any other reason.

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## CHAPTER 54. HOW MUCH AUTHORITY A GREAT MAN HAS IN RESTRAINING AN EXCITED MULTITUDE [MOB]

The second notable item mentioned in the text of the above chapter is, that nothing is so apt to restrain an excited multitude [mob] as the reverence [inspired] by some man of gravity and authority who encounters them; and not without reason Virgil says:

When they saw a man of grave aspect and strong with merit  
They became silent, and stood with eager ears.

Therefore, he who is in charge of an army, or he who finds himself in a City where a tumult has arisen, ought to present himself there with as much grace and as honorably as he can, attiring himself with the insignia of his rank which he holds in order to make himself more revered. A few years ago Florence was divided into two factions, who called themselves, thusly, the Frateschi [Brotherly] and Arrabiati [Angered]; and coming to arms, the Frateschi were defeated, among whom was Pagolantonio Soderini, a Citizen greatly reputed in those times; and during those tumults the People went armed to his house to sack it, Messer Francesco, his brother, then Bishop of Volterra and today Cardinal, by chance found himself in the house; who, as soon as he heard the noise and saw the disturbance, dressed himself in his most dignified clothes and over them put on his Episcopal surplice, and went to meet those armed ones, and with his person and his words stopped them: which [thing] was talked about and celebrated throughout the City for many days.

I conclude, therefore, that there is no sounder or more necessary remedy to restrain an excited multitude than the presence of a man who by his presence appears and is revered.

It is seen, therefore, (to return to the preceding text) with how much obstinacy the Roman Plebs accepted that proceeding of going to Veii because they judged it useful, but did not recognize the danger that existed underneath this; and that the many tumults which arose there would cause

troubles, if the Senate with serious men [and] full of reverence had not restrained their fury.

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## CHAPTER 55. HOW EASILY THINGS ARE MANAGED IN THAT CITY WHERE THE MULTITUDE IS NOT CORRUPT, AND THAT WHERE THERE IS EQUALITY A PRINCIPALITY CANNOT BE ESTABLISHED, AND WHERE THERE IS NONE A REPUBLIC CANNOT BE ESTABLISHED

Although above there has been much discussed that which is to be feared or to be hoped for in corrupt Cities, none the less it does not seem to me outside this subject to consider a decision of the Senate concerning the vow that Camillus had made to give the tenth part of the plunder of the Veienti to Apollo: which plunder having come into the hands of the Roman Pleb, and being unable otherwise to review the account of it, the Senate made an edict that everyone should present to the Republic the tenth part of that which they had plundered. And although such a decision was not put into effect, the Senate afterwards having taken other ways and means for satisfying Apollo in fulfillment for the Pleb, none the less from such decisions it is seen how much the Senate confided in them [the People], and how they judged that no one would not present exactly all that which was commanded of them by the edict. And on the other hand, it is seen how the Pleb did not think of evading the edict in any part by giving less than they ought, but to relieve themselves of this by showing open indignation. This example, together with many others that have been recited above, show how much goodness and religion there was in that People, and how much good there was to be hoped for from them. And, truly, when this goodness does not exist, no good is to be hoped for, as can be hoped for in those provinces which, in these times, are seen to be corrupt, as is Italy above all others, even though France and Spain have their part of such corruption. And, if in those provinces, there are not seen as many disorders as arise in Italy every day, it derives not so much from the goodness of the people (which in good part is lacking) as from having a King who keeps them united, not only by his virtue, but by the institutions of those Kingdoms which are yet unspoiled.

In the province of Germany this goodness and this religion is seen to exist in great [measure] in those People, which makes for the existence of many

Republics in freedom, and they so observe the laws that no one from inside or outside dares to attack them. And that this is true that in their kingdom there yet exists a good part of that ancient goodness, I would like to give an example similar to that given above of the Senate and the Roman Pleb. When it occurred in those Republics that they had to spend any quantity of money for public account, those Magistrates or Councils who had the authority imposed on all the inhabitants of the City [a tax] of one or two percent of what each one had of value. And such decision being made in accordance with the laws of the land everyone presented himself before the collectors of this impost, and first taking an oath to pay the right sum, he threw into a box provided for that purpose that which it appeared to him according to his conscience he ought to pay: to which payment there was no witness other than he who paid. From which it can be conjectured how much goodness and how much religion still exists in those people. And it ought to be noted that every one paid the true amount, for if it had not been paid, the impost would not have yielded that amount which they had planned in accordance with previous ones that had been taken, and if they had not yielded [this amount], the fraud would be recognized, and if it had been recognized other means than this would have been taken. Which goodness is much more to be admired in these times as it is very rare; rather, it is seen to be remaining only in that province: which result from two things; the one, that they do not have great commerce with their neighbors, for others have not come to their homes nor have they gone to the homes of others, but have been content with those goods, live on those foods, clothe themselves with the wool which the country provides, which has taken away any reason for intercourse and [consequently] the beginning of any corruption: hence they have not been able to take up the customs of the French, of the Spanish, or of the Italians, which nations all together are the corrupters of the world. The other cause, is that that Republic, whose political existence is maintained uncorrupted, does not permit that any of its Citizens to be or live in the manner of a Gentleman, instead maintain among themselves a perfect equality, and are the greatest enemies of those Lords and Gentlemen who are in that province: and if, by chance, any should come into their hands, they kill them as being Princes of corruption and the cause of every trouble.

And to clarify what is [meant by] this name of Gentleman, I say that those are called Gentlemen who live idly on the provisions of their abundant possessions, without having any care either to cultivate or to do any other work in order to live. Such as these are pernicious to every Republic and to every Province: but more pernicious are those who, in addition to the above mentioned fortune, also command castles, and have subjects who obey them. Of these two sorts of men, the Kingdom of Naples, the Lands of Rome, the Romagna, and Lombardy, are full. From which it happens that there never has been a Republic in those provinces, nor any political existence [system], because such kinds of men are all enemies of every civil society. And in provinces so constituted, to want to introduce a Republic would be impossible. But only an arbiter [monarch] would recognize it, and he would have no other means but to establish a Kingdom: the reason is this, that when the body of people is so corrupted that the laws are not sufficient to restrain it, there needs to be established there that superior force, which is the Royal hand that, with absolute and full power, places a restraint to the excessive ambitions and corruption of the Powerful. This [cause] is verified by the example of Tuscany, where one sees in a small extent of land there have existed for a long time three Republics, Florence, Siena, and Lucca; and although the other Cities of that Province are in a way subject to these, yet, by their spirit and their institutions, it is seen that they maintain, or attempt to maintain, their liberty: all of which arises from there not being any lords of castles in that province, and few or no Gentlemen: but there exists so much equality, that it would be easy for a prudent man who had knowledge of ancient civilizations, to introduce a civil government there. But its misfortunes have been so great, that up to these times not any one has come forth who has been able to or known how to do it.

From this discussion, therefore, this conclusion is drawn, that he who would want to establish a Republic where there are many Gentlemen, cannot do so unless first he extinguishes them all; and that he who would want to establish a Kingdom or a Principality where there is great equality, will never be able to do so unless he withdraws from that equality many of the ambitious and unquiet spirits, and makes them Gentlemen in fact and not in name, giving them castles and possessions, as well as giving them aid of men and money, so that surrounded by these he can through them maintain

his power, and they through his support can maintain their ambitions, and the others constrained to endure that yoke which force and nothing else could make them endure. And, because of this, there being a proportion of those who force and those who are forced, each man will remain firm in his rank. And as the establishing of a Republic in a province better adapted to being a Kingdom, or to establishing a Kingdom in one better adapted to being a Republic, is a matter for one who in brains and authority is rare, there have been many who have wanted to do so, but few only who have known how to bring it about. For the greatness of the undertaking in part frightens them and in part stops them, so that they fail in the very beginning. I believe that this opinion of mine, that a Republic cannot be established where there are Gentlemen, appears contrary to the experience of the Venetian Republic, in which none could have any rank except those who were Gentlemen. To which it is answered that this example does not oppose it, for the Gentlemen in that Republic are more so in name than in fact, as they do not have great incomes from possessions, their riches being founded on commerce and movable property: and, in addition, none of them have castles or any jurisdiction over men; but in them that name of Gentleman is a name of dignity and reputation, without being based on those things on which men are called Gentlemen in other Cities. And as other Republics have all their divisions [of classes] under various names, so Venice is divided into Gentlemen and Popolari, and wants that the former can have all the honors, from which all others are entirely excluded. This does not cause disorders in those towns for the reasons mentioned at other times. Republics, therefore, can be established where a great equality exists or can be established, and, on the contrary, a Principality can be established where a great inequality exists; otherwise they will lack proportion and have little durability.

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## CHAPTER 56. BEFORE GREAT EVENTS OCCUR IN A CITY OR A PROVINCE, SIGNS COME WHICH FORETELL THEM, OR MEN WHO PREDICT THEM

Whence it arises I do not know, but from ancient and modern examples it is seen that no great event ever takes place in a City or a Province that has not been predicted either by fortune tellers, by revelations, by prodigies, or by other celestial signs. And in order for me not to go distant from home in proving this, everyone knows how the coming of King Charles VIII of France into Italy was predicted by Brother Girolamo Savonarola, and how in addition to this it was said throughout Italy that at Arezzo there had been seen in the air men-at-arms battling together. In addition to this, everyone knows how, before the death of Lorenzo De'Medici the elder, the Duomo was hit in its highest part by a bolt from the skies which very greatly damaged that edifice. Also everyone knows how, a little while before Piero Soderini, who had been made Gonfalonier for life by the Florentine people, had been driven out and deprived of his rank, the palace was struck in the same manner by a [lightning] stroke. I could cite other examples in addition to these, which I will omit to avoid tedium. I shall narrate only that which T. Livius tells of before the coming of the French [Gauls] to Rome, that is, how one Marcus Creditus, a Pleb, reported to the Senate that, passing at midnight through the Via Nova [New Road], he had heard a voice louder than human which admonished him that he should report to the Magistrates that the Gauls were coming to Rome. The cause of this I believe should be discussed and interpreted by a man who has knowledge of natural and supernatural things, which I have not. But it could be, as some Philosophers hold, that this air being so full of spirits, having an intelligence which by natural virtu foresee future events, and having compassion for men, so that they can warn them by such signs to prepare for defense. But, however it may be, such is the truth, [and] that always after such incidents there follows things extraordinary and new in the provinces.

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## CHAPTER 57. TOGETHER THE PLEBS ARE STRONG, DISPERSED THEY ARE WEAK

There were many Romans (after the ruin of their country had ensued because of the passage of the Gauls) who had gone to live at Veii contrary to the constitution and orders of the Senate, which, in order to remedy this disorder, commanded through its public edicts that everyone within a certain time and under certain penalties should return to inhabit Rome. Which edict at first was made light of by those against whom it was made, but afterwards when the time came for obeying it, they all obeyed. And Titus Livius said these words, From being ferocious when together, fear made them individually obedient. And truly this part of the nature of the multitude cannot be better shown than by this sentence. For the multitude many times is audacious in speaking against the decision of their Prince: but afterwards, when they see the penalty in sight, not trusting one another, they run to obey. So that it is certainly to be seen that whatever may be said of a People about their good or bad disposition, ought not to be held of great account, if you are well prepared to be able to maintain your authority if they are well disposed, and if they are ill-disposed, to be able to provide that they do not attack you. This refers to those evil dispositions which the People have from causes other than their having lost either their liberty or their Prince much loved by them, but who is still living: for the evil dispositions that arise from these causes are formidable above every thing, and have need of great remedies to restrain them: their indispositions from other [causes] are easily managed if they do not have Chiefs to whom they have recourse, for, on the one hand, there is nothing more formidable than a multitude loose and without a Head, and on the other hand, there is nothing weaker, because whenever they have arms in their hands it is easy to subdue them, if you have a shelter which enables you to avoid their first attack: for when their spirits are cooled down a little, and each one sees that he has to return to his house, they begin to be distrustful of themselves, and to think of their individual safety either by fleeing or surrendering themselves. A multitude so excited, therefore, in wanting to escape these perils, has promptly to make a Head among themselves, who would control

it, keep it united, and think of its defense, as the Roman plebs did when, after the death of Virginius, they departed from Rome, and to save themselves created twenty Tribunes from among themselves: and if they do not do this, it will always happen as T. Livius said in the above written words, that all together they are strong, but when each one then begins to think of his own peril, they become vile and weak.

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## CHAPTER 58. THE MULTITUDE IS WISER AND MORE CONSTANT THAN A PRINCE

Nothing is more vain and more inconstant than the multitude, so our T. Livius and all other Historians affirm. For it often occurs in narrating the actions of men to observe the multitude to have condemned some one to death, and that same [multitude] afterwards weeping and very much wishing him back; as is seen the Roman people did in the case of Manlius Capitolinus, who, having condemned him to death, afterwards most earnestly desired him back. And the words of the author are these: As soon as they knew there was no peril from, they desired to have him back. And elsewhere, where he tells of the incidents which arose in Syracuse after the death of Hieronymus, nephew of Hiero, says: It is the nature of multitude, either to serve humbly, or to dominate haughtily. I do not know, in wanting to defend a thing which (as I have said) is accused by all writers, if I were to undertake a cause so hard and full of difficulty, that I would have either to abandon it in shame, or to go on with it burdensomely. But however it may be, I do not judge, or will ever judge, it to be a defect to defend any opinion with arguments, without wanting to employ either authority or force.

I say, therefore, the individual men, and especially Princes, can be accused of that defect which the writers accuse the multitudes; for anyone who is not controlled by the laws, will make the same errors as a loose multitude. And this can be easily observed, for there are and there have been many Princes, but of the good and wise ones there have been only a few, I say, of those Princes who have been able to break that restraint which could control them; among whom are not those Kings who arose in Egypt in that ancient period when that province was governed by laws, nor those who arose in Sparta, nor those who have risen in France in our times, which Kingdom is more regulated by laws than any other Kingdom of our times of which there is knowledge. And these Kingdoms which arise under such constitutions are not to be placed in that number whence the nature of each man individually has to be considered, and to see if he is like the multitude; for alongside them there ought to be placed a multitude controlled by laws in the same way as they [the Kings] were, and the same goodness will be found in them

as we see in [the Kings], and we will see that they serve neither haughtily nor humbly; as was the Roman People, who while the Republic remained incorrupt, never served humbly or ruled insolently, but rather with its institutions and Magistracies held its rank honorably. And when it was necessary to spring up against a powerful one who was harming them, they did so, as was seen with Manlius and the Ten, and others who sought to oppress them; and so also when it was necessary for the public safety to obey the Dictators and Consuls. And if the Roman People desired Manlius Capitolinus after his death, it is not to be wondered at, for they desired his virtue, which had been such that the memory of them brought compassion to everyone, and would have had the power to cause that same result in any Prince, for it is the verdict of all writers that virtue is lauded and admired even in ones enemies: and if so much desire could have restored him, the Roman people would have given him the same judgment as they did when they took him from prison, a little before they condemned him to death: and as was also seen of Princes held to be wise, who have had some persons put to death and then greatly regretted it, as Alexander with Clitus and his other friends, and Herod with Mariamne: But that which our Historian says of the nature of the multitude, he does not say of those who were regulated by laws, such as were the Romans, but of an unbridled multitude, as was that of Syracuse, which made those errors which infuriated and unbridled men make, and as Alexander and Herod did in the abovementioned cases.

The nature of the multitude, therefore, is not to be blamed any more than that of Princes, for they all err equally when they all are able to err without control. Of which, in addition to what I have said, there are many examples, both from among the Roman Emperors and from among other Tyrants and Princes, where so much inconstancy and recklessness of life is observed, as is ever found in any multitude. I conclude therefore, contrary to the common opinion which says that the People, when they are Princes, are changeable and ungrateful, affirming that there are no more of these defects in them than there are in particular Princes: And to accuse the People and the Princes together can be the truth; but to except the Princes would be a deception: For a People that commands and is well organized will be stable, prudent, grateful, and not otherwise than a Prince, or even better than a Prince, although he be esteemed wise. And on the other hand,

a Prince loosened from the [control] of the laws, will be ungrateful, inconstant, and more imprudent than a people. And that difference in their proceedings arises, not from the different nature, (for it is the same in everyone, and if there is an advantage for good, it is in the People) but from the more or less respect they have for the laws under which one and the other live. And whoever considers the Roman people will see that for four hundred years they have been enemies of the name of Royalty and lovers of glory and of the common good of their country: He will see so many examples employed by them which testify to the one thing and the other. And if anyone should allege to me the ingratitude that they [the Roman people] showed against Scipio, I will reply that which was discussed above at length on this subject, where it has been shown that people are less ungrateful than Princes. But as to prudence and stability, I say, that a people is more prudent, more stable, and of better judgment than a Prince: And not without reason is the voice of the people like that of God, for a universal opinion is seen causes marvelous effects in its prognostication, so that it would seem that by some hidden virtue, evil or good is foreseen. As to the judging of things, it is rarely seen that when they hear two speakers who hold opposite views, if they are of equal virtue, they do not take up the the better opinion, and they are capable of seeing the truth in what they hear. And if (as has been said above) they err in things concerning bravery, or which appear useful, a Prince also errs many times in his own passions, which are much greater than those of the people. It will also be seen that in the election of their magistrates, they make by far a better selection than a Prince, but a people will never be persuaded that it is better to bring to that dignity a man of infamous and corrupt habits: to which a Prince may be persuaded easily and in a thousand ways. It will be seen that when a people begin to hold a thing in horror, they remain in that opinion for many centuries, which is not seen in a Prince. And on both of these two things, the testimony of the Roman people will suffice for me, who, in so many hundreds of years, in so many elections of Consuls and Tribunes, they did not make four elections of which they had to repent. And (as I have said) they held the name of Royalty in so much hatred, that no obligation to any of its Citizens who should seize that title would enable him to escape the merited penalty. In addition to this, it will be seen that the Cities where the

people are Princes, make the greatest progress in the shortest time and much greater than those who have always been under a Prince, as Rome did after the driving out of the Kings, and Athens did after they were free of Pisistratus. Which cannot arise except that those governments of the people are better than those of the Princes.

Nor do I want that there should be opposed to my opinion all that which our Historian has said in the aforementioned text and in any other; for if there should be discussed all the disorders of the People, all the disorders of the Princes, all the glories of the People, all those of the Princes, it will be seen that the People are far superior in goodness and in glory. And if Princes are superior to the people in instituting laws, forming civil governments, make new statutes and ordinances, the People are so much superior in maintaining the institutions which will add to the glory of those who established them.

And in sum to epilogue this material, I say that the States of the Princes have lasted a long time, the States of the Republics have lasted a long time, and both have had need to be regulated by laws; for a Prince who can do what he wants is a madman, and a People which can do as it wants to is not wise. If, therefore, discussion is to be had of a Prince obligated by laws, and of a People unobligated by them, more virtue will be observed in the People than in Princes: if the discussion is to be had of both loosened [from such control], fewer errors will be observed in the People than in the Princes, and those that are fewer have the greater remedies: For a licentious and tumultuous People can be talked to by a good man, and can easily be returned to the good path: [but] there is no one who can talk to a Prince, nor is there any other remedy but steel [sword]. From which the conjecture can be made of the maladies of the one and the other: that if words are enough to cure the malady of the People, and that of the Prince needs the sword, there will never be anyone who will not judge that where the greater cure is required, they are where the greater errors exist. When a People is indeed unbridled, the foolishness that they do is not to be feared, nor is fear to be had of the present malady, but of that which can arise, a Tyrant being able to rise up amidst so much confusion. But the contrary happens in the case of bad Princes, where the present evil is feared, and there is hope for

the future, men persuading themselves that the [termination] of their lives can make liberty spring up. Thus the difference between the one and the other is seen, that one concerns things that are, the other of things that will be. The cruelties of the multitude are [directed] against those whom they fear will oppose the common good, those of a Prince are [directed] against those whom he fears will oppose his own good. But the opinion against the People arises because everyone speaks evil of the people freely and without fear even while they reign; of the Princes they talk with a thousand fears and a thousand apprehensions. And it does not appear to me to be outside this subject (for this matter draws me there) to discuss in the following chapter whether alliances made with a Republic, or those made with a Prince, can be trusted.

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## CHAPTER 59. WHICH ALLIANCES OR LEAGUES CAN BE TRUSTED, WHETHER THOSE MADE WITH A REPUBLIC OR THOSE MADE WITH A PRINCE

As there occurs every day that Princes or Republics make leagues and friendships between themselves, and also similarly alliances and accords are drawn between a Republic and a Prince, it appears to me proper to examine whose faith is more stable, and which ought to be held more in account, that of a Republic or that of a Prince. In examining everything, I believe that in many cases they are the same, and in some there is a difference. I believe, therefore, that accords made by force will not be observed either by a Prince or by a Republic: I believe that when fear of [losing] the State comes to pass, both will break the faith in order not to lose it, and will serve you ingratitude. Demetrius, who was called Conqueror of Cities, had given infinite benefits to the Athenians: it happened that later, having been routed by his enemies and taking refuge in Athens as a City friendly and obligated to him, was not received by her: which saddened him much more than had the loss of his forces and his army; Pompey, having been routed by Caesar in Thessaly, took refuge in Egypt with Ptolemy, who, in the past he had reinstated in his Kingdom, but was put to death by him. Which instances, it is seen, have the same reasons; none the less it was more humanely employed by a Republic and with less injury, than by the Prince. Where there is fear, therefore, there will be found in each the same [loss of] faith. And if in either a Republic or a Prince it is found that they observe the faith even if ruin may be expected, this also may arise from similar reasons. For it can very well occur that a Prince, who is a friend of a powerful Prince [and] who may not then have the opportunity to defend him, can hope that with time he [the latter] will restore his Principality to him; or believe he will find either faith or accords with his enemies. Of this kind have been the Princes of the Kingdom of Naples who have followed the French side. And as for Republics, Saguntum in Spain was of this kind, which hazarded her own ruin in order to follow the Roman side, and with Florence in MDXII <sup>1512</sup> in order to follow the French side. And I believe, taking everything into account, that in such cases where danger is imminent, there will be found greater stability in the

Republics than in Princes: For even if the Republics had the same spirit and the same wants as Princes, their movements being slower will always make them take longer to form resolutions than Princes, and because of this they will be less prompt in breaking their faith.

Alliances are broken for usefulness. In this, Republics are more careful in the observance of accords than Princes. And it is possible to cite examples where a minimum of usefulness has caused a Prince to break his faith, and where a great usefulness has not caused faith to be broken by a Republic; as was that proceeding which Themosticles proposed to the Athenians, to whom in his speech he said he had a counsel that would be of great usefulness to their country, but could not tell it so as not to disclose it for discovering it would take away the opportunity of doing it. Whence the people of Athens elected Aristedes to whom he should confide the matter, and according to which they would later decide as it might appear to them: whereupon Themosticles showed that the fleet of all Greece, although they were under their faith, was in such a position that they could easily win it for themselves or destroy it, which would make the Athenians the arbiters of that Province. Whence Aristedes reported back to the people that the proposal of Themosticles was most useful, but most dishonest: for which reason the people rejected it entirely, which would not have been done by Philip the Macedonian and the other Princes who had looked for more usefulness, and who had gained more by breaking the faith than by any other means.

Of the breaking of pacts because of some cause for non-observance, I will not speak, as it is an ordinary thing: but I will talk of those that are broken for extraordinary reasons, where I believe, from the things said, that the people make fewer errors than Princes, and because of this, they can be trusted more than Princes.

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## CHAPTER 60. HOW THE CONSULSHIP AND EVERY OTHER MAGISTRACY IN ROME OUGHT TO BE [BESTOWED] WITHOUT ANY REGARD TO AGE

And it is to be seen from the course of History that the Roman Republic, after the Consulship came to the Pleb, admitted all its Citizens [to this dignity] without regard to age or blood [birth], even though the regard to age never existed in Rome as they always went to find virtue, whether it was in young men or old. This is seen from the testimony of Valerius Corvinus who was made Consul at twenty three years [of age]; and Valerius said, talking to his soldiers, that the Consulship was the reward of virtue, not of blood. Which thing can be much discussed, whether or not it is well considered. As to blood [birth], this was conceded because of necessity, and this same necessity which existed in Rome would also be found in every City that wanted to have the same success as Rome had, as has been said at another time; for hardships cannot be given to men without reward, nor can the hope of obtaining the reward be taken away without peril. And it was proper, therefore, that the plebs should have the hope of obtaining the Consulship, and that they should nourish this hope for a time, without attaining it: When afterward the hope was not enough, they had to arrive at that result [the Consulship]. The City that does not admit its Plebs to any of its glory, can treat them in their own way, as has been discussed elsewhere; but that City which wants to accomplish that which Rome did, cannot make this distinction.

And given that it is so [as regards birth], the question of age needs no reply, rather it is necessarily disposed of; for in electing a young man to a rank which has need of the prudence of an old man, it happens (the multitude having to elect him) that he should come to that rank through some noble action that he should make. And when a young man is of such great virtue as to have made himself known by some notable thing, it would be a very harmful thing if that City should not then be able to avail itself of him, and that it should have to wait until he should have aged [and] that age deprive him of that vigor of spirit and activity of which [at that age] his country

should avail itself, as Rome availed itself of Valerius Corvinus, of Scipio, of Pompey, and of many other who triumphed when very young.

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## SECOND BOOK

## PREFACE

Men always praise (but not always reasonably) the ancient times and find fault with the present; and they are such partisans of things past, that they celebrate not only that age which has been recalled to their memory by known writers, but those also (being now old) which they remember having seen in their youth. And when this opinion of theirs is false (as it is most of the times) I am persuaded the reasons by which they are led to such deception are various. And the first I believe is that the whole truth which would bring out the infamy of those times, and they amplify and magnify those others that could bring forth their glory. Moreover, the greater number of writers so obey the fortune of the winners that, in order to make their victories glorious, they not only exaggerate that which is gotten by their own virtue, but they also exaggerate the actions of the enemies; so that whoever afterwards is born in either of the two provinces, both the victorious and the defeated ones, has cause to marvel at those men and times, and is forced summarily to praise and love them. In addition to this, men hating things either from fear or envy, these two reasons for hating past events come to be extinguished, as they are not able to offend or give cause for envy of them. But the contrary happens with those things that are [presently] in operation and are seen, which because you have a complete knowledge of them as they are not in any way hidden from you; and knowing the good together with the many other things which are displeasing to you, you are constrained to judge the present more inferior than the past, although in truth the present might merit much more of that glory and fame; I do not discuss matters pertaining to the arts, which shine so much by themselves, which time cannot take away or add a little more glory which they merit by themselves; but I speak of those matters pertinent to the lives and customs of men, of which such clear evidences are not seen.

I repeat, therefore, that the custom of praising and blaming as mentioned above is true, but it is not true that you err in doing it. For sometimes of necessity our judgment is the truth, as human affairs are always in motion,

either ascending or descending. And we see a City or a Province well-organized in its government by some excellent man, and for a time always progressing toward the better through the virtue of that organizer. He who is born in that state, and praises the past more than the present, deceives himself; and his deception is caused by those things mentioned above. But if they are born in that City or province after the time when it has begun to descend to its bad times, then he does not deceive himself. And in thinking of how these things go on, I judge that the world has always been in the same condition, and that there is as much good as there is bad in it; but this bad and good vary from province to province, as is seen by the historian of those ancient Kingdoms which varied from one another because of the variations in customs, while the world remained the same: the only difference was, that where virtue first found a place in Assyria, it then [moved] to Media, afterwards to Persia, and from there came to Italy and Rome: and if after the Roman Empire no other Empire followed which endured, and where the world kept together all its virtue, none the less it is seen to be scattered in many nations where people lived with virtue, as it was in the Kingdom of the Franks, the Kingdom of the Turks, that of the Soldan [of Egypt], and today the people of Germany, and before then that Saracen Sect which accomplished such great things and occupied so much of the world after having destroyed the Eastern Roman Empire. In all these provinces, therefore, after the Romans fell, the Sects possessed, and yet possess in part, that virtue which is desired and lauded with true praise. And whoever is born in them and praises the times past more than the present, may deceive himself: but whoever is born in Italy and Greece, and has not become either an Ultramontane in Italy or a Turk in Greece, has reason to find fault with his times and to praise the others, for in the past there are many things that make him marvel, but now there is not anything that will compensate for the extreme misery, infamy, and disgrace in these times where there is no observance of religion, of laws, or of military discipline, but are stained by every brutish reasoning. And these vices are even more detestable as they exist more in those who sit in the tribunals, commanding everyone, and desiring to be adored.

But returning to our argument, I say that, if the judgment of men is corrupt in deciding whether the present or the ancient age is better, in those things

where because of their antiquity they cannot have a perfect knowledge as they have of their own times, the old men ought not to corrupt themselves in judging the times of their youth and their old age, they having known and seen the latter and the former equally. Which thing would be true if men throughout all the periods of their lives had the same judgment and the same appetites. But as these vary (although the times do not vary), things cannot appear the same to those men who have other appetites, other delights, and other considerations in their old age than in their youth. For as men wane (when they age) in strength but grow in judgment and prudence, so it is that those things which in their youth appeared supportable and good, will turn out (as they grow old) unsupportable and bad, and where they ought to blame their judgment, they blame the times. In addition to this, human appetites being insatiable (because by nature they have to be able to and want to desire everything, and to be able to effect little for themselves because of fortune), there arises a continuous discontent in the human mind, and a weariness of the things they possess; which makes them find fault with the present times, praise the past, and desire the future, although in doing this they are not moved by any reasonable cause. I do not know, therefore, whether I merit to be numbered among those who deceive themselves, if in these Discourses of mine I shall laud too much the times of the ancient Romans and censure ours. And truly, if the virtue that then reigned and the vice that now reigns should not be as clear as the Sun, I would be more restrained in talking, being apprehensive of falling into that deception of which I accuse others.

But the matter being so manifest that everyone sees it, I shall be bold in saying openly that which I learned of those times and these, so that the minds of the young men who may read my writings can avoid the latter [evils] and imitate the [virtu] of the former, whenever fortune should give them the opportunity. For it is the office of a good man to show others that good which because of the malignity of the times and of fortune, he has not been able to accomplish, so that (many being capable) some of those more loved by Heaven can accomplish them.

And having in the discourses of the preceding book talked of the decisions made by the Romans pertinent to the internal affairs of the City, in this

[book] we shall talk of that which the Roman people did pertinent to the aggrandizement of their Empire.

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## CHAPTER 1. WHETHER VIRTU OR FORTUNE WAS THE GREATER CAUSE FOR THE EMPIRE WHICH THE ROMANS ACQUIRED

Many [authors], among whom is that most serious writer Plutarch, have had the opinion that the Roman people in acquiring the Empire were favored more by Fortune than by Virtu. And among other reasons which he cities, he says that, by the admission of that people, it can be shown that they ascribed all their victories to Fortune, as they had built more temples to Fortune than to any other God. And it seems that Livius joined in this opinion, for he rarely makes any Roman speak where he recounts [of] Virtu, without adding Fortune. Which thing I do not in any way agree with, nor do I believe also that it can be sustained. For if no other Republic will ever be found which has made the progress that Rome had, then I note that no Republic will ever be found which has been organized to be able to make such conquests as Rome. For it was the virtu of the armies that enabled her to acquire that Empire; and the order of proceeding and her own institutions founded by her first Legislator that enabled her to maintain the acquisitions, as will be narrated below in further discussion.

These [authors] also say that the fact of not ever engaging in two most important wars at the same time was due to the fortune and not the virtu of the Roman people; for they did not engage in war with the Latins until they had so beaten the Samnites that the Romans had to engage in a war in defense of them: They did not combat with the Tuscans until they first subjugated the Latins, and had by frequent defeats almost completely enervated the Samnites: So that if these two powers had joined together (while they were fresh), without doubt it can easily be conjectured that the ruin of the Roman Republic would have ensued.

But however this thing may have been, it never did happen that they engaged in two most powerful wars at the same time; rather it appeared always that at the beginning of one the other would be extinguished, or in extinguishing one another would arise. Which is easily seen from the succession of wars engaged in by them; for, leaving aside the one they were engaged in before Rome was taken by the French [Gauls], it is seen that

while they fought against the Equii and the Volscians, no other people (while these people were powerful) rose up against them. When these were subdued there arose the war against the Samnites, and although before that war was ended the Latin people rebelled against the Romans with their armies in subduing the insolence of the Latins. When these were subdued, the war against the Samnites sprung up again. When the Samnites were beaten through the many defeats inflicted on their forces, there arose the war against the Tuscans; which being composed, the Samnites again rose up when Pyrrhus crossed over into Italy, and as soon as he was beaten and driven back to Greece, the first war with the Carthaginians was kindled: and that war was hardly finished when all the Gauls from all sides of the Alps conspired against the Romans, but they were defeated with the greatest massacre between Popolonia and Pisa where the tower of San Vincenti stands today. After this war was finished, they did not have any war of much importance for a space of twenty years, for they did not fight with any others except the Ligurians and the remnants of the Gauls who were in Lombardy. And thus they remained until there arose the second Carthaginian war, which kept Italy occupied for sixteen years. When this war ended with the greatest glory, there arose the Macedonian war; [and] after this was finished there came that of Antiochus and Asia. After this victory, there did not remain in all the world either a Prince or a Republic that could, by itself or all together, oppose the Roman forces.

But whoever examines the succession of these wars, prior to that last victory, and the manner in which they were conducted, will see mixed with Fortune a very great Virtu and Prudence. So that if one should examine the cause of that [good] fortune, he will easily find it, for it is a most certain thing that as a Prince or a People arrives at so great a reputation, that any neighboring Princes or Peoples by themselves are afraid to assault him, and he has no fear of them, it will always happen that none of them will ever assault him except from necessity; so that it will almost be at the election of that powerful one to make war upon any of those neighbors as appears [advantageous] to him, and to quiet the others by his industry. These are quieted easily in part because they have respect for his power, and in part because they are deceived by those means which he used to put them to sleep: and other powerful ones who are distant and have no commerce with

him, will look upon this as a remote thing which does not pertain to them. In which error they remain until the conflagration arrives next to them, for which, when it comes, they have no remedy to extinguish it except with their own forces, which then will not be enough as he has become most powerful.

I will leave to one side how the Samnites remained to see the Volscians and the Equii conquered by the Romans, and so as not to be too prolix I will make use of the Carthaginians who were of great power and of great reputation when the Romans were fighting with the Samnites and Tuscans; for they already held all Africa, Sardinia and Sicily, and had dominion in part of Spain. Which power of theirs, together with their being distant from the confines of the Roman people, caused them never to think of assaulting them, nor of succoring the Samnites and Tuscans; rather it made them do as is done in any power that grows, allying themselves with them [the Romans] in their favor and seeking their friendship. Nor did they see before this error was made, that the Romans having subdued all the peoples [placed] between them and the Carthaginians, begun to combat them for the Empire of Sicily and Spain. The same thing happened to the Gauls as to the Carthaginians, and also to Philip King of Macedonia and to Antiochus; and everyone of them believed (while the Roman people were occupied with others) that the others would overcome them, and then it would be time either by peace or war to defend themselves from [the Romans]. So that I believe that the [good] Fortune which the Romans had in these parts would be had by all those Princes who would proceed as the Romans and who would have that same Virtu as they had.

It would be well here in connection with this subject to show the course held by Roman people in entering the Provinces of others, of which we have talked about at length in our treatment of Principalities [Treatise on the Prince], for there we have debated this matter widely. I will only say this briefly, that they have always endeavored to have some friend in these new provinces who should be as a ladder or door to let them climb in, both to let them enter and as a means of keeping it; as was seen, that by means of the Capuans they entered Samnium, by means of the Camertines into Tuscany, by the Mamertines into Sicily, by the Saguntines into Spain, by Massinissa

into Africa, by the Aetolians into Greece, by Eumences and other Princes into Asia, and by the Massilians and the Aeduans into Gaul. And thus they never lacked similar supports, both in order to be able to facilitate their enterprises of their acquiring provinces and in holding them. Which those people who observed them saw that they had less need of Fortune, than those people who do not make good observers. And so as to enable everyone to know better how much more Virtu enabled them to acquire that Empire than did Fortune, in the following chapter we will discuss the kind of people they had to combat and how obstinate they were in defending their liberty.

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## CHAPTER 2. WITH WHAT PEOPLE THE ROMANS HAD TO COMBAT, AND HOW OBSTINATELY THEY DEFENDED THEIR LIBERTY

Nothing caused so much hard work for the Romans as the overcoming of the surrounding people and part of the distant Provinces, as the love many people in those times had for liberty; which they so obstinately defended but they would never have been subjugated except for the excessive virtue [of the Romans]. For, from many examples, it is known into what dangers they placed themselves in order to maintain or recover [their liberty], and what vengeance they practiced against those who had deprived them of it. It is also to be learned from the lessons of history what injury the people and the City received from such servitude. And, while in these times there is only one Province of which it can be said has in it free Cities, in ancient times in all the Provinces there existed many free people. It will be seen that in those times of which we speak at present, there were in Italy, from the Alps (which now divide Tuscany from Lombardy) up to the furthest [part] in Italy, many free peoples, such as were the Tuscans, the Romans, the Samnites, and many other people, who inhabited the remaining part of Italy. Nor is there ever any discussion whether there was any King outside those who reigned in Rome, and Porsenna, King of Tuscany, whose line was extinguished in a manner of which history does not speak. But it is indeed seen that in those times when the Romans went to besiege Veii, Tuscany was free, and so much did it enjoy its liberty and so hated the title of Prince, that when the Veientians created a King for the defense of Veii, and requested aid of the Tuscans against the Romans, they decided, after much consultation, not to give aid to the Veientians as long as they lived under the King, judging it not to be good to defend the country of those who already had subjected themselves to others. And it is easy to understand whence this affection arises in a people to live free, for it is seen from experience that Cities never increased either in dominion or wealth except while they had been free. And truly it is a marvelous thing to consider to what greatness Athens had arrived in the space of a hundred years after she had freed herself from the tyranny of Pisistratus. But above all, it is a more marvelous thing to consider to what greatness Rome arrived after it

liberated itself from its Kings. The cause is easy to understand, for not the individual good, but the common good is what makes Cities great. And, without doubt, this common good is not observed except in Republics, because everything is done which makes for their benefit, and if it should turn to harm this or that individual, those for whom the said good is done are so many, that they can carry on against the interests of those few who should be harmed. The contrary happens when there is a Prince, where much of the time what he does for himself harms the City, and what is done for the City harms him. So that soon there arises a Tyranny over a free society, the least evil which results to that City is for it not to progress further, nor to grow further in power or wealth, but most of the times it rather happens that it turns backward. And if chance should cause that a Tyrant of virtu should spring up, who by his courage and virtu at arms expands his dominion, no usefulness would result to the Republic but only to be himself; for he cannot honor any of those citizens who are valiant and good over whom he tyrannizes, as he does not want to have to suspect them. Nor also can he subject those Cities which he acquires or make them tributary to the City of which he is the Tyrant, because he does not help himself in making them powerful, but it will help him greatly in keeping the State disunited, so that each town and each province should recognize him. So that he alone, and not his country, profits from his acquisitions. And whoever should want to confirm this opinion with infinite other arguments, let him read Xenophon's treatise which he wrote on Tyranny.

It is no wonder, therefore, that the ancient people should have persecuted the Tyrants with so much hatred and should have loved living in freedom, and the name of Liberty so much esteemed by them; as happened when Hieronymus, nephew of Hiero the Syracusan, was killed in Syracuse; that when the news of his death came to his army, which was not very far from Syracuse, they at first begun to raise a tumult and take up arms against his killers; but when they heard that there was shouting of liberty in Syracuse, attracted by the name everyone became quiet, their ire against the Tyrannicides was quelled, and they thought of how a free government could be established in that City. It is also no wonder that the people took extraordinary vengeance against those who deprived them of liberty. Of which there have been many examples, but I intend to refer only to one

which happened in Corcyra, a City of Greece, in the times of the Peloponnesian war, where, the Province being divided into two factions, of which the Athenians followed one, the Spartans the other, there arose then among the many other Cities a division among themselves, some following [the friendship of] Sparta, the the others [of] Athens: and it happened in the said City [Corcyra] that the nobles had prevailed and had taken away the liberty from the people; the populari [popular party] with the aid of the Athenians recovered its power, and, having laid hands on the nobility, put them into a prison capable of holding all of them; from which they took out eight or ten at one time under a pretext of sending them into exile in different places, but put them to death with [examples of] extreme cruelties. When the remainder became aware of this, they resolved if possible to escape that ignominious death, and arming themselves as [best] as they could, they fought with those who attempted to enter and defended the entrance to the prison; but when the people came together at this noise, they pulled down the upper part of that place, and suffocated them in the ruins. Many other similar notable and horrible cases occurred in the said Province, so that it is seen to be true that liberty is avenged with great energy when it is taken away than when it is only threatened [to be taken].

In thinking, therefore, of whence it should happen that in those ancient times the people were greater lovers of Liberty than in these times, I believe it results from the same reason which makes men presently less strong, which I believe is the difference between our education and that of the ancients, founded on the difference between our Religion and the ancients. For, as our Religion shows the truth and the true way [of life], it causes us to esteem less the honors of the world: while the Gentiles [Pagans] esteeming them greatly, and having placed the highest good in them, were more ferocious in their actions. Which can be observed from many of their institutions, beginning with the magnificence of their sacrifices [as compared] to the humility of ours, in which there is some pomp more delicate than magnificent, but no ferocious or energetic actions. Theirs did not lack pomp and magnificence of ceremony, but there was added the action of sacrifice full of blood and ferocity, the killing of many animals, which sight being terrible it rendered the men like unto it. In addition to this, the ancient Religion did not beatify men except those full of worldly glory,

such as were the Captains of armies and Princes of Republics. Our Religion has glorified more humble and contemplative men rather than men of action. It also places the highest good in humility, lowliness, and contempt of human things: the other places it in the greatness of soul, the strength of body, and all the other things which make men very brave. And, if our Religion requires that there be strength [of soul] in you, it desires that you be more adept at suffering than in achieving great deeds.

This mode of living appears to me, therefore, to have rendered the world weak and a prey to wicked men, who can manage it securely, seeing that the great body of men, in order to go to Paradise, think more of enduring their beatings than in avenging them. And although it appears that the World has become effeminate and Heaven disarmed, yet this arises without doubt more from the baseness of men who have interpreted our Religion in accordance with Indolence and not in accordance with Virtu. For if they were to consider that it [our Religion] permits the exaltation and defense of the country, they would see that it desires that we love and honor her [our country], and that we prepare ourselves so that we can be able to defend her. This education and false interpretations, therefore, are the cause that in the world as many Republics are not seen in them that the people have as much love for liberty now as at that time. I believe, however, the reason for this rather to be, that the Roman Empire with its arms and greatness destroyed all the Republics and all civil institutions. And although that Empire was later dissolved, yet these Cities could not reunite themselves, nor reorganize their civil institutions, except in a very few places in that Empire.

But however it was, the Romans found a conspiracy in every smallest part of the world of Republics very well armed and most obstinate in the defense of their liberty. Which shows that the Roman people could never have overcome them without that rare and extreme virtu. And to give an example of one instance, the example of the Samnites suffices for me, which seems to be a marvelous one. And T. Livius admits that these [people] were so powerful and their arms so valiant, that, up to the time of the Consul Papirus Cursor, son of the first Papirus, for a period of forty six years, they were able to resist the Romans, despite the many defeats, destruction

of Towns, and massacres suffered by their country. Especially as it is now seen that that country where there were so many Cities and so many men, is now almost uninhabited: and yet it was so well established and so powerful, that it was unconquerable except by Roman virtue. And it is an easy thing whence that order and disorder proceeded, for it all comes from their then living in freedom and now living in servitude. For all the towns and provinces which are free in every way (as was said above) make the greatest advances. For here greater populations are seen because marriages are more free and more desired by men, because everyone willingly procreates those children that he believes he is able to raise without being apprehensive that their patrimony will be taken away, and to know that they are not only born free and not slaves, but are also able through their own virtue to become Princes. They will see wealth multiplied more rapidly, both that which comes from the culture [of the soil] and that which comes from the arts, for everyone willingly multiplies those things and seek to acquire those goods whose acquisition he believes he can enjoy. Whence it results that men competing for both private and public betterment, both come to increase in a wondrous manner. The contrary of all these things happens in those countries which live in servitude, and the more the good customs are lacking, the more rigorous is the servitude. And the hardest of all servitudes is that of being subject to a Republic: the one, because it is more enduring and the possibility of escaping from it is missing: the other, because the final aim of a Republic is to enervate and weaken (in order to increase its own power) all the other states. Which a Prince who subjugates you does not do unless that Prince is some barbarous Prince, a destroyer of countries and dissipater of all human civilization, such as are oriental Princes: But if he has ordinary human feelings in him, most of the times he will love equally the Cities subject to him, and will leave them [enjoy] all their arts, and almost all their ancient institutions. So that if they cannot grow as if they were free, they will not be ruined even in servitude; servitude being understood as that in which Cities serve a foreigner, for of that to one of their own Citizens, we have spoken above.

Whoever considers, therefore, all that which has been said, will not marvel at the power which the Samnites had while they were free, and at the weakness to which they came afterwards under servitude: and T. Livius

gives testimony of this in many places, and mainly in the war with Hannibal, where he shows that when the Samnites were pressed by a legion of [Romans] who were at Nola, they sent Orators [Ambassadors] to Hannibal to beg him to succor them. Who in their speech said to him. that for a hundred years they had combatted the Romans with their own soldiers and their own Captains, and many times had sustained [battle against] two consular armies and two Consuls; but now they had arrived at such baseness that they were hardly able to defend themselves against the small Roman legion which was at Nola.

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### CHAPTER 3. ROME BECAME A GREAT CITY BY RUINING THE SURROUNDING CITIES AND ADMITTING FOREIGNERS EASILY TO HER HONORS

Crescit interea Roma Albae ruinis. [Rome grew on the ruins of Alba] Those who plan for a City to achieve great Empire ought with all industry to endeavor to make it full of inhabitants, for without this abundance of men, one can never succeed in making a City great. This is done in two ways, by love and by force. Through love, by keeping the ways open and secure for foreigners who should plan to come to live there. Through force, by destroying the neighboring Cities and sending their inhabitants to live in your City. Which was so greatly observed by Rome, that in the time of the sixth King of Rome, that there lived there eighty thousand men capable of bearing arms. For the Romans wanted to act according to the custom of the good cultivator, who, in order to make a plant grow and able to produce and mature its fruits, cuts off the first branches that it puts out, so that by retaining that virtu in the roots of that plant, they can in time grow more green and more fruitful. And that this method of aggrandizing and creating an Empire was necessary and good, is shown by the example of Sparta and Athens; which two Republics although well armed and regulated by excellent laws, none the less did not attain to the greatness of the Roman Empire, and Rome appeared more tumultuous and not as well regulated as those others. No other reason can be adduced for this than that mentioned above; for Rome, from having enlarged the population of the City in both those two ways, was enabled to put two hundred thousand men under arms, while Sparta and Athens were never able [to raise] twenty thousand each.

Which resulted not from the site of Rome being more favorable than those of the other, but solely from the different mode of procedure. For Lycurgus, founder of the Spartan Republic, thinking that nothing could more easily dissolve its laws than the admixture of new inhabitants, did everything [he could] so that foreigners would not come to them; and in addition to not receiving them into their citizenship by marriage, and other commerce that

makes men come together, ordered that in that Republic of his only leather money should be spent, in order to take away from everyone the desire to come there in order to bring in merchandise or some arts: of a kind so that the City could never increase its inhabitants. And because all our actions imitate nature, it is neither possible nor natural that a slender trunk should sustain a big branch.

A small Republic, therefore, cannot conquer Cities or Republics which are larger and more valiant than it; and if it does conquer them, it happens then to them as to that tree that has its branches bigger than its trunk, which sustains it only with great effort with every little breeze that blows; such as is seen happened in Sparta, which had conquered all the Cities of Greece, but as soon as Thebes rebelled, all the others rebelled, and the trunk remained alone without branches. Which could not have happened to Rome, as it had its trunk so big that it could sustain any branch. This mode of proceeding therefore, together with others which will be mentioned below, made Rome great and most powerful. Which T. Livius points out in two [few] words, when he said: Rome grew while Alba was ruined.

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## CHAPTER 4. REPUBLICS HAVE HAD THREE WAYS OF EXPANDING

Whoever has studied the ancient histories finds that Republics had three ways of expanding. One has been that which the ancient Tuscans observed, of being one league of many united Republics, where there is not any one before the other either in authority or in rank. And in acquiring other Cities they made them associates of themselves, as in a similar way the Swiss do in these times, and as the Achaens and Aetolians did in ancient times in Greece. And as the Romans had many wars with the Tuscans (in order to illustrate better the first method) I will extend myself in giving a particular account of them. Before the Roman Empire, the Tuscans were the most powerful people in Italy, both on land and on the sea, and although there is no particular history of their affairs, yet there is some small record and some signs of their greatness; and it is known that they sent a colony to the sea, above [north of] them, which they called Adria, which was so noble that it gave a name to that sea which the Latins also called the Adriatic. It is also known that their arms [authority] was obeyed from the Tiber up to the foot of the Alps which now encircle the greater part of Italy; notwithstanding that two hundred years before the Romans became so powerful that the said Tuscans lost the Dominion of that country which today is called Lombardy: which province had been seized by the Gauls, who, moved either by necessity or the sweetness of the fruits, and especially of the wine, came into Italy under their leader Bellovesus, and having defeated and driven out the inhabitants of the province, they settled there where they built many Cities, and they called that Province Gallia from the name they themselves had, which they kept until they were subjugated by the Romans. The Tuscans, then, lived in that equality and proceeded in their expansion through the first method which was mentioned above: and there were twelve Cities, among which were Clusium, Veii, Fiesole, Arezzo, Volterra, and others like them, which through a league governed their Empire; nor could they go outside of Italy with their acquisitions, a great part of which still remained intact [independent], for the reasons which will be mentioned below.

The other method is to make them associates; not so closely, however, that the position of commanding the seat of the Empire and the right of sovereignty should not remain with you; which method was observed by the Romans. The third method is to make subjects of them immediately and not associates, as did the Spartans and Athenians. Of which three methods this last is entirely useless as is seen was the case in the above mentioned two Republics, which were ruined for no other reason than from having acquired that dominion which they were unable to maintain. For to undertake the governing of Cities by violence, especially those which were accustomed to living in freedom, is a difficult and wearisome thing. And unless you are armed, and powerfully armed, you cannot either command or rule them. And to want to be thus established, it is necessary to make associates of them who would help in increasing the population of your City. And as these two Cities [Sparta and Athens] did not do either the one or the other, their method of procedure was useless. And because Rome, which is an example of the second method, did both things, she therefore rose to such exceeding power. And as she had been the only one to act thusly, so too she had been the only one to become so powerful; for she had created many associates throughout all Italy, who lived with them in many respects equally under the law, but on the other hand (as I said above) she always reserved for herself the seat of Empire and the right of command, so that these associates of hers came (without their being aware of it) through their own efforts and blood to subjugate themselves. For as soon as they begun to go beyond Italy with their armies to reduce other Kingdoms to Provinces, and to make for themselves subjects of those who, having been accustomed to live under Kings, did not care to be subjects, and from having Roman governors, and having been conquered by armies under Roman command, they recognized no one to be superior other than the Romans. So that those associates of Rome [who were] in Italy found themselves suddenly surrounded by Roman subjects and pressed by a very large City like Rome: and when they understood the deceit under which they had lived they were not in time to remedy it, for Rome had achieved so much authority with the [acquisition] of the external provinces, and so much power was to be found within themselves, the City having become greatly populated and well armed. And although these associates of hers conspired against her in order

to avenge the injuries inflicted on them, they were defeated [in war] in a short time, worsening their condition; for from being associates they too became their subjects. This method of proceeding (as has been said) had been observed only by the Romans; and a Republic which wants to aggrandize itself cannot have any other method, for experience has not shown anything else more certain and more true.

The fore-mentioned method of creating Leagues, such as were the Tuscans, Achaians, and the Aetolians, and as are the Swiss today, is, after that of the Romans, the better method; for with it, it is not possible to expand greatly, but two benefits ensue: the one, that they are not easily drawn into war: the other, that that which you take you can easily hold. The reason they are not able to expand is that Republics are not united and have their seats in several places, which makes it difficult for them to consult and decide. It also makes them undesirous of dominating, for, as many Communities participating in that dominion, they do not value much such acquisitions as does a single Republic which hopes to enjoy it entirely by itself. In addition to this they are governed by a council, and it follows that they are tardier in every decision than those which come from those who live in the same circle. It is also seen from experience that such methods of procedure have a fixed limit, of which there is no example which indicates it has ever been transgressed; and this [limit] is the addition of twelve or fourteen communities, beyond which they cannot go, and as their defending themselves appears to them to be difficult they do not seek greater dominion, as much because necessity does not constrain them to have more power, as well as for not recognizing any usefulness in further acquisitions for the reason mentioned above: for they have to do one of two things: either to continue making additional associates for themselves, as this multitude would cause confusion, or they would have to make them subjects to themselves. And as they see the difficulty of this, and little usefulness in maintaining it, they see no value in it. When, therefore, they are come to such a great number that it appears to them they can live securely, they turn to two things: the one, to take up the protection of others who seek it, and by this means obtain money from each one, and which they can readily distribute among themselves: the other, is to become soldiers for others and accept a stipend from this Prince or that, who hires

them for undertaking his enterprises, as is seen the Swiss do these days, and as one reads was done by the above mentioned ones. Of which Titus Livius gives testimony, where he tells of Philip, King of Macedon, coming to negotiate with Titus Quintus Flaminius, and discussing the accord in the presence of a Praetor of the Aetolians, the said Praetor in coming to talk with him, was by him reprimanded for avarice and infidelity, saying that the Aetolians were not ashamed to enlist in the military service for one, and then also send their men into the service of the enemy, so that many times the Aetolian ensigns were seen among the two opposing armies. We see, therefore, that this method of proceeding through leagues has always been the same, and has had the same results. It is also seen that the method of making [them] subjects has always been ineffective and to have produced little profit: and when they had carried this method too far, they were soon ruined. And if this method of making subjects is useless in armed Republics, it is even more useless in those which are unarmed, as the Republics of Italy have been in our times.

It is to be recognized, therefore, that the Romans had the certain method, which is so much more admirable as there was no example before Rome, and there has been no one who has imitated them since Rome. And as to leagues, only the Swiss and the league of Swabia are found to be the only ones which imitated them. And finally of this matter it will be said, so many institutions observed by Rome, pertinent to the events both internal as well as external, have not only not been imitated in our times, but have not been taken into account, being judged by some not to be true, by some impossible, by some not applicable and useless. So that by remaining in this ignorance we [Italy] are prey to anyone who has wanted to rule this province. But if the imitation of the Romans appeared difficult, that the ancient Tuscans ought not to appear so, especially by the present Tuscans. For if they could not acquire that power in Italy, which that method of procedure would have given them, they lived in security for a long time, with very much glory of Dominion and arms, and especially praise for their customs and Religion. Which power and glory was first diminished by the Gauls, and afterwards extinguished by the Romans: and was so completely extinguished, that, although two thousand years ago the power of the Tuscans was great, at present there is almost no memory. Which thing has

made me think whence this oblivion of things arises, as will be discussed in the following chapter.

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## CHAPTER 5. THAT THE CHANGES OF SECTS AND LANGUAGES, TOGETHER WITH THE ACCIDENT OF DELUGES AND PESTILENCE, EXTINGUISHED THE MEMORY OF THINGS

To those Philosophers who hold that the World has existed from eternity, I believe it is possible to reply, that, if such great antiquity was true, it would be reasonable that there should be some record of more than five thousand years, except it is seen that the records of those times have been destroyed from diverse causes: of which some were acts of men, some of Heaven. Those that are acts of men are the changes of the sects [religion] and of languages. Because, when a new sect springs up, that is, a new Religion, the first effort is (in order to give itself reputation) to extinguish the old; and if it happens that the establishers of the new sect are of different languages, they extinguish it [the old] easily. Which thing is known by observing the method which the Christian Religion employed against the Gentile [heathen] sect, which has cancelled all its institutions, all of its ceremonies, and extinguished every record of that ancient Theology. It is true that they did not succeed in entirely extinguishing the records of the things done by their excellent men, which has resulted from their having maintained the Latin language, which was done by force, having to write this new law in it. For if they could have written it in a new language, considering the other persecutions they suffered, none of the past events would have been recorded. And whoever reads the methods used by Saint Gregory and the other Heads of the Christian Religion, will see with what obstinacy they persecuted all the ancient memorials, burning the works of the Poets and Historians, ruining statues, and despoiling every thing else that gave any sign of antiquity. So that, if to this persecution they had added a new language, it would have been seen that in a very brief time everything [previous] would have been forgotten.

It is to be believed, therefore, that that which the Christian Religion wanted to do against the Gentile sect, the Gentiles did against that which preceded them. And as these sects changed two or three times in five or six thousand years, all memory of things done before that time are lost. And if, however,

some signs of it were left, it would be considered a fabulous thing, and not to be given credence: as happened with the history of Diodorus Siculus, who although he gives account of forty or fifty thousand years, none the less it is reputed (as I believe it is ) a mendacious thing.

As to the causes that come from Heaven, they are those that extinguish the human race and reduce the inhabitants of parts of the world to a very few. And this results either from pestilence, or famine, or from an inundation of water; and the last is the most important, as much because it is the most universal, as because those who are saved are men of the mountains and rugged, who, not having any knowledge of antiquity, cannot leave it to posterity. And if among them there should be saved one who should have this knowledge, he would hide it or pervert it in his own way in order to create a reputation and name for himself; so that there remains to his successors only what he wanted to write, and nothing else. And that these inundations, pestilences, and famines, occur, I do not believe there is any doubt, not only because all histories are full of them, but also because the effects of these oblivious things are seen, and because it appears reasonable they should be; For in nature as in simple bodies, when there is an accumulation of much superfluous matter, it very often moves by itself and makes a purgation which is healthy to that body; and so it happens in this compound body of the human race, that when all the provinces are full of inhabitants so that they cannot live or go elsewhere in order to occupy and fill up all places, and when human astuteness and malignity has gone as far as they can go, it happens of necessity that the world purges itself in one of the three ways, so that men having been chastised and reduced in number, live more commodiously and become better. Tuscany, then, was once powerful, as was said above, full of Religion and Virtu had its own customs and its own national language; all of which was extinguished by the Roman power. So that (as was said) nothing remained of it but the memory of its name.

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## CHAPTER 6. HOW THE ROMANS PROCEEDED IN MAKING WAR

Having discussed how the Romans proceeded in their expansion, we will now discuss how they proceeded in making war, and it will be seen with how much prudence they deviated in all the actions from the universal methods of others, in order to make their road to supreme greatness easy. The intention of whoever makes war, whether by election or from ambition, is to acquire and maintain the acquisition, and to proceed in such a way so as to enrich themselves and not to impoverish the [conquered] country and his own country. It is necessary, therefore, both in the acquisition and in the maintenance, to take care not to spend [too much], rather to do every thing for the usefulness of his people. Whoever wants to do all these things must hold to the Roman conduct and method, which was first to make the war short and sharp, as the French say, for coming into the field with large armies, they dispatched all the wars they had with the Latins, Samnites, and Tuscans, in the briefest time. And if all those things they did from the beginning of Rome up to the siege of the Veienti were to be noted, it will be seen that they were all dispatched some in six, some in ten, some in twenty days; for this was their usage. As soon as war broke out, they went out with the armies to meet the enemy and quickly came to the engagement. Which, when they won it, the enemy (so that their countryside should not be completely laid waste) came to terms, and the Romans condemned them [to turn over] lands, which lands they converted into private possessions or consigned them to a colony, which, placed on the confines of those people, served as a guard to the Roman frontiers, with usefulness as well to those colonists who received those fields as to the people of Rome, who, without expense, maintained that guard. Nor could this method be more secure, more effectual, or more useful. For, as long as the enemy were not in the fields, that guard was enough; but as soon as they went out in force to oppress that Colony, the Romans also came out in force and came to an engagement with them, and having waged and won the battle, [and], having imposed heavier conditions on them, they returned home. Thus, little by little, they came to acquire reputation over them and strength within themselves [their state]. And they kept to this method up to the time of war

when they changed the method of proceeding; which was after the siege of the Veienti, where, in order to be able to wage a long war, they ordered them to pay their soldiers, [and] which at first (since it was not necessary as the wars were short) they did not pay. And although the Romans gave them the money, and by virtue of which they were able to wage longer wars, and to keep them at a greater distance if necessity should keep them in the field longer, none the less they never varied from the original system of finishing them quickly, according to the place and time: nor did they ever vary from sending out of colonies. For, in the first system, the ambition of the Consuls contributed in making the wars short (in addition to the natural custom), who, being elected for one year, and six months of that year in quarters, wanted to finish the war in order to [have a] triumph. In the sending of colonies there was usefulness to them and resultant great convenience. They [the Romans] made a good distribution of booty, with which they were not as liberal as they were at first, as much because it did not appear to them to be so necessary (the soldiers receiving a stipend), as also because the booty being larger, they planned to enrich themselves of it so that the public should not be constrained to undertake the enterprises with the tributes from the City. Which system in a short time made their Treasury very rich. These two methods, therefore, of distributing the booty and of sending of colonies, caused Rome to be enriched by the wars while other unwise Princes and Republics were impoverished [by theirs]. And these were brought to such limits that a Consul did not think he could obtain a triumph unless, with his triumph, he could bring much gold and silver, and every other kind of booty into the Treasury.

Thus the Romans with the above described conditions and by finishing wars quickly, being satisfied by the length [of the wars] to massacre the enemy, and by defeating [their armies] and overrunning [their lands], and [making] accords to their advantage, always became richer and more powerful.

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## CHAPTER 7. HOW MUCH LAND THE ROMANS GAVE EACH COLONIST

I believe it is very difficult to find out the truth as to how much land the Romans distributed per colonist. I believe they gave them more or less, according to the places where they sent the colonies. And I would judge that in any instance and in all places the distribution was small. First, in order to send a greater number of men assigned to guard that country: then, as they lived poorly at home it would not have been reasonable that they should desire that their men should live too abundantly outside.

And T. Livius says that, after taking Veii, they sent a colony there and distributed to each three and seven-twelfths [ $3 \frac{7}{12}$ ] Jugeri of land, which in our measures are . . . [ $2 \frac{2}{3}$  acres]. For, in addition to the above written things, they judged it was not the amount of land, but its good cultivation, that should suffice. It is necessary also that all the colonies have public fields where everyone could pasture their beasts, and forests where they could get wood to burn, without which things a colony cannot organize itself.

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## CHAPTER 8. THE REASON WHY PEOPLE DEPART FROM THEIR NATIONAL PLACES AND INUNDATE THE COUNTRY OF OTHERS

Since there has been discussed above the method of proceeding in war observed by the Romans and how the Tuscans were assaulted by the Gauls, it does not appear to me alien to the subject to discuss how two kinds of war are made. One is waged because of the ambitions of Princes or of a Republic that seek to extend their Empire, such as were the wars that Alexander the Great waged, and those that the Romans waged, and those which one power wages against another. While these wars are dangerous, they never drive all the inhabitants out of a province, but the obedience of the people is enough for the conqueror, and most of the times he leaves them to live with their laws, and always with their homes and possessions: The other kind of war is when an entire people with all their families are taken away from a place, necessitated either by famine or by war, and goes to seek a new seat in a new province, not in order to seek dominion over them as those others above, but to possess it absolutely; and to drive out or kill its old inhabitants. This kind of war is most cruel and most frightful. And of these wars Sallust discusses at the end of [the history] of Jugurtha, when he says that, after Jugurtha was defeated, movements of the Gauls coming into Italy were heard: where he [also] says that the Roman People had combatted with all the other peoples only as to who should dominate, but that with the Gauls they combatted for the [very] existence of each. For to a Prince or a Republic that assaults a province, it is enough to extinguish only those who command, but to these entire populations, it behooves them to extinguish everyone because they want to live on that which the others lived.

The Romans had three of these most perilous wars. The first was when Rome was taken, which was occupied by those Gauls who had detached Lombardy (as was mentioned above) from the Tuscans and made it their seat: for which Titus Livius assigns two causes: The first, as was said above, that they were attracted by the sweetness of the fruits and wines of Italy, which were lacking in France: The second, that in that Kingdom of Gaul, men multiplied so fast that they were no longer able to feed them, [and] the

Princes decided it should be necessary that a part of them should go some place to seek a new country. And having made such a decision, they elected as captains over those who should depart Bellovesus and Sicovesus, two Kings of the Gauls, of whom Bellovesus went into Italy and Sicovesus passed into Spain. From the passage of this Bellovesus there resulted the occupation of Lombardy, and hence the first war that the Gauls made against Rome. After this came that which they made after the first Carthaginian war, where they [the Romans] killed over two hundred thousand Gauls between Piombino and Pisa. The third was when the Teutons and Cimbrians came into Italy, who having overcome several Roman armies, were defeated by Marius. The Romans, therefore, won these three most perilous wars. And no little virtu was necessary to win them; for it is seen that when that Roman virtu was lost [and], those arms lost their ancient valor, that Empire was destroyed by similar people, such as were the Goths, Vandals, and the like, who occupied all the western Empire.

These people go out from their countries (as was said above) driven by necessity; and the necessity arises from famine, or war, and oppression, which in their own country is experienced by them, so that they are constrained to seek new land. And these such are sometimes of a great number, and then enter into the countries of others with violence, killing the inhabitants, taking possession of their goods, create a new Kingdom, and change the name of the province, as Moses did, and those people who occupied the Roman Empire. For these new names that exist in Italy and in the provinces, do not come from anything else than of having been thus named by the new occupiers, such as is Lombardy which was called Cisalpine Gaul, France which was called Transalpine Gaul, and now is called after the Franks, as those people were called who had occupied it; Slavonia was called Illyria, Hungary Pannonia, England Brittania, and many other provinces which have changed names, to recount which would be tedious. Moses also called that part of Syria occupied by him Judea. And as I have said above that sometimes such people are driven from their own seats because of war, whence they are constrained to seek new lands, I want to cite the example of the Maurusians, a most ancient people of Syria, who, hearing of the coming of the Hebrew people and judging not to be able to resist them, thought it better to save themselves and leave their own

country, than to attempt to save it and lose themselves; and taking up their families, they went to Africa where they established themselves after driving out those inhabitants whom they found in that place. And thus those who were unable to defend their own country, were able to occupy that of others. And Procopius, who wrote of the war that Belisarius made against the Vandals, occupiers of Africa, refers to having read letters written on certain columns in the places that were inhabited by these Maurusians, which said: We Maurusians here fled from before Jesus the robber, son of Narva. Whence appeared the reason of their departure from Syria. These people, therefore, who have been driven out by an extreme necessity are most formidable, and if they are not confronted by good arms, will never be checked. But when those who are constrained to abandon their own country are not many, they are not as dangerous as those people who were discussed, for they are unable to use as much violence but must employ cunning in occupying some place, and having occupied it, to maintain themselves by way of friends and confederates: as is seen was done by Aeneas, and Dido, and the Massalians, and the like, all of whom were able to maintain themselves, with the consent of their neighbors.

The great numbers of people that went out, and are going out, are almost all from the country of Scythia, a cold and poor place, where, because there were a great number of men and the country of a kind which was unable to feed them, they are forced to go out, having many things which drive them out and none to retain them. And if in the past five hundred years it has not occurred that some of these people have not inundated any country, it arises from several reasons. The first, the great evacuation which that country made during the decline of the Empire, when more than thirty tribes left [Scythia]. The second is, that Germany and Hungary, whence also such people went out, have now improved their country so that they are able to live comfortably, that they are not necessitated to change places. On the other hand, their men being very warlike are a bastion in holding back the Scythians, who have the same boundary with them, from presuming to overcome or pass through them. And often times there occurred very great movements of Tartars, who were later checked by the Hungarians and the Poles, and they often boast that if it had not been for their arms, Italy and

the Church would have many times felt the weight of the Tartar armies. And this I want to be enough concerning the people mentioned.

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## CHAPTER 9. WHAT CAUSES COMMONLY MAKE WARS ARISE BETWEEN THE POWERFUL

The cause which made war arise between the Romans and the Samnites who were in league for a long time, is a common cause which arises among all powerful Principalities. Which cause either arises by chance or is made to arise by those who desire to set a war in motion.

That which arose between the Romans and the Samnites was by chance, for it was not the intention of the Samnites, in setting the war in motion against the Sidicians, and afterwards against the Campanians, to set it in motion against the Romans. But the Campanians being hard pressed and having recourse to Rome, beyond the thoughts of the Romans and the Samnites, the Campanians forced the Romans to take them to themselves as subjects of theirs, so that it appeared to them [the Romans] they could not honorably evade [the obligation] of defending them, and [hence] take up that war.

For it indeed appeared reasonable to the Romans not to defend the Campanians as friends against the Samnites, who were their friends, but it seemed to them disgraceful not to defend them as subjects, even though voluntary ones, judging that if they did not undertake such defense, it would alienate all those who should plan to come under their dominion. And as the aim of Rome was Empire and Glory, and not Quiet, she could not refuse this enterprise.

This same cause gave beginning to the first war against the Carthaginians because of the defense of the Messenians in Sicily which the Romans undertook, which was also by chance. But the second war which afterwards arose between them was not by chance, for Hannibal the Carthaginian Captain assaulted the Saguntines friends of the Romans in Spain, not to injure them, but to move the Romans to arms, and to have occasion to combat them and pass into Italy. This method of kindling new wars has always been customary among Powers, and who have some respect for the faith [treaties] with others.

For if I want to make war against a Prince, and have between us a signed treaty observed for a long time, I would assault a friend of his very own with some other pretext and justification, especially knowing that in assaulting his friend either he would resent it and I would obtain my intention of making war against him, or if he did not resent it, his weakness and unfaithfulness in not defending his ally will take away reputation from him, and to execute my designs more easily.

It ought to be noted, therefore, because of the dedication of the Campanians in setting the war in motion in the way mentioned above, that the best remedy which a City has, that is unable to defend itself, but wants to defend itself in whatever manner against anyone who should assault them: which is to give itself freely to whomever they design to defend them, as the Campanians did to the Romans, and the Florentines to King Robert of Naples, who, unwilling to defend them as friends, defended them afterwards as subjects against the forces of Castruccio of Lucca who was pressing them hard.

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## CHAPTER 10. MONEY IS NOT THE SINEW OF WAR ALTHOUGH THIS IS COMMON OPINION

Because anyone can commence a war at his pleasure, but cannot so finish it, a Prince ought before he undertakes an enterprise to measure his forces, and govern himself in accordance with them. But he ought to have so much prudence as not to deceive himself of the two forces: and he will deceive himself every time when he measures it either by his money, or by the location [of his country], or by good will of his people, while on the other hand he lacks his own arms. For although the above things will increase his strength, [but] they will not give it to him, and of themselves are nothing, and will not be of benefit without trustworthy arms. For without them, great amounts of money will not suffice you, the strength of the country will not benefit you, and the faith and good will of men will not endure, as these cannot remain faithful to you if you are not able to defend them. Every mountain, every lake, every inaccessible place becomes a plain where strong defenders are lacking. Money alone, also, will not defend you, but causes you to be plundered more readily. Nor can that common opinion be more false which says that money is the sinew of war. Which sentence was said by Quintus Curtius in the war which existed between Antipater the Macedonian and the King of Sparta, where he narrates that because of a want of money the King of Sparta was obliged to come to battle and was routed, that if he had deferred the fight a few days the news of the death of Alexander in Greece would have arrived, whence he would have remained victor without fighting. But lacking money, and being apprehensive that, for the want of which, his army would abandon him, was constrained to try the fortune of battle. So that for this reason Quintus Curtius affirms money to be the sinew of war. Which opinion is alleged every day, and acted on by not so prudent Princes to whom it is enough to follow it: For relying on it, they believe it is enough to have much treasure to defend themselves, and do not think that if treasure should be enough to win, that Darius would have vanquished Alexander, the Greeks would have vanquished the Romans, and in our times Duke Charles would have vanquished the Swiss, and a few days ago the Pope and the Florentine together would not have had difficulty in defeating

Francesco Maria, nephew of Julius II, in the war at Urbino. But all the above named were vanquished by those who esteemed not money, but good soldiers, as the sinew of war.

Among other things that Croesus, King of Lydia, showed to Solon the Athenian was a countless treasure: and asking what he thought his power to be, Solon answered that he did not judge him more powerful because of that, because war was made with iron and not gold, and that someone might come who had more iron than he and would take it away from him. In addition to this, when, after the death of Alexander the Great, a great multitude of Gauls passed into Greece and then into Asia, and the Gauls sent Ambassadors to the King of Macedonia to treat of certain accords, that King to show his power and to dismay them showed them much gold and silver: whence those Gauls who had already as good as signed the peace broke it, so much did the desire grow in them to take away that gold. And thus was that King despoiled by the very thing that he had accumulated for defense. The Venetians a few years ago also, having their Treasury full of treasure, lost the State without being able to be defended by it.

I say, therefore, that gold (as common opinion shouts) is not the sinew of war, but good soldiers; because gold is not sufficient to find good soldiers, but good soldiers are indeed sufficient to find gold. To the Romans (if they had wanted to make war more with money instead of with iron) it would not have been enough to have all the treasure of the world, considering the great enterprises that they made and the difficulties that they had to encounter. But making their wars with iron, they never suffered from want of gold, because it was brought, even up to their camps, by those who feared them. And if that King of Sparta, because of a dearth of money, had to try the fortune of battle, that which happened to him on account of money many times would have happened for other causes; for it has been seen that any army lacking provisions, and being obliged either to die of hunger or to engage in battle, will always take the side of fighting as being more honorable, and where fortune can in some way favor you. It has also happened many times that a Captain, seeing succor come to the army of his enemy, has preferred to come to an engagement with him at once and try the fortune of battle, rather than wait until he is reinforced and then have to

fight him in any case under a thousand disadvantages. It has also been seen, how it happened to Hasdrubal when he was assaulted in the Marca [Metaurus River] by Claudius Nero, together with the other Roman Consul, that a Captain obliged either to fight or flee, always elects to fight, it seeming to him in this way, even if most doubtful, to be able to win, but in the other to lose in any case.

There are many necessities, therefore, which make a Captain choose the side of coming to battle against his will, among which sometimes it can be the dearth of money, but not for this ought money to be judged the sinew of war more than other things which induce men to a similar necessity. Repeating again, therefore, the sinew of war is not gold, but good soldiers. Money is indeed necessary in a secondary place, but it is a necessity that good soldiers by themselves will overcome; for it is impossible that good soldiers will lack money, as it is for money by itself to find good soldiers. Every history in a thousand places shows that which we say to be true, notwithstanding that Pericles had counselled the Athenians to make war with all the Peloponnesus, showing that they could win that war with perseverance and by the power of money. And although in that war the Athenians at times had prospered, in the end they lost, and the good counsels and good soldiers of Sparta were of more value than the perseverance and the money of Athens. But the testimony of Titus Livius is more direct than any other, where, discussing if Alexander the Great should have come into Italy, if he would have vanquished the Romans, he showed three things to be necessary for war, many and good soldiers, prudent Captains, and good fortune: where examining whether the Romans or Alexander should have prevailed in these things, afterwards makes his conclusion without ever mentioning money. The Campanians had, when they were requested by the Sidicians to take up arms of them against the Samnites, to measure their power by money and not by soldiers; for having undertaken the proceeding to aid them, after two defeats were constrained to make themselves tributaries of the Romans if they wanted to save themselves.

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## CHAPTER 11. IT IS NOT A PRUDENT PROCEEDING TO MAKE AN ALLIANCE WITH A PRINCE WHO HAS MORE REPUTATION THAN POWER

Titus Livius, wanting to show the error of the Sidicians in trusting to the aid of the Campanians, and the error of the Campanians in believing themselves able to defend them, could not say it with more forceful words, saying, The Campanians brought a greater name in aid of the Sidicians, than they did men for protecting them. Where it ought to be noted that leagues made with Princes who have neither the convenience of aiding you because of the remoteness of their location nor the strength to do so because of disorganization or other reasons of theirs, bring more notoriety than aid to those who trust in them: as happened in our times to the Florentines, when in one thousand four hundred seventy nine <sup>1479</sup> the Pope and the King of Naples assaulted them, that being friends of the King of France derived from that friendship more notoriety than protection; as also would happen to that Prince who should undertake some enterprise trusting himself to the Emperor Maximilian, because this is one of those friendships that would bring to whoever made it more notoriety than protection, as is said in this treatise of what that of the Campanians brought to the Sidicians.

The Campanians, therefore, erred in this part by imagining themselves to have more strength than they had. And thus little prudence sometimes does to men, who not knowing how nor being able to defend themselves, want to undertake enterprises to defend others; as also the Tarentines did, who, when the Roman armies encountered the Samnites, sent ambassadors to the Roman Consul to make him understand that they wanted peace between those two people, and that they were ready to make war against the one that should refuse peace. So that the Consul, laughing at this proposition, in the presence of the ambassadors, had the [bugle] sound for battle and commanded his army to go and meet the enemy, showing the Tarentines by acts and not words of what a reply they were worthy.

And having in the present chapter discussed the wrong proceedings which Princes undertake for the defense of others, in the following one I want to talk of those means they should undertake for their own defense.

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## CHAPTER 12. IS IT BETTER, FEARING TO BE ASSAULTED, TO CARRY OUT OR AWAIT WAR

I have heard from men much practiced in the things of war some time discuss whether, if there are two Princes of almost equal strength, if one more stalwart has declared war against the other, what would be the better proceeding for the other, either to await the enemy within his own boundaries, or to go out to meet him in his house and assault him. And I have heard reasons cited on every side. And those who defend the going out to assault the other, cite the counsel that Croesus gave to Cyrus when, having arrived at the confines of the Messagates to make war against them, their Queen Tamiri sent to say that they should select which of the two proceedings they wanted, either to enter her Kingdom where she would await him, or that he want her to come out to meet him: And the matter coming under discussion, Croesus, against the opinion of the others, said that he would go to meet her, saying that if he should vanquish her at a distance from her kingdom, he would not be able to take away her kingdom because she would have time to recover; but if he should vanquish her within her confines he could follow her in flight and, by not giving her time to recover, could take away her State from her. He also cites the counsel that Hannibal gave Antiochus when that king planned to make war against the Romans, where he showed that the Romans could not be beaten except in Italy, for there the others could avail themselves of the arms and the wealth of their friends; but whoever would combat them outside Italy and would leave Italy free to them, he would leave them that font which would never lack life in supplying strength where it was needed: and he concluded that Rome could be taken from the Romans easier than the Empire, and Italy before the other provinces. He also cites Agatocles, who, not being able to sustain the war at home, assaulted the Carthaginians who were waging it against him, and reduced them to ask for peace. He cites Scipio, who, to lift the war from Italy, assaulted Africa.

Those who speak to the contrary say that he who wants to inflict an evil on the enemy will draw him away from home. They cite the Athenians, who, as long as they made war convenient to their home, remained superior, but

that when they went a distance with their armies into Sicily, lost their liberty. They cite the poetic fables where it is shown that Anteus, King of Libya, being assaulted by Hercules the Egyptian, was insuperable as long as he awaited him within the confines of his own kingdom, but as soon as he went off a distance, through the astuteness of Hercules, lost the State and his life. Whence a place is given to the fable of Anteus who, when [thrown] on the ground, recovered his strength from his mother which was the earth, and that Hercules, becoming aware of this, lifted him high [and] off the ground. They also cite modern judges. Everyone knows that Ferrando, King of Naples, was held to be a most wise Prince in his time, and when two years before his death, news came that the King of France, Charles VIII, wanted to come to assault him, after he had made preparations, but fell sick, and as he was approaching death, among other advices he left to his son Alfonso, was that he should await the enemy inside the Kingdom, and for nothing in thy world to withdraw his forces outside of his State, but should await him entirely within all his borders. Which [advice] was not observed by him, but sending an army into the Romagna, without a fight, lost it and the State. In addition to the instances described, the reasons that are cited in favor of every [both] side are: That he who assaults comes with more spirit than he who awaits, which makes the army more confident. In addition to this, many advantages are taken away from the enemy to be able to avail himself of his resources, [and] he will not be able to avail himself of those from his subjects who have been plundered; and as the enemy is in his house, the Lord is constrained to have more regard in extracting money from them and in overworking them, so that that font comes to dry up, as Hannibal says, which makes him able to sustain the war. In addition to this, his solders, because they find themselves in the countries of others, are more necessitated to fight, and that necessity makes vertu, as we have several times said.

On the other hand, it is said that in awaiting the enemy one waits with many advantages, for without any inconvenience you can cause great inconveniences of provisions and of every other thing which an army needs: You can better impede his designs because of the greater knowledge of the country you have than he: You can meet him with more strength because of being able to unite [concentrate] [your forces] easily, while he cannot take

his all away from home: You can (if defeated) recover easily, as much because much can be saved of your army having places of refuge near, as well as reinforcements do not have to come from a distance, so that you come to risk all your forces but not all your fortune; but taking yourself to a distance you risk all your fortune but not all your strength. And there have been some who, in order better to weaken their enemy, have allowed him to enter several days [march] into their country and to take many Towns, so that by leaving garrisons everywhere his army is weakened, and then they are able to combat him the more easily.

But to say now what I think, I believe that this distinction ought to be made: either I have my country armed like the Romans and as the Swiss have, or I have it disarmed like the Carthaginians, and as have the Kings of France and the Italians. In this [latter] case the enemy ought to be kept distant from home, for your virtu being in money and not in men, whenever that [money] may be impeded to you, you are lost, and nothing will impede it to you as war at home. As an example, there are the Carthaginians, who, as long as they were undisturbed at home with their revenues, could make war against the Romans, but when they were assaulted [in their own country] they were unable to resist [even] Agathocles. The Florentines did not have any remedy against Castruccio, Lord of Lucca, because he waged war against them at home, so that they were obliged to give themselves (in order to be defended) to King Robert of Naples. But after the death of Castruccio, those same Florentines had the courage to assault the Duke of Milan in his home [territory] and work to take away his Kingdom. As much virtu as they showed in distant wars, just so much baseness [did they show] in nearby ones. But when Kingdoms are armed as Rome was armed and as the Swiss are, the more difficult are they to overcome the nearer you are to them. For these bodies [states] can unite more forces to resist an attack [impetus] than they are able to assault others. Nor am I moved in this case by the authority of Hannibal, because his passion and his interests make him say thusly to Antiochus. For if the Romans had experienced in Gaul three such defeats in so great a space of time as they had in Italy from Hannibal, without doubt they would have been beaten; for they would not have availed themselves of the remnants of the armies as they did in Italy, [and] could not have reorganized them with the same ease, nor could they have

resisted the enemy with that same strength as they were able to. It has never been found that they ever sent outside armies of more than fifty thousand men in order to assault a province: but to defend themselves at home against the Gauls after the first Punic war, they put eighteen hundred thousand men under arms. Nor could they have put to rout those [Gauls] in Lombardy as they routed them in Tuscany, for they could not have led so great a force against so great a number of enemies at so great a distance, nor fight them with such advantage. The Cimbrians routed a Roman army in Germany; nor did the Romans have a remedy. But when they [Cimbrians] came into Italy and they [Romans] were able to put all their forces together, they destroyed them [Cimbrians]. The Swiss are easily beaten when away from home where they cannot send more than thirty or forty thousand men, but it is very difficult to beat them at home where they are able to gather together a hundred thousand.

I conclude again, therefore, that that Prince who has his people armed and organized for war should always await a powerful and dangerous war [enemy] at home and not go out to meet it. But that [Prince] who has his subjects unarmed and the country unaccustomed to war, should always keep it as distant as he can. And thus one and the other (each in his own manner) will defend himself better.

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## CHAPTER 13. THAT ONE COMES FROM THE BOTTOM TO A GREAT FORTUNE MORE BY FRAUD THAN BY FORCE

I believe it to be a most true thing that it rarely or never happens that men of little fortune come to high rank without force and without fraud, unless that rank to which others have come is not obtained either by gift or by heredity. Nor do I believe that force alone will ever be found to be enough; but it will be indeed found that fraud alone will be enough; as those will clearly see who read the life of Philip of Macedonia, that of Agathocles the Sicilian, and many such others, who from the lowest, or rather low, fortune have arrived either to a Kingdom or to very great Empires. Xenophon shows in his life of Cyrus this necessity to deceive, considering that the first expedition that he has Cyrus make against the King of Armenia is full of fraud, and that he makes him occupy his Kingdom by deceit and not by force. And he does not conclude anything else from such action except that to a Prince who wants to do great things, it is necessary to learn to deceive. In addition to this, he made Cyraxes, King of the Medes, his maternal uncle, to be deceived in so many ways, without which fraud he shows that Cyrus could not have achieved that greatness he attained. Nor do I believe anyone will ever be found of such fortune to have arrived at great Empire only by force and ingenuity, but indeed only by fraud, as did Giovanni Galeazzo in order to take away the State and Dominion of Lombardy from his uncle Messer Bernabo. And that which Princes are obliged to do at the beginning of their expansions, Republics are also obliged to do until they have become powerful so that force alone will be enough. And as Rome used every means, either by chance or by election, necessary to achieve greatness, she did not also hesitate to use this one [fraud]. Nor could she, in the beginning, use greater deceit than to take up the method discussed above by us to make associates for herself, because under this name she made them her slaves, as were the Latins, and other surrounding people. For first she availed herself of their arms to subdue the neighboring peoples and to take up the reputation of the State: after subduing them, she achieved such great expansion that she could beat everyone. And the Latins never became aware that they were wholly slaves until they saw two routs of the Samnites

and [saw them] constrained to come to an accord. As this victory greatly increased the reputation of the Romans with the distant Princes, who heard the Roman name and not their arms, generating envy and suspicion in those who saw and felt those arms, among whom were the Latins. And so much was this envy and so powerful this fear, that not only the Latins, but the colonies they had in Latium, together with the Associates who had been defended a short time before, conspired against the Roman name. And the Latins began this war in the way mentioned above that the greater part of wars are begun, not by assaulting the Romans, but by defending the Sidicians against the Samnites, against whom the Samnites were making war with the permission of the Romans. And that it is true that the Latins began the war because they had recognized this deceit, is shown by T. Livius through the mouth of Annius Setinus, a Latin Praetor, who in their council said these words: If even now under the pretext of equal confederates, we can suffer servitude, etcetera.

It will be seen, therefore, that the Romans in their first expansions did not also lack using fraud; which has always been necessary for those to use who, from small beginnings, want to rise to sublime heights, which is less shameful when it is more concealed, as was this of the Romans.

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## CHAPTER 14. MEN OFTEN DECEIVE THEMSELVES BELIEVING THAT BY HUMILITY THEY OVERCOME HAUGHTINESS

Many times it is seen that humility not only does not benefit, but harms, especially when it is used by insolent men who, either from envy or for other reasons, have conceived a hatred against you. Of this our Historian gives proof on the occasion of the war between the Romans and the Latins. For when the Samnites complained to the Romans that the Latins had assaulted them, the Romans did not want to prohibit such a war to the Latins, desired not to irritate them; which not only did not irritate them, but made them become more spirited against them [Romans], and they discovered themselves as enemies more quickly. Of which, the words of the aforementioned Annius, the Latin Praetor, in that same council, attest, where he says: You have tried their patience in denying them military aid: why do you doubt this should excite them? Yet they have borne this pain. They have heard we are preparing an army against their confederates, the Samnites, yet have not moved from their City. Whence is there such modesty, except from their recognition of both our virility and theirs? It is very clearly recognized, therefore, by this text how much the patience of the Romans increased the arrogance of the Latins. And therefore a Prince ought never to forego his own rank, and ought never to forego anything by accord, wanting to forego it honorably, unless he is able or believes that he is able to hold it; for it is almost always better (matters having been brought to the point where you cannot forego it in the manner mentioned) to allow it to be taken away by force, rather than by fear of force; for if you permit it from fear, you do so in order to avoid war, but most of the times you do not avoid it, for he to whom you have from baseness conceded this, will not be satisfied, but will want to take other things away from you, and he will excite himself more against you esteeming you less: and on the other hand, in your favor you will find the defenders more cold, it appearing to them that you are either weak or a coward: but as soon as you discover the intention of the adversary, if you prepare your forces, even though they may be inferior to his, he will begin to respect you, [and] the other neighboring Princes will respect you more, and the desire to aid you will come to those

(being armed by you) who, even if you gave yourself up, would never aid you.

This is what is learned when you have an enemy: but when you have several, to render to some of them some of your possessions, either to gain him over to yourself even though war should already have broken out, or to detach your enemies from the other confederates, is always a prudent proceeding.

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## CHAPTER 15. WEAK STATES ARE ALWAYS AMBIGUOUS IN THEIR RESOLUTIONS, AND WEAK DECISIONS ARE ALWAYS HARMFUL

In connection with this same matter and with the origin of the war between the Latins and the Romans it can be noted, that in all deliberations it is well to come to the point of what it is to be decided and not to be always ambiguous, nor to remain uncertain of the matter. Which is manifestly seen in the deliberation that the Latins held when they thought of alienating themselves from the Romans. For having foreseen this bad mood that had come upon the Latin people, the Romans in order to assure themselves of the matter and to see if they could regain those people to themselves without resorting to arms, made them understand that they should send eight Citizens to Rome, because they wanted to consult with them. The Latins, learning of this, and being conscious of many things done against the wishes of the Romans, called a council to arrange who should go to Rome and to give them the commission of what they should say: And while this was deliberated in the councils, their Praetor Annius said these words: I judge it to be most important for our interest, that we should think of what we shall do that what we shall say: when we have decided that, it will be easy to accommodate our words [the details of our counsels] to our acts. These words without doubt are very true, and ought to be of benefit to every Prince and every Republic; for words are not made to explain the ambiguity and incertitude of that which is to be done, but once the mind is fixed, and that which is to be done decided, it is an easy thing to find the words. I have the more willingly noted this part, as I have known many such indecisions to interfere with public actions, with damage and shame to our Republic: And this will always happen that in doubtful proceedings and where spirit is needed in making decisions, this ambiguity [indecision] will exist when these deliberations and decisions have to be made by weak men. Slow and late decisions are also not less harmful than ambiguous ones, especially when they have to decide in favor of some friend, for no person is helped by their lateness, and it injures oneself. Such decisions so made proceed from feebleness of spirit and strength or from the malignity of those who have to decide, who, moved by their own passion to want to ruin

the State or to fulfill some desire of theirs, do not allow the deliberations to proceed, but impede and thwart them. For good citizens (even though they see a popular fad turning itself into a perilous course) never impede deliberations, especially when those matters cannot be delayed.

After the death of Hieronymus, Tyrant of Syracuse, while the war between the Carthaginians and the Romans was at its height, a dispute arose among the Syracusans whether they ought to follow the Roman friendship [alliance] or the Carthaginian. And so great was the ardor of the parties that they remained undecided, nor was any action taken, until at last Appolonides, one of the first men of Syracuse, with a speech [of his] full of prudence, showed that those who held the opinion to adhere to the Romans were not to be blamed, nor those who wanted to follow the Carthaginian side; but that it was right to detest that indecision and tardiness in taking up the proceeding, because he saw surely the proceeding had been undertaken [the decision made], whatever it might be, some good could be hoped for. Nor could T. Livius show better than in this case the damage done by remaining undecided. He shows it also in the case of the Latins, for the Lavinians seeking their aid against the Romans, they delayed so long in determining upon it that, when they had just gone out of the gate with forces to give them succor, the news arrived that the Latins were routed. Whence Milonius, their Praetor, said: This short march would cost us much with the Roman people: For if they had decided at once either to help or not to help the Latins, they would by not aiding them not have irritated the Romans; and by helping them, the aid being in time, they could by joining forces enable them to win; but by delaying, they would come to lose in any case, as happened to them.

And if the Florentines had noted this text, they would not have received so much injury or so much trouble from the French as they had in the passage of King Louis XII of France to make war against Lodovico, Duke of Milan, in Italy. For the King when he was considering such a passage sought to make an accord with the Florentines, and the ambassadors to the King made an accord with him that they would remain neutral, and that the King after coming into Italy should take their State under his protection, and gave the City one month to ratify it. This ratification was delayed by those who,

because of little prudence, favored the affairs of Lodovico, so that the King having already achieved his victory, and the Florentines then wanting to ratify it, the ratification was not accepted, as he recognized that the friendship of the Florentines came by force and not voluntarily. Which cost the City of Florence much money, and was to lose them the State, as happened to them another time from similar causes. And that proceeding was so much more damnable because it did not even serve the Duke Lodovico, who, if he had won, would have shown more signs of enmity against the Florentines than did the King.

And although above in another chapter I have discussed the evil that results to a Republic from this weakness, none the less having a new opportunity for a new incident, I wanted to repeat it, especially as it seems to me a matter that ought to be noted by Republics similar to ours.

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## CHAPTER 16. HOW MUCH THE SOLDIERS IN OUR TIMES ARE DIFFERENT FROM THE ANCIENT ORGANIZATION

The most important engagement ever fought in any war with any nation by the Roman People, was that which they had with the Latin people during the Consulate of Torquatus and of Decius. As every reason would have it, just as by the loss of the battle the Latins became slaves, so too the Romans would have been slaves if they had not won. And Titus Livius is of this opinion, because on both sides he makes the armies equal in organization, in virtue, in obstinacy, and in numbers: the only difference he makes is that the Heads of the Roman army were of more virtue than those of the Latin army. It will also be seen that in the managing of this engagement, two incidents arose which had not arisen before, and that afterwards were rare examples; that of the two Consuls, in order to uphold the courage of the soldiers and keep them obedient to their command and more deliberate in action, one killed himself and the other his son. The equality which Titus Livius says existed in these armies resulted from their having fought together a long time, having the same language, the same discipline, and the same arms: For they held to the same manner in the order of battle, and the organizations and Heads of the organization had the same names: Being of equal strength and of equal virtue, it was therefore necessary that something extraordinary should arise which would make one more firm and obstinate than the other; in which obstinacy victory (as was said at another time) was contained; for so long as that endured in the breasts of those who combatted, no army will ever turn its back. And as it endured more in the breasts of the Romans than in the Latins, partly chance and partly the virtue of the Consuls gave rise that Torquatus had to kill his son and Decius himself.

In demonstrating this equality of strength, T. Livius shows the whole organization that the Romans had in the armies and in battles. As he has explained this at length, I will not otherwise repeat it; but I will discuss only that which I judge to be notable, and that which, because it is neglected by all Captains of these times, has caused many disorders in armies and battles. I say, then, that from the text of Livius it is gathered that the Roman armies were composed of three principal divisions, which in Tuscan can be called

Ranks, and they named the first Astati, the second Principi, the third Triari, and each of these had its cavalry. In organizing a battle they put the Astati in front, directly behind in the second line they placed the Principi, and in the same manner in the third line they placed the Triari. The cavalry of all of these orders were placed to the right and the left of these three battalions, the ranks of which cavalry, from their shape and place, they called Alae [Wings], because they seemed like two wings of that body. They arranged the first ranks of the Astati, which were in the front and serried in a way that it could strike or sustain [the attack of] the enemy. The second line of the Principi (as it was not the first in combat, but was bound to support the first line when it was struck or hurled back), they did not make straight, but maintained its order open [thin] and of a kind so that it could receive within itself the first line, without disordering itself, whenever, pushed by the enemy, it should be necessary for them to retreat. The third line of the Triari was arranged even more open than the second, in order to receive within itself, if need be, the first two lines of Principi, and Astati. These three ranks thus deployed kindled the battle, and if the Astati were forced or overcome, they retreated into the open ranks of the Principi, and the two ranks being united together into one body rekindled the battle: if these were also forced or rebuffed, they both retired into the open ranks of the Triari, and all these ranks becoming one body, renewed the fight; where, if they were overcome (for not having further reinforcements) they lost the engagement. And as every time that this last rank of Triari became engaged, the army was in danger, and gave rise to that proverb, The matter has come to the Triari, which in Tuscan usage means to say, we have put up the last resource.

The captains of our times, having abandoned entirely the organization and no longer observing the ancient discipline, have thus abandoned this part which is not of little importance: for whoever arranges [his army] so as to be able to reorganize three times in an engagement, must have fortune inimical to him three times in order to lose, and must have [pitted] against him a virtu three times as adept to overcome him. But whoever cannot maintain himself against the first onrush (as the Christian armies are today) can lose easily, for every disorder, every half-way virtu, can take away the victory. And that which prevents our armies from being able to reorganize three times is to have lost the manner of receiving one rank into the other. Which

arises because at present engagements are arranged with two defects: either their ranks are formed shoulder to shoulder, and make their battle line wide in front and thin in depth, which makes it very weak from having too few men in the depth of the ranks: or, in order to make it stronger, they reduce the ranks [in width of the front], in accordance as the Romans did; if the first rank is broken, there not being an arrangement to be received by the second, they will be entangled all together, and rout themselves; for if that front rank is pushed back, it will be hurled on the second; if the second rank wants to go forward, it is impeded by the first: Whence that the first being hurled upon the second, and the second on the third, there ensues so much confusion that the slightest accident often ruins an army.

In the battle at Ravenna, which was (according to our times) a very well-fought engagement, in which the Captain of the French forces, Monsignor De Foix, was killed, the Spanish and French armies were organized in one of the above mentioned methods, that is, that the one and the other army came with all its forces arranged shoulder to shoulder so as to have a wide front and little depth. And thus they always did when they had a large field as they had at Ravenna: for recognizing the disorder that is caused in retiring, when they put themselves all into one rank, they avoid it when they can by making the front wide, as has been said; but when the country is restricted, they remain in the disorder described above without thinking of a remedy. In similar disorder the cavalry rides through the enemy's country, either for plunder or for some other purpose of war. And at Santo Regolo and elsewhere in the war against Pisa, where the Florentines were routed by the Pisans in the [time of the] war which existed between the Florentines and that City because of her rebellion, after the passage of Charles, King of France, into Italy; that ruin did not result from anything else than the friendly cavalry, which being in front and repulsed by the enemy, was thrown back into the Florentine infantry and broke it, whence all the remaining forces turned back: and Messer Criaco Del Borgo, Head of the Florentine infantry, has affirmed in my presence many times that he would never have been routed except for the cavalry of his friends. The Swiss who are masters of modern war, when they fought for the French, above all things they take care to put themselves on the side where the friendly cavalry, if it should be repulsed, will not be hurled back on them.

And although this thing would appear easy to understand and not easy to do, none the less there has not yet been found any of our contemporary Captains who have imitated the ancient order and corrected the modern one. And although they also divide their army into three parts, calling one part the Vanguard, the next the Battle Corps, and the last the Rearguard, they do not serve themselves of it other than to command them in their quarters; but in using it, it is a rare thing (as was said above) that they do to unite them all in one body, so that they all share the same fortune: And as many, to excuse their ignorance, allege that the violence of the artillery will not allow the same arrangements that the ancients had to be used in these times, I want to discuss this matter in the following chapter, and to examine whether the artillery impedes them so that it is not possible to use the ancient virtue.

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## CHAPTER 17. HOW MUCH THE ARMY OUGHT TO ESTEEM THE ARTILLERY IN THE PRESENT TIMES, AND IF THAT OPINION THAT IS GENERALLY HAD OF IT IS TRUE

In addition to the things written above, in considering how the many field fights, called in our times by the French word Engagements [Giornate], and by the Italians Deeds of arms, were fought by the Romans at diverse times, I have thought upon the general opinions of many, which hold that if artillery had existed in those days the Romans would not have been permitted to conquer provinces and make other people tributary to themselves as they did, nor would they in any way have been able to make such large acquisitions: They say also that because of these instrument of fire men are not able to use or show their virtu as they were able to anciently. And a third thing should be added that one now comes to the joining of battle with more difficulty than formerly, nor is it possible to maintain the same discipline as in those times, so that in time wars will be reduced to artillery [exchanges]. And as I judge it not to be outside this subject to discuss whether such opinions are true, and whether artillery has increased or diminished the strength of armies, and whether it gives or takes away opportunity to good Captains of acting with virtu.

I shall begin by speaking concerning the first opinion that the ancient Roman armies would not have made the conquests that they did if artillery had existed: Upon which in replying, I say that war is made either to defend oneself or to take the offensive: whence it must first be examined as to which of these two kinds of war make it [artillery] more useful or more damaging. And although there is something to say on both sides, none the less I believe that beyond comparison it does more damage to whoever defends himself than to whoever attacks. The reason I say this is that he who defends himself is either inside some fortified place or in a camp within a stockade: and if he is inside a town, either this town is small as are the greater part of the fortresses, or it is large: in the first case whoever defends himself is entirely lost, for the impetus of the artillery is such that a wall has not yet been found which is so strong that in a few days it will be battered

down by it; and if whoever is inside does not have considerable space for retreat, and [cannot protect himself] with ditches and earthworks, he is lost, nor can he sustain the attack of the enemy who would then enter through the breach in the wall: nor will the artillery he has be of any benefit to him in this, for there is a maxim that where men attack in mass, the artillery will not stop them; and thus the fury of the Ultramontanes in the defense of their lands has never been resisted: the assaults of the Italians are easily resisted, as they go in battle, not in mass, but in small detachments, which by their own name are called Scaramouches [skirmishes]: and when they deliberately go in this disordered manner into a breach in a wall where there is artillery, they go to a certain death, for against them the artillery is of value: but when they go in a dense mass, and one pushes the other as they come to a break, if they are not impeded by ditches or earthworks, they enter in every place and artillery will not hold them: and if some are killed, they cannot be so many that they would impede the victory. That this is true has been recognized by the many conquests made by the Ultramontanes in Italy, and especially that of Brescia; for when that land rebelled against the French, and the fortress being still held by the King of France, the Venetians, in order to resist the attacks which could come from the town, had fortified all the road that descends from the fortress to the City with artillery, placing it in front and on the flanks and in every convenient place: of which Monsignor De Foix took no account, rather, with his squadron, he descended on foot, and passing through the midst of it [the artillery] occupied the City, nor from what was heard had he received any recordable damage. So that whoever defends himself in a small area (as was said) and finding the walls of his town breached, and does not have space to retreat with earthworks and ditches, and have to rely on artillery, will quickly be lost.

If you defend a large town and have the convenience of retreating, I none the less maintain beyond comparison that artillery is more useful to whoever is outside than to whoever is inside. First, because if you want artillery to harm those outside, you are necessitated to raise yourself with it above the level of the surrounding land, for being on the plain, every little embankment and earthwork that the enemy raises remains secure, and you cannot harm him, so that by having to raise it and draw it along the aisle

between the walls, or in some other way raise it above the ground, you have two drawbacks: the first, that you cannot place artillery of the same size and power as those outside can bring to bear, as you are not able in a small place to handle large things: the other, no matter how well you can place it, you cannot make those earthworks trustworthy and secure in order to save the said artillery as those outside can do being on higher ground, and having that convenience and space which they themselves lacked: So that it is impossible to whoever defends a town to keep his artillery in elevated positions when those who are on the outside have plenty and powerful artillery: and if they have to place it in lower places, it becomes in large part useless, as has been said. So that the defense of a City is reduced to defending it with the same [manual] arms as was done anciently, and with small size artillery: from which little usefulness is derived (because of the small size artillery) unless there is a mine of disadvantages that counterweighs the advantage [of the artillery]: for in respect to that, the walls of the town are kept low and almost buried in the ditches, so that when the battle comes to hand to hand fighting, either because the walls are breached or the ditches filled up, those inside have many more disadvantages than they had before. And therefore (as was said above) these instruments benefit much more whoever besieges the towns that whoever is besieged.

As to the third case when you are in a camp within a stockade and you do not want to come to an engagement unless it is at your convenience or advantage, I say that in this case you do not ordinarily have a better remedy to defend yourself without fighting than what the ancients had, and some times you may have greater disadvantage on account of your artillery: For if the enemy turns on you and has even a small advantage of ground, as can easily happen, and finds himself higher than you, or that at his arrival you have not yet finished your earthworks and covered yourself well with them, he quickly dislodges you before you have any remedy and you are forced to go out of your fortress and come to battle. This happened to the Spaniards in the engagement at Ravenna, who, being entrenched between the river Ronco and an earthwork which was built insufficiently high, and the French having a slight advantage of terrain, were constrained by the artillery to leave their fortified place and come to battle. But suppose (as must often

happen) that the location you have chosen for your camp is higher than the other side at the [time of] encounter, and that your earthworks are good and secure, so that owing to the site and your other preparations, the enemy does not dare to assault you, in this case he will resort to those means that the ancients resorted to when one, with his army, was in a position where he could not be attacked, that is, he will overrun the country, take or besiege lands friendly to you and impede your provisions; so that you will be forced by some necessity to dislodge him, and come to battle, where artillery (as will be mentioned below) will not be of much use. Considering, therefore, in what manner the Romans made war, and observing that almost all their wars were to attack others and not to defend themselves, it will be seen (if all the things said above were true) that they would have had even greater advantage, and would have made their conquests more easily, if they should have lived in those times [of the advent of artillery].

As to the second proposition, that men are not able to show their virtue as they could anciently because of the use of artillery, I say that it is true that where men have to expose themselves in small groups, that they are exposed to greater danger than when they had to scale [the walls of] a town or make similar assaults, where men did not have to act bunched together, but by themselves one after the other. It is also true that the Captains and Heads of the army are now subjected to the danger of death than at that time, as they can be reached by artillery in every place, and it is of no benefit to them to be in the rear ranks, and protected by their strongest men: None the less it is seen that the one and the other of these dangers rarely caused extraordinary damages, for well fortified towns are not scaled, nor do you go to assault them with feeble attacks, but in wanting to conquer them, the matter is reduced to a siege, as was done anciently. And even in those places that can be conquered by assault, the dangers are not much greater now than they were then, for even in that time there did not lack to the defenders of towns means for throwing [missiles], which (if they were not as furious [as cannon] is) had a similar effect in killing men. As to the death of Captains and Candottieri, in the twenty four years in which there have been wars in Italy in recent times, there have been fewer examples than there were in any ten years time [of

war] of the ancients. For, outside of Count Lodovico Della Mirandola (who was killed at Ferrara when the Venetians assaulted that State a few years ago) and the Duke of Nemours (who was killed at Cirignuola), it never happened that any were killed by artillery, since Monsignor De Foix was killed at Ravenna by steel [sword] and not by fire. So that if men do not show their virtu individually, it is not the result of the artillery, but from poor discipline and weakness of the armies, which, lacking virtu collectively, are not able to show it in the [individual] parts.

As to the third proposition mentioned by some, that it is no longer possible to come to hand-to-hand fighting, and that wars will be entirely conducted through artillery, I say this opinion is entirely false, and will always be so held by those who would want to manage their armies according to the ancient virtu: For whoever wants to create a good army must, by real or feigned exercises, accustom his men to meet the enemy, and to come against him with sword in hand and to seize him bodily, and he must rely more upon the infantry than on cavalry, for the reasons which will be mentioned below. And when they rely on infantry and on the aforementioned means [of training], the artillery will become entirely useless; for the infantry in meeting the enemy can escape the blows of the artillery with greater ease than anciently they were able to escape from the attacks of elephants, from scythed chariots, and other obsolete means of attack which the Roman infantry had to encounter, [and] against which they always found a remedy: and they would have found it so much more readily against this [artillery], as the time in which artillery can harm you is much shorter than that in which the elephants and chariots could do harm. For these disorganized you in the midst of battle, while that [the artillery] only impedes you before the battle; which impediment is easily avoided by the infantry either the nature of the site covering them or by lying down on the ground during the firing. Even experience has shown this not to be necessary, especially when defending themselves from large artillery, which cannot be so [accurately] aimed, [and] either (if they are aimed high) they pass over you, or (if they are aimed low) they do not reach you. Then when you have come with the army to hand to hand [fighting], this becomes clearer than light that neither the large nor the small artillery can then harm you. For if he has the artillery in front, you capture it, and if he has it in the rear, he first harms his friend

rather than you: even on the flank he cannot harm you so, that you cannot go up to capture them, and the result mentioned above [first] will happen.

Nor is this disputed very much, because the example of the Swiss has been seen, who in MDXIII <sup>1513</sup> at Novara, without artillery or cavalry, went to encounter the French army armed with artillery within their fortresses, and routed them without having any impediment from that artillery. And the reason is (in addition to the things mentioned above) that the artillery, to be well served, has need to be guarded either by walls, ditches, or earthworks: and that if it lacks one of these guards, it is captured or becomes useless, as happens in open field engagements and battles when it is defended only by men. On the flank it cannot be employed except in that manner that the ancients used their catapults, which they placed outside of the squadrons, so that they should fight outside of the ranks, and every time they were pressed by cavalry or others, they took refuge within the legions. Who employs it otherwise does not understand it well, and relies on something which can easily deceive him. And if the Turk by means of artillery gained the victory over the Sofi [Persians] and the Soldan [Egyptians], it resulted from no other virtu than from the unaccustomed noise which frightened their cavalry. I conclude, therefore, coming to the end of this discussion, that artillery is useful in an army when it is mixed with the ancient virtu, but, without that, it is most useless against a valorous army.

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## CHAPTER 18. THAT BECAUSE OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE ROMANS AND BY THE EXAMPLE OF ANCIENT ARMIES, THE INFANTRY OUGHT TO BE MORE ESTEEMED THAN CAVALRY

And it can be clearly demonstrated by many arguments and by many examples how much the Romans in all their military actions esteemed the foot soldier more than the cavalry, and based all the plans of their forces on them: as is seen by many examples, and among others that which occurred when they came to battle with the Latins next to Lake Regillo, where the Roman army already having given way, made their cavalry descend from their horses in order to succor their foot soldiers, and by that means renewed the battle and obtained the victory. Where it is manifestly seen that the Romans had more confidence in their men, when on foot, than maintaining them on horseback. They used this same means in many other battles, and they always found it an optimum remedy in their dangers. Nor is the opinion of Hannibal opposed to this who, when he saw in the engagement at Cannae that the Consuls made their horsemen descend on foot, making a mock of a like proceeding, said: *Quam malem vinctos mini traderent equites*, that is, I would have more concern if they would give them to me bound. Which opinion, although coming from the mouth of a most excellent man, none the less if we have to go back to authority, we ought to believe more if it came from a Roman Republic and from so many excellent Captains which she produced, than to one single Hannibal; although even without authorities, there are manifest reasons, for a man can go into many places on foot where he cannot go on horseback: you can teach him to preserve the ranks, and should they be broken, how to reform them, but it is difficult to make horses preserve the ranks, and when they are disturbed impossible to reform them: in addition to this, it will be found (as in men) that some horses have little spirit and some have much, and many times it happens that a spirited horse is ridden by a base man, and a timid horse by a spirited man, and however this disparity arises, uselessness and disorder result. Well disciplined infantry can easily break the cavalry but only with difficulty can they be routed by them. Which opinion is corroborated (in addition to many ancient and modern examples) by the

authority of those who make regulations for civil affairs, where they show that at first wars were begun to be fought by cavalry, because [good] infantry was not yet been organized: but as soon as this was done, it was quickly recognized how much more useful these were than cavalry: However, the cavalry is necessary in armies for reconnaissance, to overrun and plunder the country, and to pursue the enemy when in flight, and to be a part of the opposition to the cavalry of the adversaries: but the foundation and the sinew of the army, and that which should be more esteemed, ought to be the infantry.

And among the faults of the Italian Princes who have made Italy slave to foreigners, there is none greater than to have taken into little account this organization [infantry], and to have turned all their attention to mounted troops. Which error arose from the malignity of the Heads, and from the ignorance of those who ruled the State: For during the past twenty five years the Italian military have been brought under men who did not have a State, but were as Captains [Soldiers] of fortune, whose main thought was how they should be able to maintain their reputation by their being armed, and the Princes disarmed. And as a large number of infantry could not continuously be paid by them, and not having subjects of whom they could avail themselves, and as a small number would not give them reputation, they turned to keeping cavalry; for two hundred or three hundred cavalry paid by a Condottiere maintained his reputation, and the payment was not such that it could not be met by men who had a State: and so that this should be facilitated and to maintain themselves in even greater reputation, they took away all the affection for and the reputation of the infantry, and transferred those to their cavalry; and so greatly increased this disorder, that the infantry was a minimum part of any of the largest armies. Which usage (together with many other disorders that accompanied it) made the Italian military so weak, that their province has been easily trampled on by all the Ultramontanes. This error of esteeming cavalry more than infantry is shown more openly by another Roman example. The Romans were besieging Sora, and a squadron of cavalry having gone out from the town to assault the camp, the Master of the Roman cavalry went to meet it with his cavalry, and coming breast to breast, chance would have it that in the first shock the Heads of both armies were killed; and the fight continued none

the less, while [both sides] remained without direction, when the Romans in order to overcome the enemy more easily, dismounted and forced the cavalry (if they wanted to defend themselves) to do similarly, and with all this the Romans carried the victory.

This example could not be better in demonstrating how much greater virtue there is in the infantry than in the cavalry; for if in the other cases the Consuls made the Roman cavalry dismount, it was to succor the infantry which was suffering and in need of aid; but in this case they dismounted, not to succor the infantry, nor to fight with enemy infantry, but a combat of cavalry against cavalry, [and] not being able to overcome them on horseback, they judged that by dismounting they would be able more easily to overcome them. I want to conclude, therefore, that a well organized infantry cannot be overcome without the greatest difficulty, except by another infantry. Crassus and Marc Anthony overran the dominion of Parthia for many days with very few cavalry and many infantry, and encountered innumerable cavalry of the Parthians. Crassus with part of the army was killed, Marc Anthony saved himself with virtue. None the less, in this Roman affliction is seen how much the infantry prevailed against the cavalry; for being in a large country where mountains are rare, rivers rarer, distant from the sea, and far from all conveniences, none the less, in the judgment of the Parthians themselves, he saved himself skillfully; nor did the Parthian cavalry ever dare to try the discipline of his army. If Crassus were returned to you, whoever examines his actions carefully will see that he was rather deceived than overpowered, and never in his greatest straits did the Parthians dare to hurl themselves against him, rather they always went on flanking him and impeding his provisions, [and] by promising them to him and then not observing it, they reduced him to the last extremity.

I believe I should have to endure more hard work in persuading [the reader] how much more superior is the virtue of the infantry than that of the cavalry, except that there are many modern examples which render the fullest testimony. And it has been seen how nine thousand Swiss at Novara, mentioned above by us, went out and attacked ten thousand cavalry and as many infantry, and defeated them, for the cavalry could not attack them, and the infantry being forces composed for the most part of Gascons and ill-

disciplined, they [the Swiss] esteemed them little. It has subsequently been seen how twenty six thousand Swiss went to encounter north of Milan the King of the French, Francis, who had with him twenty thousand cavalry, forty thousand infantry, and a hundred pieces of artillery; and if they did not win the engagement, as at Novara, they fought valiantly for two days, and though they were later routed, half of them were saved. Marcus Attilius Regulus attempted to resist with his infantry not only [the attack of] the cavalry, but the elephants: and if his design did not succeed, yet it not that the virtu of his infantry was not such that he did not have faith in them believing them capable of overcoming those difficulties. I repeat, therefore, that to want to overcome a disciplined infantry it is necessary to oppose them with a better disciplined infantry, otherwise one goes to a manifest defeat.

In the time of Filippo Visconti, Duke of Milan, about sixteen thousand Swiss descended into Lombardy, whence the Duke having at that time Carmignuola as his Captain, sent him with about a thousand cavalry and a few infantry to meet them. This man, not knowing their method of fighting, went to meet them with his cavalry presuming to be able to rout them quickly. But finding them immovable, having lost many of his men, he retired: and being a most valiant man, and knowing he had to take new proceeding in new events, reorganized his forces and went to meet them; and on coming to the engagement made all his men at arms dismount and go on foot, and placing them at the head of the infantry, went to attack the Swiss, who had no remedy [against them]. For the forces of Carmignuola being on foot and well armored, could easily enter between the ranks of the Swiss without suffering any injury, and having entered therein could easily attack them: So that of all that number, there remained only the part which was saved through the humanity of Carmignuola.

I believe that many recognize this difference in virtu that exists between the one and the other of these systems, but so great is the infelicity of these times, that neither the examples of the ancients or the moderns, nor the confession of error, is enough to cause the modern Princes to re-see things, and to make them think that to give reputation to the military of a Province or a State it is necessary to revive these insinuations [of the ancients], to

keep them close to one, to give them reputation, to give them life, so that in return it may give him life and reputation: And as they deviate from these methods, so they deviate from the other methods mentioned above: whence there results that the acquisitions become harmful, not an aggrandizement, to a State, as will be told below.

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**CHAPTER 19. THAT ACQUISITIONS IN REPUBLICS NOT WELL ORGANIZED AND THAT DO NOT PROCEED ACCORDING TO ROMAN VIRTU, ARE THE RUIN AND NOT THE EXALTATION OF THEM**

This opinion contrary to the truth, founded upon those bad examples that have been introduced by these corrupt centuries of ours, causes men not to think of deviating from their accustomed habits. Would it have been possible to persuade an Italian of thirty years ago that ten thousand infantry could have attacked, in an open plain, ten thousand cavalry and as many more infantry, and with these not only to fight them, but to defeat them, as is seen in the example at Novara given by us many times? And although histories are full [of such examples], yet they would not have believed it; and if they had believed it, they would have said that in these times one is better armed, and that a squadron of men at arms would be more adept at charging a rock than a body of infantry: and thus with these erroneous arguments their judgment was corrupted, nor have they considered that Lucullus with few infantry routed one hundred and fifty thousand cavalry of [King] Tigranes, and that among those horsemen was a kind of cavalry entirely similar to our men at arms. And thus that fallacy was uncovered by the example of the Ultramontane forces: And as that which is narrated in histories is seen to be true in regard to infantry, so also ought all the other ancient institutions to be believed to be true and useful. And if this were believed, the Republics and Princes would have erred less, would have been stronger in opposing the attack that might come upon them, they would not have put their hope in flight, and those who had the government in their hands would have known better how to direct the manner of aggrandizement or the manner of preservation; and they would have believed that for the city to increase its inhabitants, to make associations for themselves and not subjects, to send colonies to guard the acquired countries, to make capital of the plunder, to subdue the enemy by incursions and engagements, and by sieges, to keep the public rich, the private citizen poor, to maintain military exercises with the greatest zeal, these are the ways to make a Republic great and to acquire Empire. And if these means of expanding did not please them, they would consider that

acquisitions by any other means are the ruin of a Republic; and they would place a restraint to all ambition, regulating the internal affairs of the City well with laws and other customs, prohibiting conquests, and thinking only of defending themselves, and to keep the defenses well organized; as do the Republics of Germany, who, in this manner, live and have lived for a long time.

None the less (as I have said another time when discussing the difference that existed between being organized for conquest and being organized for preservation) it is impossible that a Republic succeeds in remaining quiet and enjoy its liberty and her limited confines; for even if she does not molest others, she will be molested: and from being molested there will arise the will and desire for conquest: and even if she should not have any outside enemies, she would find some at home, as it appears necessary to occur to all great Cities. And if the Republics of Germany could live in this fashion, and have been able to endure a long time, it arises from certain conditions that exist in that country which are not found elsewhere, without which they could not have maintained such a manner of living. That part of Germany of which I speak was subject to the Roman Empire, as was France and Spain: but when the decline of the Empire came afterwards, and the rule of that Empire reduced in that Province, the more powerful Cities begun (according to the weakness or necessity of the Emperors) to make themselves free, ransoming themselves from the Empire by reserving a small annual rent to it: so that little by little all those Cities which were held directly by the Emperor, and were not subject to any Prince, ransomed themselves in similar fashion. There occurred in these same times when these Cities were ransoming themselves, that certain Communities subject to the Duke of Austria rebelled against him, among which were Fribourg, the Swiss, and other like, which prospering from the beginning, gradually expanded little by little, that they did not return under the yoke of Austria, and became feared by their neighbors; and these are those whom we call Swiss. And therefore this Province is divided between the Swiss, Republics which they call Free Towns, Princes, and the Emperor. And the reason that among such a diversity of forms of government wars do not arise, or if they do arise they do not last long, is that this shadow of an Emperor, who, although he has no power, none the less he has so much reputation among

them that he is their conciliator, and with his authority by interposing himself as a mediator, quickly extinguishes all trouble. And the major and longer wars that have occurred have been those that took place between the Swiss and the Duke of Austria: and although for many years past the Emperor and the Duke of Austria have been the same person, yet he has never been able to overcome the audacity of the Swiss, where there has never been a means of accord except by force: Nor has the rest of Germany given him much help, as much because the Communities do not want to injure those who want to live free as they do, as because those Princes [are unable to aid him] part of whom cannot because they are poor, part do not want to because they envy his power. These Communities therefore can live contentedly with their small dominions because they have no reason (in respect to the Imperial authority) of desiring a greater one: They can live united within their walls because they have an enemy nearby and who would take the opportunity to occupy them whenever they should have a discord. If this Province was constituted otherwise, it would behoove them to seek to expand and break their quiet existence.

And because elsewhere such conditions do not exist, this way of living cannot be adopted, and it is necessary either to expand by means of leagues, or to expand as the Romans did: And whoever governs otherwise seeks not his life, but his death and ruin, for in a thousand ways and for many reasons, the acquisitions are harmful; for he may very well extend his Empire, but not power; and whoever acquires Empire and not power together, comes to ruin. Whoever impoverishes himself in war cannot acquire power, even though he is victorious, for he puts in more than he draws out of the acquisitions; as the Venetians and Florentines have done, who have been much weaker when the one had Lombardy and the other Tuscany, than they were when the one was content with the [dominion of the] sea, and the other with six miles of boundaries. For all of this resulted from their having wanted to acquire but not to have known the means to do so: and they merit so much more blame as they had less excuse, having seen the methods which the Romans employed, and having been able to follow their example, while the Romans, without any example, through their prudence, knew how to find it by themselves. In addition to this, acquisitions sometimes do no little damage to any well ordered Republic

when they acquire a City or a Province full of luxury, where those [indolent] habits can be picked up through intercourse they have with them, as happened to Rome first in the acquisition of Capua, and afterwards also to Hannibal. And if Capua had been further distant from the City [of Rome], and if the errors of the soldiers had not have prompt remedy, or if Rome had been in any part corrupted, that acquisition without doubt would have been the ruin of the Roman Republic: And Titus Livius bears witness of this with these words; Capua the instrument of all pleasures, the least conducive to military discipline, turned the spirit of the military away from the memory of their country. And truly similar Cities or Provinces avenge themselves against their conquerors without a fight and without bloodshed; for by transferring to them their own bad habits they expose them to being conquered by whoever assaults them. And Juvenal in his Satires could not have better understood this part, when he says that, because of the acquisitions of foreign lands, foreign customs had entered the breasts of the Romans, and in exchange for parsimony and other very excellent virtues, gluttony and luxury dwell there, and will avenge the conquered world. If, therefore, the conquest was to be pernicious to the Romans in the times when they proceeded with so much prudence and so much virtue, what then would it be to those who deviate from their methods? And what would it be, if in addition to the other errors they make (which have been discussed at length above), they avail themselves of mercenary or auxiliary soldiers? Whence often those injuries result which will be mentioned in the following chapter.

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## CHAPTER 20. WHAT PERILS ARE BROUGHT TO THAT PRINCE OR THAT REPUBLIC WHICH AVAILS ITSELF OF AUXILIARY AND MERCENARY TROOPS

If I had not in another work of mine treated a length of how useless mercenary and auxiliary troops are, and how useful their own [national troops] are, I should extend myself in this discourse much more than I will: but having talked of it at length elsewhere, I shall be brief in this part. Nor did it seem to me I ought to pass it over entirely, having found in Titus Livius (as to auxiliary soldiers) so striking an example, for auxiliary soldiers are those which a Prince or a Republic send to your aid, captained and paid: and referring to the text of Titus Livius, I say, that the Romans at different places had routed two armies of the Samnites with their army which had been sent to the succor of the Capuans, and by this liberated the Capuans from that war which the Samnites made against them, [and] as they wanted to return to Rome, in order that the Capuans, who had been deprived of their garrisons should not become a prey again to the Samnites, left two legions in the country of Capua for their defense: Which legions, plunged into idleness, begun to delight themselves there, so that forgetting their country and the reverence due to Senate, decided to take up arms and make themselves lords of that country which they had defended with their virtue, it appearing to them that the inhabitants were not worthy to possess those things which they did not know how to defend. Which matter becoming known, it was suppressed and corrected by the Romans, as will be shown more fully where we will speak of conspiracies.

I say again, therefore, that of all the other kinds of soldiers the auxiliaries are the most harmful, because that Prince or that Republic which calls them to their aid have no authority over them, but only he who sends them has authority. For auxiliary soldiers are those who are sent you by a Prince, as I have said, under their captains, under their ensigns, and paid by them, as was this army that the Romans sent to Capua. Such soldiers as these, when they had won, most of the time plunder as well him who leads them as him against whom they are led; and they do so either from the malignity of the

Prince who sends them or from their own ambition. And although the intention of the Romans was not to break the accord and convention which they had made with the Capuans, none the less the ease of attacking them appeared to those soldiers to be such, that it was able to persuade them to think of taking the town and the State from the Capuans. We could give many examples of this, but I deem it sufficient to cite that of the Rhegians, whose lives and city were taken away by a legion which the Romans had placed there as a guard. A Prince or a Republic ought, therefore, first to take up any other proceeding than to have recourse to bringing auxiliary forces into their State relying on them for its defense, for every pact, every convention (however hard) that they have with the enemy, will be much lighter than such a proceeding. And if past events are well read, and present ones discussed, it will be found that for one who has had a good ending, infinite others have been deceived. And an ambitious Prince or Republic cannot have a greater opportunity to occupy a City or a Province, than to be requested by it to send their armies to its defense. Therefore, he who is so ambitious that he calls for such aid not only to defend himself but to attack others as well, seeks to acquire that which he will not be able to hold, and which can easily be taken away from him by him from whom he acquired it. But the ambition of men is so great, that to gratify a present desire, do not think of the evil which, in a short time, will result from it. Nor do the ancient examples move him, as well in this as in the other matters discussed; for if they were moved by them, they would see how much more the liberality they show their neighbors, and the less desirous they are of occupying them, so much the more they throw themselves into your arms, as will be told below through the example of the Capuans.

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## CHAPTER 21. THE FIRST PRAETOR WHICH THE ROMANS SENT ANY PLACE WAS THE CAPUA, FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AFTER THEY HAD BEGUN TO MAKE WAR [AGAINST THAT CITY]

It has been discussed at length above, how the Romans differed in their manner of proceeding in their acquisitions from those who in the present time expand their jurisdiction; and how they left [the people of] those lands which they did not destroy living with their laws, including even those who had surrendered to them, not as associates, but as subjects, and how they did not leave in them any sign of the authority [Empire] of the Roman people, but obligated them to some conditions, which so long as they were observed by them, they would maintain them in their state and dignity. And it is known that these methods were observed until they went outside of Italy and commenced to reduce Kingdoms and States into Provinces. There is no clearer example of this than that of the Praetors sent by them to any place was to Capua; whom they sent, not because of their ambition, but because they had been requested by the Capuans, who (there being discord among them) judged it necessary to have a Roman Citizen within that City who would restore order and re-unify them. From this example, [and] moved and constrained by a similar necessity, the people of Antium also requested a Praetor from them. And T. Livius says of this incident and [commenting] on this new method of ruling, That they promised not only arms, but Roman justice. It is seen, therefore, how much this facilitated Roman expansion; for those Cities mainly that are accustomed to living free or to govern themselves by their own citizens, remain more quiet and content under a government they do not see (even though it may have some inconvenience in itself) than under one which they see every day, as it would appear to them they would be reproached by their servitude every day. Another advantage also results to the Prince who, not having at hand his ministers, judges and magistrates to render both civil and criminal decisions in that City, [and] no sentence being able ever to be pronounced which will bring censure or infamy upon the Prince, in this manner, comes to escape many causes of calumny and hatred.

And that this is the truth, in addition to the ancient examples which could be cited, there is one recent example in Italy. For (everyone knows) Genoa having been occupied by the French many times, the King always (except at the present time) has sent a French Governor who governs in his name. Only at present has he allowed that City to be governed by itself and by a Genoese governor, not by election of the King, but because necessity so ordained. And without doubt, if it were to be examined as to which of these two methods gives more security to the King from the Rule [Empire] over it, and more contentedness to that people, without doubt this latter method would be approved. In addition to this, men will so much more readily throw themselves into your arms the less you appear disposed to subjugate them, and so much less will they fear you in connection with their liberty as you are more humane and affable with them. This affability and liberality made the Capuans have recourse to request the Praetor from the Romans: that if the Romans had shown the slightest desire to send one, they would quickly have become jealous and would have kept their distance from them [Romans].

But what need is there to go to Capua and Rome for examples, when we have them in Florence and Tuscany? Everyone knows how the City of Pistoia a long time ago came voluntarily under the Florentine Empire [Dominion]. Everyone also knows how much enmity there has existed between the Florentines, the Pisans, the Lucchese, and the Sienese; and this difference in spirit has not arisen because the Pistoians do not value their liberty as the others or do not esteem themselves as much as the others, but because the Florentines have always borne themselves toward them [the Pistoians] as brothers, and like enemies towards the others. It was this that caused the Pistoians to have run voluntarily under their Dominion, and the others to have used, and still use, every force not to come under them. And doubtless, if the Florentines either by means of leagues or by rendering them aid, had cultivated instead of frightening their neighbors, at this hour they would have been Lords of Tuscany. I do not judge by this that arms and force are not to be employed, but that they ought to be reserved as the last resort where and when other means are not enough.

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## CHAPTER 22. HOW OFTEN THE OPINIONS OF MEN IN JUDGING THINGS [TO BE] GREAT ARE FALSE

Those who have found themselves witnesses of the deliberations of men have observed, and still observe, how often the opinions of men are erroneous; which many times, if they are not decided by very excellent men, are contrary to all truth. And because excellent men in corrupt Republics (especially in quiet times) are frowned upon both from envy and from other reasons of ambition, it follows that a common deception [error] is judged good, or it is put forward by men who want favors more readily for themselves than for the general good. When this error, in times of adversity, is discovered, then from necessity refuge is sought among those who in times of quiet were almost forgotten, as will be discussed in full in its proper place. Certain events also arise where men who do not have a great amount of experience of things are easily deceived, for they have in them that incident which resembles so many similar actions which are true as to make that one believed, [and] upon cases such as this men are persuaded. These things have been said of that [error] which the Praetor Numicus (when the Latins were routed by the Romans) persuaded them, and of that [error] which a few years ago was believed by many, when Francis I, King of France, attempted the conquest of Milan, which was defended by the Swiss.

I say, therefore, that after the death of Louis XII, and Francis of Angouleme succeeded to the kingdom of France, and when he desired to restore to the kingdom the Duchy of Milan, which a few years before was occupied by the Swiss, through the help of Pope Julius II, desired to obtain aid in Italy which should facilitate the enterprise for him; and, in addition to the Venetians whom King Louis and gained over to himself, attempted to regain the Florentines and Pope Leo X, deeming his enterprise would be easier any time he should have regained those people to himself, inasmuch as the forces of the King of Spain were in Lombardy, and the other forces of the Emperor were in Verona. Pope Leo did not yield to the desires of the king, but was persuaded by those who counselled him (according as it was said) to remain neutral, showing him that certain victory consisted in this proceeding, for the Church not to have either the King [of France] or the

Swiss too powerful in Italy; but if he wanted to bring it [the Church] to its ancient liberty, it was necessary to liberate her from the servitude of the one and the other. And because it was not possible to overcome one and the other, or each one separately, or both together, it would be best that one should overcome the other, and that the Church with her friends should attack the one that remained victor. And it was impossible to find a better opportunity than the present, as the one and the other were in the field, and the Pope had his forces organized so as to be able to show himself on the borders of Lombardy and near to both armies, under pretext of wanting to guard his possessions; and where he could remain until an engagement should take place, which reasonably (both armies being of equal vertu) ought to be bloody for both parties, and leave the victor so debilitated that it would be easy for the Pope to assail him and rout him, and thus he would, with great glory to himself, to remain Lord of Lombardy and arbiter of all Italy. And how much this opinion was wrong is to be seen from the result, for the Swiss were defeated after a long fight, and the forces of the Pope and of Spain did not presume to assault the victors, but prepared for flight: which also would not have done them good if it had not been for the humanity or indifference of the [French] King, who did not seek a second victory, but it sufficed him to make an accord with the Church.

This advice was based on certain reasons which at a distance appear true, but are entirely alien to the truth. For it rarely happens that the victor loses many of his soldiers, because the victor loses only those who die in battle, none by flight; and in the ardor of the combat, when men have turned to face one another, only a few fall, especially because very often it only lasts a short time: and even if it did last a long time and many of the victors should die, the reputation which follows the victory and the terror which it brings with it, are such that it greatly outweighs the injury which the death of his soldiers causes the victor to endure. So that an army, which in the belief that he has been weakened, should go and meet him, will find itself deceived, unless the army should be such as to be able to have combatted with him at any time, even before the victory. In this case it is possible to win or lose according to its fortune and vertu; but that one which should have first fought, and won, will have rather the advantage over the other. This was recognized for certain by the experience of the Latins and by the error that

the Praetor Numicus committed, and by the injuries which those people suffered who believed him, when (after the Romans had defeated the Latins) he shouted throughout all the country of Latium now was the time to assault the Romans weakened by the fight they had had with them, and that only the name of victory remained to the Romans, inasmuch as all the other injuries they had suffered were as though they had been defeated, and that any little force that should assault them anew would destroy them. Whence those people who believed him raised a new army, but were quickly routed, and suffered those injuries which those people always suffer who hold similar opinions.

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## CHAPTER 23. HOW MUCH THE ROMANS, IN JUDGING THE MATTERS FOR ANY INCIDENT THAT SHOULD NECESSITATE SUCH JUDGMENT, AVOIDED HALF-WAY MEASURES

Such was the state of things in Latium, that they could endure neither peace nor war. Of all the happy and unhappy states to which a Prince or a Republic can be reduced is to come to such terms that they cannot accept peace or sustain war; to which those are reduced who are oppressed too much by the conditions of the peace, and who, on the other hand, (wanting to make war) would have to throw themselves as prey to those who aid them, or to remain prey to the enemy. And all this comes from evil counsels and from the bad procedure of not having well measured their strength, as was said above. For that Republic or that Prince which should measure them well, will only with difficulty be brought to that condition which the Latins were brought, who made an accord with the Romans when they ought not to have, and declared war when they ought not to have, and thus they knew how to manage so that the enmity and friendship of the Romans were equally damaging to them. The Latins were therefore overcome and afflicted in the extreme, first by Manlius Torquatus, and afterwards by Camillus, who having constrained them to give themselves up and put themselves into the arms of the Romans, and having placed guards throughout the towns of Latium, and having taken hostages from all, returned to Rome and reported to the Senate that all Latium was in the hands of the Roman people. And as this judgment was notable and merits being observed so as to be able to be imitated when similar opportunities are given to Princes, I want to cite the words which Livius placed in the mouth of Camillus, which give witness both of the manner which the Romans held in expanding and how in the judgments of the State they always avoided half-way measures and turned to extremes. For a government consists only in so holding the subjects that they cannot or ought not want to injure you. This is done either by assuring yourself entirely by taking away from them all means of harming you, or by benefiting them so that it would not be reasonable that they would have a desire for any change of fortune. Which is entirely understood, first from the proposition

of Camillus, and then by the judgment given by the Senate upon it. His words were these: The immortal Gods caused you to go where you were able to by these counsels, placing in your hands whether Latium should exist. Therefore, you can prepare a peace in perpetuity in relation to the Latins, either by violence or forgiveness. Will you proceed cruelly against those whom you conquered and who gave themselves up to you? If so, you are at liberty to destroy all Latium. Will you rather by example desire to increase the power of the Roman Republic by accepting those whom you have overcome into your citizenship? If so, you have the opportunity for a most glorious increase. Certainly that Empire is more firm which enjoys obedience. While, therefore, their minds are in a stupor and in suspense, it behooves you to assure yourselves either through punishment or benefits. This proposition was followed by the decision of the Senate which was in accordance with the words of the Consul, so that going from town to town which were of importance, they either bestowed benefits on them or destroyed them, granting to the beneficiaries exemptions and privileges, giving them Citizenship, and assuring them in every way: the others they destroyed their towns, colonies were sent there, [the inhabitants] transferred to Rome, and so dispersing them that they could never by arms or by counsel injure Rome.

Nor did they [the Romans] ever employ neutral means in these matters of moment (as I have said). Princes ought to imitate this judgment, and the Florentines ought to have adopted this course when, in MDII<sup>1502</sup> Arezzo and all the Val Di Chiana rebelled: which if they had done so, they would have secured their Empire and greatly increased the City of Florence, and given her those fields which she lacked in order to live. But they employed that middle way, which is most pernicious in the judging of men, so that they exiled part of the Aretini, and a part they condemned to death, and they deprived all of them of their honors and their ancient ranks in the City, but left the City entire. And when any Citizen in their deliberations advised that Arezzo should be destroyed, those who were deemed more wise said that it would be of little honor to the Republic to destroy her, as it would appear that Florence lacked the strength to hold her: which reasons are of those which appear to be, but are not, true; for by this same reason a parricide, a criminal, or an infamous person would not be put to death, as it would be a

shame for that Prince to show that he did not have the power to be able to restrain a solitary man, And those who have similar opinions do not see, that individual men, and a whole City, will some times so sin against a State, that as an example to others, and for his own security, a Prince has no other remedy but to destroy them. And honor consists in being able and knowing when and how to castigate them, not in being able with a thousand dangers to hold them, for the Prince who does not castigate evil-doers in a way that he can no longer do evil, is held to be either ignorant or cowardly. This judgment which the Romans gave when it was necessary, is also confirmed by the sentence given against the Privernati. Where from the text of Livius, two things ought to be noted: the one, that which is mentioned above that subjects ought to be given benefits or destroyed: the other, how much the generosity of spirit and speaking the truth helps, especially when it is spoken in the presence of prudent men. The Roman Senate had assembled to judge the Privernati, who had rebelled, but were later by force returned to the Roman obedience. Many Citizens had been sent by the people of Privernatum to beg pardon from the Senate, and when they had come into their presence, one of them was asked by a Senator, what punishment do you think the Privernati merit? To which the Privernate replied, That which those who feel themselves worthy of liberty merit. To which the Consul replied, If we remit your punishment, what peace can we hope to have with you? To which that man responded, A faithful and perpetual one, if you give us a good one; if a bad one, only a day-by-day one. Whence, although many were displeased, the wiser part of the Senate said, This was the voice of free and virile people, and they could not believe that it is possible for that people, or an individual, would otherwise remain in a condition that was punishment to them, except if it resulted from necessity. Peace would be trustful where it was made voluntarily, and not from a position where servitude is prevalent where it is hopeless to look for good faith. And after these words they decided that the Privernati should be Roman Citizens, and they honored them with the privileges of their society, saying: Those who think of nothing except liberty are here worthy of being Romans. So much did this true and generous response [of the Privernati] please those generous spirits [Romans]; for any other response would have been false and cowardly. And those who believe men to be otherwise (especially if

these are accustomed to be, or appeared to be, free) deceive themselves, and under this deception take up proceedings that are neither good in themselves nor satisfactory to them [who are affected by it]. From which there often results rebellions and the ruin of States.

But to return to our discussion, I conclude, both from this and from the judgment given to the Latins, when a City, powerful and accustomed to living free, is to be judged, it must be either destroyed or caressed, otherwise every judgment is vain; and above all the middle-way course ought to be avoided, which is pernicious, as it was to the Samnites when they had enveloped the Romans at the Caudine forks, and when they did not want to follow the advice of that old man who counselled them that they should allow the Romans to go honorably, or to kill them all; but by taking a middle way, disarming them and putting them under the yoke, they allowed them to go full of ignominy and anger. So that a little afterwards, to their harm, they realized how useful the sentence of that old man had been and how harmful was their decision, as will be discussed more fully in its place.

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## CHAPTER 24. FORTRESSES ARE GENERALLY MORE HARMFUL THAN USEFUL

It may perhaps appear to these sages of our times as something not well considered, that the Romans in wanting to assure themselves of the people of Latium and of the City of Privernum, did not think of building some fortresses there, which would be a restraint to hold them faithful; especially as there was a saying in Florence alleged by our wise men, that Pisa and other similar Cities ought to be held by fortresses. And truly, if the Romans had been like them, they would have thought to build them: but as they were of another virtue, of another judgment, of another power, they did not build them. And so long as Rome lived free and followed her institutions and virtuous constitutions, they never built one to hold either a City or a province, but they did save some that had already been built. Whence seeing the mode of proceeding of the Romans in this regard, and that of the Princes in our times, it appears to me proper to put into consideration whether it is good to build fortresses, or whether they are harmful Or useful to him who builds them. It ought to be considered, therefore, whether fortresses are built for defending oneself from the enemy or to defend oneself from one's subjects.

In the first case they are not necessary, in the second harmful. And I will begin by giving the reason why in the second case they are harmful, I say that that Prince or that Republic which is afraid of its subjects and of their rebelling, it results first from the fact that that fear arises from the hate which the subjects have for them, and the hate they have of the treatment given them. The ill treatment results either from the belief of being able to hold them by force, or from the little prudence of those who govern them; and one of the things that makes them believe they are able to force them, is to have their fortresses near them: for the ill treatment that is the cause of hatred, arises in good part because of that Prince or that Republic have the fortresses, which (if this is true) are much more harmful by far than useful: For firstly (as has been said) they cause you to be more audacious and more violent toward your subjects: afterwards there is not that internal security of which you persuade yourself, as all the strength and violence that is

employed in holding a people are nothing, except these two: either you have always to place a good army in the field, as the Romans had, or you must disperse them, extinguish them, disorganize them, and so destroy them that they are not able to come together to attack you; for if you impoverish them, the despoiled ones will win their arms: if you disarm them, fury will serve as arms: if you kill the Captains and continue to injure the others, the Heads will spring up as those of the Hydra: if you build fortresses, they are useful in times of peace because they give you more courage to do evil to them, but in times of war most useless because they will be assaulted by the enemy and by your subjects, nor is it possible that they can resist the one and the other. And if ever they were useless, they are now in our times on account of artillery, because of which the small places, where moreover you cannot retire behind earthworks, are impossible to defend, as we discussed above.

I want to discuss this manner more tritely. Either you, a Prince, want to keep the people of the City in restraint with these fortresses, or you, a Prince or a Republic, want to keep a City in restraint that has been occupied in war. I want to turn to the Prince, and I say to him that such fortresses cannot be more useless to him in holding his Citizens in restraint for the reasons given above, for it makes you more prompt and less regardful in oppressing them, and that oppression will expose you to your ruin and will excite them so, that that fortress which is the reason for it cannot afterwards defend you; so that a wise and good Prince, in order to keep himself good and not give cause to his sons to dare to become bad, will never build fortresses, so that they will rely, not upon the fortresses, but on the good will of men. And if Count Francesco Sforza who had become Duke of Milan was reputed wise and none the less built fortresses in Milan, I say that in this case he was not wise, and the result has shown that that fortress was harmful and not a security to his heirs: for judging that through the medium of it to live securely, and to be able to oppress their Citizens and subjects, they indulged in all kinds of violence, so that they became so hated as described above, that they lost the State as soon as the enemy assaulted them: nor did that fortress defend them, nor did they have any usefulness for them in war, and in peace had done them much harm: for if they had not had them, and if because of little prudence they had not treated their Citizens harshly, they

would have discovered the peril more quickly, and would have retreated, and would then have been able to resist the impetus of the French more courageously with friendly subjects and without a fortress, than with hostile subjects, and with the fortress, which do you no good in any way, for either they [fortresses] are lost through the treachery of those who guard them, or because of the violence of those who assault it, or by famine.

And if you want them to do you any good and to help you in recovering a lost State, where only the fortress remains to you, it behoves you to have an army with which you can assault those who have driven you out; and if you have the army you would recover the State in any case, [and] even more [easily] if the fortress did not exist, and so much more easily as men would be more friendly than they were to you, for you had maltreated them because of the pride of having the fortress. And from experience it has been seen that this fortress of Milan was of no usefulness either to the Sforza or to the French in times of adversity for the one or the other; rather it brought much harm and ruin to both, not having given thought because of it to more honest means of holding that State. Guidobaldo Duke of Urbino, son of Frederick, who in his time was an esteemed Captain, was driven out of his State by Cesare Borgia, son of Pope Alexander VI; when afterwards because of an incident that had arisen he returned there, he caused all the fortresses that existed in that province to be destroyed, judging them to be injurious. For he being beloved by men, did not need them on their account, and with regard to his enemies, he had seen that he could not defend them; as they needed an army in the field to defend them, he resolved to destroy them. Pope Julius, after having driven out the Bentivogli from Bologna, built a fortress in that City, and afterwards had those people assassinated by one of his Governors: so that that people rebelled, and the Pope quickly lost the fortress; and thus the fortress did him no good, but injury, and the more so, that by conducting himself otherwise it could have done him good. Niccolo Da Costello, father of the Vitelli, returning to his country when he had been exiled, quickly razed two fortresses that Pope Sixtus IV had built, judging that the good will people, not the fortresses, would keep him in that State. But of all the other examples, the most recent and the most notable in every way, and apt to show the uselessness of building them and the usefulness of destroying them, is that of Genoa which ensued in the most recent time.

Everyone knows that in MDVII <sup>1507</sup> Genoa rebelled against Louis XII, King of France, who had come in person with all his forces to recover it, and having recovered it, he had a fortress built stronger than all others known up to the present time; it was impregnable because of its location and other circumstances, being placed on the apex of a hill that extended into the sea, called Codefa by the Genoese, and by means of this he commanded all the port and great part of the town of Genoa. Afterwards in the year MDVII <sup>1512</sup> it happened that the French forces were driven out of Italy, Genoa rebelled notwithstanding the fortress, and Ottaviano Fregoso seized the State, who, after sixteen months and with every industry, captured it by starvation. And everyone believed, and many counselled him, that he should preserve it as a refuge in any event: but being a most prudent man, [and] knowing that the good will of men and not fortresses maintained Princes in their States, destroyed it. And thus without founding his State on the fortress, but on his virtue and prudence, he has held it and still holds it. And where before only a thousand infantry usually were enough to overturn the State of Genoa, his adversaries have assaulted him with ten thousand and have not been able to harm him. It will be seen from this, therefore, that the destruction of the fortress did no more harm Ottaviano, than the building of it protected the King of France. For when he was able to come into Italy with his army, he was able to recover Genoa without the fortress being there; but without the army he could not come into Genoa even though he had a fortress there. For him, therefore, it was an expense to do [build] it and a disgrace to lose it: To Ottaviano the recovery of it was glorious and the destruction of it useful.

But let us come to the Republics which build fortresses, not within their own country, but inside the towns they acquire. And if the example given of France and Genoa are not enough to demonstrate the fallacy of this, those of Florence and Pisa will be enough for me; for the Florentines build fortresses in order to hold that City, and did not understand that to hold a City which was always hostile to Florentine rule, had lived in freedom, and had resorted to rebellion as a refuge for liberty, it was necessary in wanting to observe the old Roman method, either to make her an associate or to destroy her: for the virtue of fortresses is seen in the coming of King Charles, to whom they all surrendered, either through the treachery of those who

guarded it, or from fear of a greater evil: for if there had not been one, the Florentines never would have based their holding Pisa on it, and the King [of France] could never in that manner have deprived the Florentines of that City: and the means by which they had maintained it up to that time would perhaps have been sufficient to preserve it, and without doubt would have stood the test better than the fortress.

I conclude, therefore, that to hold one's own country a fortress is injurious and to hold towns that are acquired fortresses are useless: And I want the authority of the Romans to be enough [for me], who razed the walls of those towns which they wanted to hold, having taken them by violent means, and never rebuilt them. And if anyone should cite in opposition to this opinion that [example] of Tarantum in ancient times and of Brescia in modern times, both of which places were recovered from their rebellious subjects by means of fortresses, I reply, that for the recovery of Tarantum Fabius Maximus was sent at the beginning of the year with the entire army, who would have been more apt to have recovered it if there had not been a fortress: for although Fabius had used that means, if there had not been this means [fortress], he would have used other means which would have had the same result. And I do not know of what usefulness a fortress may be, if in the recovery of a town, a consular army with Fabius Maximus for its Captain is needed to recover it: And that the Romans would have recovered it in any event, is seen by the example of Capua where there was no fortress, and which they reacquired through the virtue of the army. But let us come to Brescia. I say that there rarely occurs that which occurred in that rebellion, that while the fortress remains in your power (the town having revolted) you should have a large army [and] nearby as was that of the French: for Monsignor De Foix, Captain of the King, being with his army at Bologna and learning of the loss of Brescia recovered the town by means of the fortress. The fortress of Brescia, therefore, (in order to be of benefit) also needed a Monsignor De Foix, and a French army which had to succor it in three days: Hence this example in contrast to opposite examples is not enough, for many fortresses have been taken and retaken in wars of our times, by the same fortune as field campaigns [have taken and retaken], not only in Lombardy, but also in the Romagna, in the Kingdom of Naples, and throughout all parts of Italy.

But as to building fortresses in order to defend oneself from external enemies, I say that they are not necessary to those people, or to those Kingdoms that have good armies, and are useless to those who do not have good armies: for good armies without fortresses are sufficient to defend themselves, and fortresses without good armies cannot defend you. And this is seen from the experience of those who are held to be excellent as governors and in other things, as was the case with the Romans and the Spartans; for if the Romans did not build fortresses, the Spartans not only abstained from building them, but even did not permit the City to have walls, because they wanted [to rely on] the personal virtue of their men to defend them, [and] not some other means of defense. When, therefore, a Spartan was asked by an Athenian whether the walls of Athens appeared beautiful to him, he replied “yes, if the [City] was inhabited by women”.

The Prince, therefore, who has good armies, may have on the frontiers of his State, or on the sea, some fortresses that could resist the enemy for some days until he could be checked; this may sometimes be a useful thing, but is not a necessary one. But when the Prince does not have a good army, then having fortresses throughout his State or at the frontiers, are either injurious or useless to him: injurious, because he loses them easily, and when they have been lost they are turned [make war] against him; or even if they should be so strong that that enemy cannot occupy them, they are left behind by the enemy army, and are of no benefit; for good armies, unless they are confronted by equally brave ones, enter into enemy country regardless of the City or fortress which they leave behind, as is seen in ancient histories; and as Francesco Maria did, who in recent times, in order to assault Urbino, left ten enemy Cities behind him, without taking any account of them. That Prince, therefore, who can raise a good army, can do without building fortresses: He who does not have a good army, ought not to build. He ought indeed to fortify the City where he lives, and keep it fortified, and keep the Citizens of that City well disposed, in order to be able to sustain an enemy attack so that he can [keep it] free by an accord or by external aid. All other plans are an expense in times of peace, and useless in times of war. And thus whoever considers all that I have said, will recognize the Romans as wise in all their other institutions, as they were prudent in their judgments concerning the Latins and the Privernati, where, not

thinking of fortresses, they assured themselves of these people by wiser and more virtuous means.

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## CHAPTER 25. THAT THE ASSAULTING OF A DISUNITED CITY IN ORDER TO OCCUPY IT BY MEANS OF ITS DISUNION IS AN ERROR

There was so much disunity within the Roman Republic between the Plebs and the Nobility that the Veienti together with the Etruscans (through the medium of such disunion) thought they could extinguish the name of Rome. And having raised an army and made incursions upon the fields of Rome, the Senate sent Gnaeus Manilus and M. Fabius against them, [and] when they had led their army near the army of the Veienti, the Veienti did not cease both with assaults and insults to attack and abuse the Roman name; and so great was their temerity and insolence that, from being disunited the Romans became united, and coming to battle they defeated and routed them. It will be seen, therefore, how much men deceive themselves (as we discussed above) in adopting some course, and how many times they believe they can gain a thing and lose it.

The Veienti believed that by assaulting the Romans when they were disunited, they could defeat them, but that assault was the cause of the unification of them [the Romans] and of their [the Veienti] ruin. For the cause of disunity in Republics most of the times is due to idleness and peace; the cause of unity is fear and war. And, therefore, if the Veienti had been wise, the more disunited they saw the Romans, the more they would have kept war away from them, and sought to oppress them by the arts of peace.

The way to do this is to gain the confidence of the people of that City which is disunited, and to manage to become arbiters between the parties, as long as they did not come to arms. But if they come to arms, to give light aid to the weaker party, as much to keep up the war longer and make them consume themselves, as well not to make them wholly apprehensive because of your large forces that you should want to oppress them and become their Prince. And if this part is well carried out it will always almost happen that you will obtain the object which you had presupposed.

The City of Pistoia (as I have said in other discussions and on other matters) did not come to the Republic of Florence with other arts than this; for she being divided, and the Florentines favoring first the one party, and then the

other, without caring for either, brought her to such terms that, weary of her tumultuous existence, she came to throw herself spontaneously into the arms of Florence. The City of Siena has never changed her State with the help of the Florentines unless that help has been weak and small. For when it has been strong and large, they caused that City to become united in defense of the existing government. I want to add another example to those written above. Filippo Visconti, Duke of Milan, often made war against the Florentines, relying on their disunity, and always was the loser. So that he had to say, lamenting his enterprise, that the follies of the Florentines had made him spend two millions in gold uselessly.

The Veienti and the Tuscans, therefore, (as was said above) were deceived by this opinion, and were in the end defeated by the Romans in one engagement. And thus in the future anyone who believes he can subjugate a people in a similar manner and for similar reasons will be deceived.

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## CHAPTER 26. CONTEMPT AND INSULT GENERATE HATRED AGAINST THOSE WHO EMPLOY THEM, WITHOUT ANY USEFULNESS TO THEM

I believe that it is one of the great signs of prudence which men exhibit in abstaining from threatening and injuring anyone with words, for neither the one and the other takes away strength from the enemy; but the one makes him more cautious, and the other causes him to have greater hatred against you, and with more industry to think of injuring you. This is seen from the example of the Veienti of whom discussion was had in the above chapter, who added the opprobrium of words to the injury of war against the Romans, from which every prudent Captain ought to make his soldiers abstain, as they are things which inflame and excite the enemy to revenge, and in no way impede him (as has been said) in attacking you, so that they are all as arms turned against you. A notable example of which occurred in Asia, where Gabades, Captain of the Persians, having for a long time besieged Amida, and becoming weary of the siege, decided to depart, and having already broken up his camp, all the inhabitants of the town came upon the walls; and having become haughty from [the thought] of victory, did not omit assailing them with every kind of injury, vituperating them, accusing and reproaching them for their cowardice and poltroonery.

Irritated by this, Gabades changed his counsel and returned to the siege, and so great was his indignation at this injury, that in a few days he took and sacked it. And the same thing happened to the Veienti, to whom (as has been said) it was not enough to make war against the Romans, but they also had to vituperate them with words, and went up to the very stockade of their camp to speak their insults, irritating them more with words than with arms: and those soldiers who at first fought unwillingly, constrained the Consuls to enkindle the battle, so that the Veienti suffered the punishment for their contumacy as was mentioned previously. Good Princes [Leaders] of the army and good Governors of a Republic, therefore, have to take every convenient means that these injuries and reproaches are not used either by their Citizens or their army, either among themselves or against the enemy, for then there arises those inconveniences mentioned above; and among

themselves, it would be even worse unless they are stopped, as prudent men have always stopped them.

The Roman legions left at Capua having conspired against the Capuans, as will be narrated in its proper place, and this conspiracy having given rise to sedition, which was later quelled by Valerius Corvinus, among the other stipulations of the convention that was made, was that they ordained the greatest penalties against those who should ever reprove any of those soldiers with that sedition. Tiberius Gracchus, who in the war against Hannibal, was made Captain over a certain number of slaves whom the Romans had armed because of the scarcity of men, ordered among the first things that the capital penalty [be inflicted] on whoever should reproach any of them with their [previous] servitude. So much did the Romans think this was a harmful thing (as has been said above) to treat men with contempt and reproach them with any disgrace, because there is nothing that so excites their spirit and generates greater indignation, that whether true or false, it is said: For harsh statements, even when they have the least truth in them, leave their harshness in the memory.

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## CHAPTER 27. TO PRUDENT PRINCES AND REPUBLICS, IT OUGHT TO BE ENOUGH TO WIN, FOR OFTEN IT IS NOT ENOUGH IF THEY LOSE

The use of dishonorable words against an enemy arises most of the times from the insolence that victory, or the false hope of victory, gives you; which false hope makes men err not only in their words, but also in their deeds. For when this [false] hope enters the hearts of men, it makes them go beyond the mark, and often lose that opportunity of obtaining a certain good, hoping to obtain an uncertain better. And because this is a matter that merits consideration, this deception that exists in men and very often causing damage to their State, it appears to me it ought to be demonstrated in detail by ancient and modern examples, as it cannot be so clearly demonstrated by arguments. After Hannibal had defeated the Romans at Cannae, he sent his ambassadors to the Carthaginians to announce the victory and request their support. This was discussed in the Senate as to what should be done. Hanno, an old and prudent Carthaginian Citizen advised that they should use this victory wisely in making peace with the Romans, for, having won, they were able to do so with more favorable conditions than they would expect [to make them] after a defeat; for the intentions of the Carthaginians ought to be to show the Romans that it was enough for them in combatting them, to have obtained a victory for themselves and not to seek to lose it in the hope of a greater one. This proceeding was not taken, but later when the opportunity was lost, it was well recognized by the Carthaginian Senate to have been a wise one. After Alexander the Great had already conquered all the Orient, the Republic of Tyre (noble and powerful in those times for having their City situated on water like the Venetians), seeing the greatness of Alexander, sent ambassadors to tell him they wanted to be his good servants and to render him that obedience he wanted, but that they were not ready to accept him or his forces in their land. Whereupon Alexander, indignant that a City should close those doors that all the world had opened to him, rebuffed them, and, not accepting their conditions, went to besiege them. The town was situated in water and very well supplied with provisions and the other munitions necessary for defense, so that Alexander saw after four months

[of siege] that taking the City would take away more time and glory from him that many other acquisitions had not taken away, decided to try for an accord and concede to them that which they themselves had asked. But those people of Tyre having become haughty, not only did not want to accept the accord, but killed whoever came to present it. At which Alexander being indignant, he exerted himself with so much strength to its extinction that he took and destroyed it, and killed or made slave its people. In the year 1502 a Spanish army came into the Florentine dominion to reinstate the Medici in Florence and to tax the City, they being called there by its Citizens who had given them hope that, as soon as they had entered the Florentine dominion, they would take up arms in their favor; and having entered the plain and not discovering anyone, and having a scarcity of provisions, they attempted an accord: which the people of Florence, having become haughty, did not accept; when there resulted the loss of Prato and the ruin of that State [Florence]. Princes who are attacked cannot make a greater error, therefore, especially when the assault is made by men who are far more powerful than they, than to refuse any accord, and especially when it is offered; for it would never be offered so harshly that it will not be in some way good for those who accept it, and they will in a way have obtained a part of the victory. For it should have been enough for the people of Tyre that Alexander had accepted those conditions which he at first refused, and it should have been a great enough victory for them that they had with arms in hand made so great a man condescend to their will. It should also have been enough for the Florentine people, and it would have been a great victory for them, if the Spanish army had yielded in something to their will, and not fulfill all things of theirs, for the intention of that army was to change the State in Florence, to take it away from its attachment to, France, and extract money from it. If of the three things, they [Spaniards] should have obtained the last two, and there should have remained to the [Florentine] people the first, that of saving their State, there would have remained within each one some honor and satisfaction and the people ought not to have cared for the other two things, as long as they existed free; nor ought they (even if they should have seen a greater and almost certain victory) to have wanted to put any part of it [their liberty] to the

discretion of fortune, as this was their last resource, which no prudent man would ever risk except from necessity.

Hannibal departed from Italy where he had been for sixteen glorious years, recalled by the Carthaginians to succor his own country; he found Hasdrubal and Syphax broken, the Kingdom of Numida lost, Carthage restricted between the confines of its walls, and no other refuge remaining but he and his army: and knowing that this was the last resource of his country, he did not want to place it in jeopardy without first having tried every other remedy, and was not ashamed to ask for peace, judging that if his country had any remedy, it was in it [peace] and not in war; which afterwards having been refused, he did not hesitate to combat (and to be defeated), judging he might have [a chance to] win, or if he lost, to lose gloriously. And if Hannibal who had so much virtu and had his army intact, sought peace first rather than a battle, when he saw that losing it his country would be enslaved, what ought someone else with less virtu and less experience than he do? But men make this error of not knowing where to place the limits to their hopes, and by relying on these without otherwise measuring their resources, they are ruined.

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## CHAPTER 28. HOW DANGEROUS IT IS FOR A PRINCE OR A REPUBLIC, NOT TO AVENGE AN INJURY MADE AGAINST THE PUBLIC OR A PRIVATE [CITIZEN]

That which indignation makes men do, is easily recognized as that which happened to the Romans when they sent the three Fabii as ambassadors to the Gauls who had come to assault Tuscany, and Clusium in particular. For the people of Clusium having sent to Rome for aid, the Romans sent Ambassadors to the Gauls that in the name of the Roman people they should signify to them to abstain from making war against the Tuscans: These ambassadors, being more accustomed to act than to speak, having arrived there as the Gauls and Tuscans were engaged in battle, put themselves among the first in combatting against them: Whence there arose that, being recognized by them [the Gauls], all the indignation that they had against the Tuscans turned against the Romans. This indignation became greater, because the Gauls having complained to the Roman Senate through their Ambassadors of this injury, and asked that in satisfaction for the harm done that the three above-mentioned Fabii should be turned over to them; not only were they not delivered to them or in any way castigated, but when the Comitii assembled, they were made Tribunes with consular powers. So that the Gauls seeing those men honored who ought to have been punished, took it all to be to their disparagement and ignominy, and, excited by anger and indignation, went to assault Rome, and captured it all except the Campidoglio [Capitol]. This ruin to the Romans resulted only from their own non-observance of justice, for their Ambassadors having sinned against the law of nations, instead of being castigated were honored.

It is to be considered, therefore, how much every Republic and every Prince ought to be careful in making a similar injury, not only against an entire people, but even to an individual. For if a man is greatly offended either by the public or by a private citizen, and is not avenged according to his satisfaction, if he lives in a Republic he will seek to avenge himself even with their ruin, if he lives under a Prince and has any courage within himself, he will never remain quiet until in some way he should have revenged himself

against him, even though he may see in it his own ruin. To verify this, there is no better or truer example than that of Philip of Macedonia, father of Alexander. This man had in his court Pausanias, a beautiful and noble youth, of whom Attalus, one of the chief men close to Philip was enamored; and having several times sought that he should consent [to his desires], but finding him opposed to such things, decided to obtain by deceit and force that which he was unable to obtain by other means. And he gave a grand banquet at which Pausanias and many other noble Barons were gathered; after each one was full of viands and wine, he caused Pausanias to be seized, and brought to a retired place; and he not only gave vent to his libido by force, but also to shame him still more, caused him to be abused in a similar fashion by many others. Pausanias complained of this injury many times to Philip, who for a time kept him in the hope of avenging him, but not only did he not avenge him, but promoted Attalus to the governorship of a Province of Greece: Whence Pausanias seeing his enemy honored and not castigated, turned all his indignation not against him who had injured him, but against Phillip who had not avenged him; and one morning during the solemn nuptial of the daughter of Phillip to Alexander of Epirus, while Phillip was going to the Temple to celebrate them, between the two Alexanders, his son and son-in-law, he [Pausanias] killed him. Which example is very similar to that of the Romans, should be noted by anyone who governs, that he ought never to underestimate a man so as to believe (adding injury on injury) that he whom he has injured does not think of avenging himself, even with every danger and injury to himself.

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## CHAPTER 29. FORTUNE BLINDS THE MINDS OF MEN WHEN SHE DOES NOT WANT THEM TO OPPOSE HER DESIGNS

If we consider well how human affairs proceed, many times many events will be seen to arise and accidents happen against which the Heavens have not entirely desired that they should be provided. And if this of which I speak happened at Rome where there was so much virtu, so much religion, and so much order, it is no wonder that it should happen much more often in a City or a Province which lacks the above mentioned attributes. And as this case in point is most remarkable in demonstrating the power of Heaven over human affairs, T. Livius relates it at length and in the most effective language, saying that Heaven, wanting some means to have the Romans know its power, first made those Fabii err who had gone as ambassadors to the Gauls, and through whose deeds excited them to make war against Rome: Afterward it ordained that, to reprimand them for that war, nothing should be done in Rome worthy of the Roman people, having first ordained that Camillus, who alone could be the remedy for so much evil, was sent into exile at Ardea; afterwards when the Gauls were approaching Rome, those people who had many times before created a Dictator in order to check the attacks of the Volscians and other neighboring enemies, did not create one when the Gauls came. Also they were slow and without extraordinary diligence in making their selection of soldiers, and were so slow in taking up arms, that only with great effort were they in time to meet the Gauls on the river Allia, ten miles distant from Rome. Here the Tribunes established their camp without any of the customary diligence, without first examining the place, not circumscribing it with ditches and palisades, and not using any human or divine remedy. And in the order of battle, they made the ranks open and weak, so that neither the soldiers nor the Captains did anything worthy of the Roman discipline. They fought them without any bloodshed, for they fled before they had been assaulted; and the greater part went off to Veii, the remainder retreated to Rome, where they entered the Capitol without entering even their own homes; so that the Senate with no thought of defending Rome (any more than the others) did not close its gates, [and] a part of them fled, another part entered the Capitol with the others. In

defending it [the Capitol], however, they did employ some non-tumultuous methods, for they did not burden it with useless people, they supplied it with all the grain they could so as to be able to endure a siege, and of the useless crowd of old men and women and children, the greater part fled to the surrounding towns, the rest remained in Rome a prey to the Gauls. So that whoever had read of the things done by that people so many years before, and then should read of the events of those times, could in no way believe that it was the same people. And T. Livius who had told us of all the above mentioned troubles, concludes by saying: Fortune thus blinds the minds, when she does not want them to resist her power.

Nor can this conclusion be more true. Whence men who ordinarily live in great adversity or prosperity merit less praise or less blame, for most of the time it will be seen that they have been brought to ruin or to greatness by some great expedient which Heaven has caused, giving them the opportunity or depriving them of the ability to work with virtue. Fortune indeed does this, when she wants to bring some great things, she selects a man of much spirit and much virtue, that he will recognize those opportunities she offers. So too in the same way, when she wants to bring some great ruin, she promotes men who can do such ruin. And if anyone should be able to resist her, she either kills him or deprives him of all the faculties of being able to do any good. From this text it is to be clearly recognized how fortune, in order to make Rome greater and bring her to that greatness that she arrived at, judged it was necessary to beat her (as will be discussed at length in the beginning of the next book) but did not want to ruin her entirely. And because of this, it is seen that she caused Camillus to be exiled and not killed, caused Rome to be taken but not the Capitol, ordained that the Romans should not think of any good thing in preparing Rome [for the attack], but should not lack any good preparation for the defense of the Capitol. She caused (as Rome was to be taken) that the greater part of the soldiers who were defeated at the Allia to go to Veii, and thus cut off all means for the defense of the City of Rome. And yet in ordaining this, she prepared everything for her recovery, having conducted an entire Roman army to Veii, and Camillus to Ardea, in order to be able to raise a large band under a Captain unstained by any ignominy of defeat and completely dedicated to the recovery of his country.

We might cite some modern example in confirmation of the things mentioned here, but as I judge it unnecessary, (this one being able to satisfy anyone) I shall omit it. I indeed reaffirm this to be most true (according as is seen from all histories) that men can second fortune but not oppose her, they can develop her designs but not defeat them. They ought never to abandon themselves; because not knowing her aims, [and] the devious and unknown ways she takes, they always have hope; and in hoping, not to abandon themselves no matter in what [ill] fortune or trouble they find themselves.

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## CHAPTER 30. TRULY POWERFUL REPUBLICS AND PRINCES DO NOT PURCHASE FRIENDSHIP WITH MONEY, BUT WITH VIRTU AND REPUTATION OF STRENGTH

The Romans were besieged in the Capitol, and although they awaited succor from Veii and from Camillus, being driven by hunger, they came to terms with the Gauls to ransom themselves with a certain amount of gold, but while making these terms (the gold already being weighed) Camillus arrived with his army, which fortune caused (as the historian says) so that the Romans should not live under an aura of ransom. Which occurrence not only is more noteworthy in this instance, but more so in the course of events of this Republic, where it is seen that they never acquired lands by means of money, but always through the virtu of their army. Which I do not believe ever to have happened with any other Republic.

And among the other signs by which the power of a State is recognized, is to see how it lives with its neighbors; and if it is governed in a way that the neighbors (so as to have them friendly) are its pensioners, then it is a certain sign that that State is powerful: But when these said neighbors (although inferior to it) draw money from it, then it is a great sign of its weakness. Let anyone read all the Roman histories and he will see that the Massalians, the Aeduans, the Rhodians, Hiero the Syracusan, Eumene and the Kings of Massinissa, who all lived near to the confines of the Roman Empire, in order to have its friendship, agreed to contribute to its needs and expenses by tribute, not seeking any other return from it than to be defended. On the other hand, it will be seen in weak States, and beginning with our own Florence in times past in the period of her greatest reputation, that there was not a petty Lord in the Romagna who did not get a pension from her, and in addition she gave one to the Perugini, the Castellani, and all her other neighbors. But if this City had been armed and strong, everything would have proceeded oppositely, for everyone in order to have her protection would have given money to her, and sought, not to sell their friendship, but to purchase hers. Nor are the Florentines to be seen alone in this baseness, but the Venetians and the King of France, who with so great a Kingdom lives

tributary to the Swiss and the King of England. All of which resulted from having disarmed their people, and because that King and the others mentioned above desired rather to enjoy a present usefulness of being able to plunder the people, and to avoid an imaginary rather than a real peril, than to do things which would have assured them and made their States happy in perpetuity. Such baseness, if it sometimes produces some quiet, is in times of necessity the cause of irreparable harm and ruin.

And it would be lengthy to recount how many times the Florentines, and the Venetians, and this Kingdom [of France] have bought themselves off in wars, and how many times they subjected themselves to an ignominy to which the Romans were subjected only one time. It would be lengthy to recount how many lands the Florentines and the Venetians have purchased, in which disorders were seen afterwards, and that the things acquired with gold cannot be defended with iron. The Romans continued in this high-minded existence as long as they lived free, but when they came under the Emperors, and the Emperors commenced to be bad, and to love the shade more than the sun, they too begun to buy off now the Parthians, now the Germans, now other neighboring peoples, which was the beginning of the ruin of so great an Empire. Such troubles proceeded, therefore, from having disarmed its own people, from which an even greater evil results, that the more the enemy comes near, so much more will he find you weak. For whoever lives in the manner mentioned above, ill treats those subjects who are in the interior of his Empire so as to obtain men who can hold the enemy at the frontiers. From this there arises that to keep the enemy more distant he has to give subsidies to these Lords and peoples who are near their borders.

Whence there arises that these States so paid make a little resistance at their frontiers, but as soon as the enemy has passed, they do not have any advantage. And they do not see that this mode of proceeding of theirs is against every good institution. For the heart and the vital parts of the body have to be kept armored, and not its extremities, for without these it is possible to live, but when the former are injured, it is possible to die: And these States have their hearts unarmored but their hands and feet armored. The disorders which have been caused to Florence have been seen, and can

be seen, every day, that as soon as an army passes the frontiers and enters near the heart, no further remedy is to be found. In the last few years the Venetians afforded similar proof, and if their City had not been surrounded by water, their end would have been seen.

This experience has not often been seen in France because that Kingdom is so great that it has few enemies who are superior. None the less, when the English in MDXIII <sup>1513</sup> assaulted that Kingdom, all that Province trembled, and the King himself and everyone else believed that only one defeat would take away the State.

The contrary happened to the Romans, for the more the enemy approached Rome, so much more he found that City powerful to resist him. And it is seen in the coming of Hannibal into Italy, that after three defeats and after so many captains and soldiers were killed, they were able not only to sustain the enemy, but to win the war. All of which resulted from her having the heart well armored and holding little account of the extremities.

For the foundation of their State was in the people of Rome, the Latin people, and the other lands allied in Italy, and their Colonies, from which they drew so many soldiers sufficient for then to conquer and hold the world. And that this is true is seen from the question that Hanno the Carthaginian put to those Ambassadors of Hannibal after the battle at Cannae, who having magnified the things done by Hannibal, were asked by Hanno if anyone had come from the Roman people to ask for peace, and if any towns of the Latins or any of the Colonies had rebelled against the Romans: and when they replied negatively, Hanno replied; This war is yet as full as before.

It will be seen therefore, both from this discussion and from what we have said elsewhere several times, how much difference there is in the proceedings of present Republics from the ancient ones. Because of this every day are seen astonishing losses and remarkable conquest, for where men have little vertu, fortune greatly shows her power, and as she varies it, Republics and States change often, and they will always change until there springs up one who is a great lover of antiquity who is able to rule so that

she has no reason at every revolution of the sun to show how powerful she can be.

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## CHAPTER 31. HOW DANGEROUS IT IS TO BELIEVE EXILES

And it does not appear to me to be foreign to this subject to discuss among other matters how dangerous a thing it is to believe those who have been driven out of their country, these being matters that are acted upon each day by those who govern States; and I am especially able to demonstrate this by a memorable example given by T. Livius in his history, even though it may be outside his subject. When Alexander the Great crossed with his army into Asia, Alexander of Epirus, his brother-in-law and uncle, came with his forces into Italy, having been called there by the exiled Lucanians, who had given him the hope that he could through their means occupy all that province. Whence he, upon their faith and hope, having come into Italy, was killed by them, because they had been promised a return to their Country by the Citizens if they would kill him. It ought to be considered, therefore, how vain are the faith and promises of those who find themselves deprived of their country. For, as to their faith, it has to be borne in mind that anytime they can return to their country by other means than yours, they will leave you and look to the other, notwithstanding whatever promises they had made you. As to their vain hopes and promises, such is the extreme desire in them to return home, that they naturally believe many things that are false and add many others by art, so that between those they believe and those they say they believe, they fill you with hope, so that relying on them you will incur expenses in vain, or you undertake an enterprise in which you ruin yourself. The previously mentioned example of Alexander is enough for me, but in addition, that of Themistocles, the Athenian, who, having been declared a rebel, fled to Darius in Asia, where he promised him so much if he should want to assault Greece, that Darius turned to that enterprise. Themistocles, not being able to observe these promises, he poisoned himself, either from shame or from fear of punishment. And if this error was made by Themistocles, a most excellent man, it ought to be considered how much more those men err who, because of less virtue, allow themselves to be drawn by their desires and passions. A Prince, therefore, ought to go slowly in undertaking an enterprise upon the representations of an exile, for most of the times he will be left either with shame or very grave injury. And

as the taking of towns rarely succeeds by deceit or by intelligence others within may have, it does not appear outside the subject to discuss it in the following chapter, adding some account of how many ways the Romans acquired them.

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## CHAPTER 32. IN HOW MANY WAYS THE ROMANS OCCUPIED TOWNS

The Romans being very often at war, they always did so with every advantage, both as to expense and as to every other thing that it required. From this arose the fact that they guarded against the taking of towns by siege, as they judged this method to be of such an expense and so much trouble that it surpassed by far any usefulness that they could draw from the acquisition: and because of this they thought that it would be better and more useful to subjugate a town by any other means than besieging it: whence there are very few examples of sieges made by them in so many wars and in so many years. Their mode of taking Cities, therefore, was either by assault or by voluntary surrender. The capture by assault was either by force or by open violence, or by force mixed with fraud: the open violence was either by assault without piercing the walls (which they called attacking the city in crown fashion) because they surrounded the City with the entire army, as when Scipio took New Carthage in Spain; or if this assault was not enough they addressed themselves to breaching the walls with rams or with other machines of war of theirs; or they made a mine and by means of it entered the City, by which method they took the City from the Veienti: or in order to be at the same level with those who defended the walls, they made towers of wood: or they made embankments of earth placed against the outside of the walls in order to come to a height above them. In the first case those who were defending the towns against these assaults were exposed to the greatest peril quickly from being assaulted on all sides and had the greatest doubts of being able to remedy this, because they needed to have many defenders in every place, [and] those they had were not numerous enough to be able to substitute for or relieve those in every place, or if they were able to do so, they were not all of equal courage to resist; and if the fight was lost on any one side, all the rest were lost. It happened, therefore, (as I have said) that this mode [of assault] many times was a happy success. But if it did not succeed at the first [try], they did not repeat it much, as it was a dangerous method for the army, for defending themselves over so much space, everything was left weak so as to be unable to resist a sortie that those inside might make, and also it would fatigue the

soldiers and cause disorder: so that they attempted this method only one time and by surprise. As to the breaking down of walls, it was opposed as in the present time by repairs; and to resist the mines they made counter mines, and through which they opposed the enemy either with arms or other means, among which was this that they filled barrels with feathers which they set on fire while burning they put them into the mine, so that the smoke and the smell impeded the entrance to the enemy: and if they assaulted them with towers, they endeavored to ruin them by fire. And as to earth embankments, they broke the wall down where the embankment leaned against it, drawing inside the earth which those outside were heaping, so that placing earth outside and taking it away from inside, the embankment did not grow. These means of attack cannot be attempted for long, and [if not successful] the siege must be abandoned and other means sought to win the war, as did Scipio, when he entered Attica, having assaulted Utica and not succeeding in taking it, he betook himself from the field and sought to break the Carthaginian army, or rather to turn to [regular] sieges as he did at Veii, Capua, Carthage, Jerusalem, and similar towns which they occupied by sieges.

As to the acquisition of towns by stealth and violence, (as happened at Paleopolis, where the Romans occupied it by treating secretly with those within) this kind of conquest was tried by the Romans and many others, but few succeeded: the reason is, that every least impediment disrupts the design, and impediments come easily. For the conspiracy is discovered before the deed happens, which is done without much difficulty, as much from the treachery of those to whom it is communicated, as from the difficulty of carrying it out, having to come together with enemies or under some pretext with those with whom it is not permitted to speak. But if the conspiracy is not discovered in its progress, then thousand difficulties spring up in putting it into execution. For if you arrive before the designated time or if you arrive after, everything is spoiled. If a furtive noise is raised, as the geese at the Capitol, if a customary order is broken, every least error and every least fault made, will ruin the enterprise. Added to this is the darkness of the night which puts more fear into those who are engaged in those dangerous things. And the greater part of men who are engaged in similar enterprises being unacquainted with the situation of the country or

the places where they are sent, are confounded, become afraid, and will turn back at every least unforeseen accident. And every false imagining acts to make them put themselves in flight. Nor has anyone ever been found who was more successful in these fraudulent and nocturnal expeditions than Aratus of Sicyon, who was as valiant in these as he was pusillanimous in expeditions carried out openly and in daylight. Which can be attributed rather to some occult virtue which he possessed, than to any natural faculty in achieving success. Of these attempts, many are projected, few are put to the test, and very few succeed.

As to the acquisition of Towns through surrender, they give up either voluntarily, or by force. The willingness arises either from some extrinsic necessity that constrains them to find refuge under you, as did Capua to the Romans, or from the desire to be well governed, being attracted by the good government which that Prince bestows on those who have voluntarily placed themselves in his arms, as were the Rhodians, the Massileans, and other such Citizens, who gave themselves to the Roman People. As to forced surrenders, this force results either from a long siege (as was said above), or from a continuous pressure from incursions, depredations, and other ill treatment; which in wanting to avoid, a City surrenders. Of all the methods mentioned, the Romans employed this last more than any others, and during more than four hundred and fifty years of harassing their neighbors with routs and incursions, and then by means of accords obtained reputation over them, as we have discussed at another time. And they always relied on this method, even though they tried all others, which they found more dangerous or useless. For in a siege it is the length of time and expense; in open assault it is doubtful and dangerous; in a conspiracy it is uncertainty. And they [the Romans] saw that by one rout of an enemy army they acquired a Kingdom in a day, but in taking an obstinate City by siege, they consumed many.

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## CHAPTER 33. HOW THE ROMANS GAVE THEIR CAPTAINS OF ARMIES UNCONTROLLED COMMISSIONS

I think that (reading this history of Livius and wanting to profit) all the methods of procedure of the Roman People and Senate should be considered. And among other things that merit consideration, is to see with what authority they sent out their Consuls, Dictators, and other Captains of armies; from which it is seen that the authority was very great, as the Senate did not reserve to itself anything other than the authority to declare new wars, to confirm peace [treaties], and left everything else to the arbitration power of the Consul. For once a war was decided on by the People and the Senate (for instance against the Latins) they remitted all the rest to the discretion of the Consul, who could either make an engagement or not make it, and lay siege to this or that town as seemed proper to him. Which things are verified by many examples, and especially by that which occurred in the expedition against the Tuscans. For Fabius, the Consul, having defeated them near Sutrium, and planning afterwards to pass with the army through the Ciminian forest and go to Tuscany, not only did not counsel with the Senate, but did not even give them any notice, even though war was to be waged in a new unknown, and dangerous country. Further witness of this is given by the decisions which were made by the Senate on learning of this, who, when they had heard of the victory Fabius had won, and fearful that he might take up the proceeding of passing through the said forest into Tuscany, judging that it would not be well to attempt that [war] and run that risk, sent Legates to Fabius to make him understand he should not cross into Tuscany; but when they arrived he had already crossed over, and had obtained this victory, so that in place of being impeters of the war, they returned as messengers of the conquest and the glory that was obtained.

And whoever considers well this method will see it is most prudently employed, for if the Senate had wanted the Consul to proceed in the war from hand to hand according to that which they committed to him, they would have made him [Fabius] less circumspect and more slow; for it would not have seemed to him that the glory of the battle should be all his, but as being shared by the Senate, by whose counsels he had been governed. In

addition to this the Senate would have obligated itself to want to advise on a matter that they could not have understood; for notwithstanding that there many of them who were men most expert in war, none the less not being in that place, and not knowing the infinite particulars that are necessary to be known to want to counsel well, infinite errors (by counselling) would have been made. And because of this, they wanted the Consul to make decisions by himself and that the glory should be all his, the love of which they judged should be a restraint as well as a rule in making him conduct himself well.

This part is more willingly noted by me, because I see that the Republics of present times, as the Venetian and the Florentine, have understood it otherwise, and if their Captains, Providers, or Commissioners have to place [a battery of] artillery, they want to know and counsel about it. Which system merits the same praise as [their conduct] in other things merit, which all together have brought about the conditions that are found at present.

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# THIRD BOOK

## CHAPTER 1. TO WANT THAT A SECT OR A REPUBLIC EXIST FOR LONG, IT IS NECESSARY TO RETURN THEM OFTEN TO THEIR PRINCIPLES

It is a most true thing that all the things of the world have to have an ending to their existence. But these only run the entire course that is generally ordained by Heaven, which does not disorganize their body, but keeps it so organized that it is not changed, or if it is changed, it is for its welfare and not its injury. And as I speak here of mixed bodies, as are Republics and [Religious] Sects, I say that those changes are for the better which bring them back to their [original] principles. And, therefore, those are better organized and have a longer existence, which through their own means are able frequently to renew themselves, or which through some accident outside the said organization come to that renewal. And it is something clearer than light, that these bodies which do not renew themselves, do not endure. The means of renewing them (as has been said), is to bring them back to their [original] principles. For all the principles of Sects and Republics and of Kingdoms must have within themselves some goodness, by means of which they obtain their first reputation and first expansion. And as in the process of time that goodness becomes corrupted, of necessity it will kill the body, unless something intervenes to bring it back to the sign [normality]. And Doctors of medicine say (speaking of the bodies of men): Every day something is gathered, and when it is ill, it must be cured.

This turning back to principles (speaking of Republics) is caused either by an extrinsic accident or by an intrinsic prudence. As to the first, it is seen how necessary it was that Rome should be taken by the Gauls to want to be reborn, and being reborn should resume a new life and a new virtue, and should resume the observance of Religion and Justice, which were beginning to blemish themselves in her. This is very well known from the history of Livius, where he shows that in calling out the army against the Gauls, and in creating the Tribunes with Consular power, they did not observe any religious ceremony. Thus in the same way they not only did not deprive the Fabii [of their rank], who, contrary to the law of nations, had

fought against the Gauls, but created them Tribunes. And it ought easily to be presupposed that they had begun to hold in less account those good institutions established by Romulus and those other prudent Princes, than what was reasonable and necessary to keep their liberty. This blow from the outside had to come, therefore, so that all the institutions of that City should be resumed, and that it should be shown to those people that it was not only necessary to maintain Religion and Justice, but also to esteem their good Citizens, and to take more account of their virtue than of that convenience which, because of their work, seemed to be lacking to them. Which is seen succeeded entirely, for as soon as Rome was retaken they renewed all the institutions of their ancient Religion, punished the Fabii who had fought against the law of nations, and then esteemed highly the virtue and goodness of Camillus that the Senate and the others put aside all envy, placing again on him all the burden of this Republic.

It is necessary, therefore, (as has been said) that men who live together in some kind of organization, often know each other either by these external incidents, or by internal ones. And as to these latter, it happens that they arise either from a law which often reviews the conduct of the men who are in that body, or truly by some good man who arises amongst them, who by his example and his deeds of virtue causes the same effect as that institution. This good then springs up in Republics either from the virtue of one man or from the virtue of one institution. As to the latter, the institutions that returned the Roman Republic back to its [original] principles was the Tribunes of the Plebs, and all the other laws that curbed the ambitions and insolence of men. Which institutions have need to be kept alive by the virtue of one Citizen who will courageously take part in their execution against the power of those who transgress them.

The most notable examples of such execution of the laws, before the taking of Rome by the Gauls, were the death of the sons of Brutus, the death of the ten Citizens [Decemvirs], and that of Melius, the grain dealer; and after the taking of Rome were the death of Manlius Capitolinus, the death of the son of Manlius Torquatus, the punishment inflicted by Papirius Cursor on Fabius, his Master of Cavalry, and the accusation of Scipio. As these were the extreme and most notable examples, each time one arose, it caused the

people to turn back to their principles; and when they began to be more rare, they begun also to give men more latitude in becoming corrupt, and the carrying out of the laws was done with more danger and more tumults. So that from one such execution to another, no more than ten years should elapse, for beyond this time men begin to change their customs and transgress the laws; and unless something arises which recalls the punishment to their memory, and revives the fear in their minds, so many delinquents will soon come together that they cannot any longer be punished without danger.

In connection with this subject, those who governed the State of Florence, from the year one thousand four hundred thirty four <sup>1434</sup> until the year one thousand four hundred ninety four <sup>1494</sup> said that it was necessary to resume the government every five years, otherwise it would be difficult to maintain it: and they called “the resuming of the government” to put the same fear and terror in men as they had done in the assuming of it, having in that time punished those who (according to that mode of living) had conducted themselves badly. But as the memory of that punishment fades, men become bold to try new things and speak ill of it [the government], and therefore it is necessary to provide against this, by bringing [the government] back to its original principles. This return of Republics back to their principles also results from the simple virtu of one man, without depending on any law that excites him to any execution: none the less, they are of such influence and example that good men desire to imitate him, and the wicked are ashamed to lead a life contrary to those examples. Those particularly, who in Rome produced these good results, were Horatius Codes, Scaevola, Fabricus, the two Decii, Regulus Attilius, and some others, who by their rare examples of virtu produced almost the same effect in Rome that laws and institutions would have done. And if the above executions, together with these particular examples had been followed at least every ten years in that City, it would have followed of necessity that it would never have been corrupt: but as they caused both these things to become rare, corruption began to multiply, for, after Marcus Regulus, no similar example is seen: and although the two Cato’s had sprung up in Rome, so great was the interval between him [Regulus] and them, and between the one and the other [Cato], and they were so isolated instances,

that they could not effect any good work by their good examples. And especially the later Cato, who, finding the City in good part corrupt, was not able by his example to make the Citizens become better. And this is enough as regards Republics.

But as to the Sects, such renewal is also seen to be necessary by the examples of our religion, which, if it had not been brought back to its principles by Saint Francis and Saint Dominic, would have been entirely extinguished: for by their poverty and by their example of the life of Christ, brought it back to the minds of men where it had already been extinguished; and their new orders were so powerful, that they were the reason why the dishonesty of Prelates and the Heads of the Religion did not ruin her; they yet continue to live in poverty and have so much credit with the people through confessions and preachings, that they were able to make them understand that it was evil to speak evil of the bad, and that it was good to live rendering them obedience, and if they had made errors to leave their punishment to God. And thus these bad [rulers] do as much evil as they can, because they do not fear that punishment they do not see or believe. This renewal [of Saint Francis and Saint Dominic] therefore has maintained and still maintains this Religion. Kingdoms also have need to renew themselves and bring their laws back to first principles. And it is seen how much good resulted from such a renewal in the Kingdom of France, which Kingdom exists under laws and ordinances more than any other Kingdom. The Parliaments are the maintainers of these laws and ordinances, and especially that of Paris; [and] these are renewed by them at any time by an execution against a Prince of that Kingdom, and at times even by condemning the King in some of his decisions. And up to now it has maintained itself because it has been an obstinate executor against that nobility: but if at any time they should allow some [disorder] to go on with impunity, and which would then come to be multiplied, and without doubt there would result either that the [evildoers] would be corrected with [accompanying] great disorders, or that the Kingdom itself would be dissolved.

I conclude, therefore, that there is nothing more necessary in a community of men, either as a Sect, or Kingdom, or Republic, than to restore it to that

reputation that it had at its beginning, and to endeavor to obtain either good ordinances or good men to bring about such a result, and not to have an extrinsic force do it. For although some time this may be the best remedy, as it was at Rome, it is so dangerous that it is in no way desirable.

But to show to anyone how much the actions of some men in particular had made Rome great and caused many good results in that City, I shall come to the narration and discussion of them, among the objects of which this third book and last part of the first Ten [Books] will be concluded. And although the actions of the Kings were great and notable, none the less, as history treats of them fully, we will leave them aside, nor otherwise speak of them, except where some of the things worked openly for their private advantage, and we shall begin with Brutus, the father of Roman liberty.

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## CHAPTER 2. HOW AT TIMES IT IS A VERY WISE THING TO SIMULATE MADNESS

No one was ever so prudent, or was esteemed so wise for any singular deed of his, as Junius Brutus merited to be esteemed for his simulation of foolishness. And although Titus Livius did not mention but one reason that had induced him to such simulation, which was that he might be able to live in greater security and maintain his patrimony, none the less, considering his method of proceeding, it can be believed that he had simulated this also in order to be less observed and to have greater opportunity to attack the Kings, and liberate his country whenever he should be given the occasion.

And that he should think of this, is seen, first, in his interpretation of the oracle of Apollo, when he simulated falling down to kiss the earth, judging by that to propitiate the Gods to his thoughts; and afterwards, when on the occasion of the death of Lucretia, in the midst of the father and husband and other relatives of hers, he was the first to draw the knife from the wound, and make all those around there swear that they should henceforth suffer no one to reign [as King] in Rome.

From this example, all who are discontent with a Prince have to learn that they first ought to weigh and measure their strength, and if they are so powerful that they can declare themselves his enemies and openly make war against him, they ought to employ this method that is less dangerous and more honorable. But if they are of a kind that their strength is not sufficient to make open war on him, they ought with all industry to seek to make him a friend, and to this purpose employ all the means they deem necessary, adopting his pleasures and taking delight in all those things that come to delight him.

This intimacy will first enable you to live securely and without bringing on any danger, it makes you enjoy the good fortune of that Prince with him, and will afford you every convenience to satisfy your spirit [of resentment]. It is true that some say that one should not keep so close to Princes that their ruin should encompass you, or so distant that if they are ruined, you should not be long in rising on their ruin; which middle course would be the

truest if it could be preserved: but as I believe that is impossible, it must come to the two methods mentioned above, that is, to get away from or come closer to them: who does otherwise, and is a man notable for his quality, lives in continuous danger.

Nor is it enough for him to say, I do not care for anything, I do not desire honors or profit, I want to live quietly and without trouble, for these excuses are heard and not accepted: nor can men of such quality elect their own way of living, [and] if they could elect it truly and without ambition, they would not be believed: so that if they wanted to live in that manner, they would not be allowed to do so by others.

It is advantageous, therefore, to play the fool as Brutus did, and one is made to be very foolish by praising, talking, seeing and doing things contrary to your thinking, to please the Prince. And as I have not spoken of the prudence of this man in recovering the liberty of Rome, we will now speak of his severity in maintaining it.

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### CHAPTER 3. HOW IT WAS NECESSARY, IN WANTING TO MAINTAIN THE NEWLY ACQUIRED LIBERTY, TO KILL THE SONS OF BRUTUS

The severity of Brutus was no less necessary than useful in maintaining that liberty in Rome which she had acquired; which is an example rare in all the record of history to see a father to sit in judgment, and not only condemn his sons to death, but to be present at their deaths. And this will always be known by those who read ancient history, that after a change of State, either from a Republic to a Tyranny, or from a Tyranny to a Republic, a memorable execution against the enemies of the existing conditions is necessary. And whoever restores liberty to a State and does not kill Brutus, and whoever restores liberty to a State and does not kill the sons of Brutus, maintains himself only a short time. And as this has been discussed at length in another place above, I refer to what has already been said there: I will cite only one memorable example which has occurred in our times and in our country. And this is that of Piero Soderini, who believed with his patience and goodness that he would be able to overcome that same determination that was in the sons of Brutus to return to another form of government, and he was deceived: And although because of his prudence he recognized this necessity, and that chance and their ambition which drove them, gave them the opportunity to destroy themselves, none the less his courage never allowed him to do it. For he thought, in addition to his belief of being able to dispel the bad disposition with patience and goodness, and to consume some of the enmity of someone by rewards (and many times he had done so with faithful friends) that to want boldly to drive out his opposition and beat down his adversaries, it would oblige him to assume extraordinary authority and legally destroy civil equality. Which thing (even though it should not afterward be used tyrannically by him) would have so terrified the general public, that after his death they would never again agree to reelect a Gonfalonier for life: which institution he judged was good for strengthening and maintaining the government. Which respect [for the laws] was wise and good: none the less one ought never to allow an evil to run on out of regard for a good, when that good could easily be suppressed by that evil: And he ought to bear in mind that his deeds and his intentions should have to be

judged by the results (if fortune and life would stay with him), that he could certify to everyone that that which he had done was for the welfare of the country, and not from him ambition; and he could have regulated things in a way that a successor of his could not be able to do by evil means that which he had done for good. But the first opinion deceived him, not knowing that malignity is not subdued by time, nor placated by any gift. So that by not knowing how to imitate Brutus, he lost at the same time his country, his State, and his reputation.

And as it is a difficult thing to save a republic, so it is difficult to save a Monarchy, as will be shown in the following chapter.

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## CHAPTER 4. A PRINCE DOES NOT LIVE SECURELY IN A PRINCIPALITY WHILE THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN DESPOILED OF IT LIVE

The death of Tarquinius Priscus caused by the sons of Ancus, and the death of Servius Tullus caused by Tarquinius Superbus, shows how difficult and perilous it is to despoil one of a Kingdom, and leave him alive, even though he should seek to win him over to himself by benefits. And it will be seen how Tarquinius Priscus was deceived by the seemingly legal possession of that Kingdom, it having been given to him by the people and confirmed by the Senate. Nor could he believe that the sons of Ancus could have so much resentment that they would not be content with him [as ruler], of whom all Rome was content. And Servius Tullus deceived himself believing he could win over to himself the sons of Tarquin by new benefits. So that, as to the first, every Prince can be advised that he will never live securely in his Principality so long as those live who have been despoiled [of their possessions]. As to the second, it should remind every potentate that old injuries were never cancelled by new benefits, and so much less if the new benefit is less than the injury inflicted. And without doubt Servius Tullus was little prudent to believe that the sons of Tarquinius would be content to be the sons-in-law of him, when they judged they ought to be the Kings. And this desire to reign is so great, that it not only enters the hearts of those who expect to inherit the Kingdom, but even to those who do not have such expectation: as existed in the wife of Tarquin the younger, daughter of Servius, who, moved by this rabidness, against every filial piety, set her husband against his father to take away his life and kingdom, so much more did the esteem to be a Queen than a daughter to a King. If, therefore, Tarquinius Priscus and Servius Tullus lost the kingdom by not knowing how to secure themselves from those whose [thrones] they had usurped, Tarquinius Superbus lost it by not observing the institution of the ancient Kings, as will be shown in the following chapter.

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## CHAPTER 5. THAT WHICH MAKES A KING LOSE THE KINGDOM THAT WAS INHERITED BY HIM

Tarquinius Superbus having killed Servius Tullus, and the latter not leaving any heirs, he [Tarquinius] came to possess the kingdom with security, not having to fear those things which had harmed his predecessors. And although the manner of his occupying the kingdom was irregular and odious, none the less had he observed the ancient institutions of the other Kings, he would have been tolerated, and the Senate and Plebs would never have arisen against him and taken the State away from him. This man, therefore, was not driven out because of his son Sextus having violated Lucretia, but for having broken the laws and governed it [his Kingdom] tyrannically; having taken away all authority from the Senate and assumed it himself, and those funds which were marked for public improvements with which the Roman Senate was satisfied, he diverted to the building of his own palace, with disgust and envy for him resulting. So that in a very short time, he despoiled Rome of all that liberty which she had maintained under the other previous Kings. And it was not enough for him to make the Fathers [Senators] his enemies, but he aroused the Plebs against himself, working them hard in mechanical labor and all unlike those which his predecessors had employed. So that by having filled Rome with such cruel and haughty examples of his, he had already disposed the minds of all the Romans to rebellion whenever they should have the opportunity. And if the incident of Lucretia had not happened, even so another would have arisen which would have produced the same result: For if Tarquin had lived like the other Kings and his son Sextus had not made that error, Brutus and Collatinus would have had recourse to Tarquin for vengeance against Sextus, and to the Roman People.

Princes should understand, therefore, that they begin to lose the State from that hour when they begin to break the laws and ancient institutions under which men have lived for a long time. And if as private citizens, having lost the State, they should ever become so prudent to see with what facility Principalities are kept by those who are counselled wisely, they would regret their loss much more, and would condemn themselves to greater

punishment than that to which others have condemned them: For it is much more easy to be loved by the good than the bad, and to obey the laws than to enforce them. And in wanting to learn the course that they should have to hold to do this, they do not have to endure any other hardship than to mirror for themselves the lives of good Princes, such as Timoleon the Corinthian, Aratus the Sicyonian, and similar ones, in the lives of whom they would find as much security and satisfaction to him who ruled as to he who is ruled; so that they ought to want to imitate him, being able to do so for the reasons mentioned: For men when they are well governed, do not seek or desire any other liberty; as happened to the people governed by the above named [Princes], whom they constrained to be Princes as long as they lived, even though they often had been tempted to return to private life.

And as in this and the two preceding chapters, there has been discussed the dispositions aroused against Princes, and of the Conspiracy made by the sons of Brutus against their country, and of those made against Tarquinius Priscus and Servius Tullus, it does not appear to me to be something outside this subject to speak at length of them in the following chapter, being a matter worthy of being noted by Princes and Private Citizens.

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## CHAPTER 6. OF CONSPIRACIES

And it does not appear proper to me to omit the discussion of Conspiracies, being a matter of so much danger to Princes and Private Citizens. For it is seen that many more Princes have lost their lives and States through them, than by open war. For it is conceded only to a few to be able to make open war against a Prince, but the ability to conspire against them is conceded to everyone. On the other hand, private citizens do not enter in an enterprise more perilous nor more foolhardy than this, as it is difficult and most dangerous in all of its parts. Whence it happens that many are attempted, and very few have the desired ending. So that, therefore, Princes may learn to guard themselves from these dangers, and that Private Citizens may less rashly engage in them, and rather may learn to live contentedly under the Rule that has been assigned to them by chance and by their state, I shall speak widely, not omitting any notable case, in documenting the one and the other. And truly that sentence of Cornelius Tacitus is golden, which says that men have to honor things past but obey the present, and ought to desire good Princes, but tolerate the ones they have. And truly, whoever does otherwise, most of the time will ruin himself and his country.

We ought, therefore, (in entering on this matter) to consider first against whom conspiracies are made, and we will find them to be made either against a country or against a Prince. It is of these two that I want us to discuss at present; for those which are made to give a town over to the enemy who besiege it, or that have some reason similar to this, have been talked about above sufficiently. And in this first part we shall treat of that against a Prince, and first we will examine the reasons for it, which are many, but there is one which is more important than all the others: and this is his being hated by the general public; for in the case of that Prince who has aroused this universal hatred, it is reasonable [to suppose] that there are some particular individuals who have been injured by him more [than others] and who desire to avenge themselves. This desire of theirs is increased by that universal ill disposition that they see is aroused against him. A Prince ought therefore to avoid these public charges, but I do not want to talk here (having treated of this elsewhere) of what he should do to

avoid them. For by guarding himself against this [hatred], the simple offenses against particular individuals will make less war against him: One, because rarely is a man met who thinks so much of an injury that he will put himself in so much danger to avenge it: The other, even if they should be of a mind and power to do so, they are held back by that universal benevolence that they see the Prince to have. Injuries that happen to an individual are of Possessions [taking them from him], of Blood [physical injury], or of Honor. Of those of Blood, threats are most dangerous, and there is no peril in the execution, because he who is dead cannot think of vengeance, and those who remain alive most of the time leave such thoughts to the dead: but he who is threatened, and sees himself constrained by necessity either to act or to suffer, becomes a most dangerous man for the Prince, as we shall relate in detail in its place. Outside of this necessity, those [injuries] of Possession and Honor, are matters that harm men more than any other offense, and against which the Prince ought to guard himself, for he can never despoil one so much that he does not leave a mind obstinate to vengeance. And of [injuries] of honor, that are inflicted on men, that against their women is most important, and after that, insult to their person. This [kind of injury] armed Pausanias against Phillip of Macedonia: this has armed many others against many other Princes: and in our times, Julio Belanti would not have set in motion a conspiracy against Pandolfo, Tyrant of Siena, except that the latter had given him a daughter for his wife, and then took her away, as we will relate in its place. The major cause that made the Pazzi conspire against the Medici, was the inheritance of Giovanni Borrromei, which was taken from the former by the latter.

There is another reason, and a very great one, which makes men conspire against a Prince, [and] that is the desire to liberate the country which has been occupied by him. This reason moved Brutus and Cassius against Caesar: this moved many others against the Falari, the Dionysii, and other occupiers of their countries. Nor can any Tyrant guard himself from this disposition, except by giving up the Tyrancy. And because none are found who will do this, few are found who do not come to an evil end; whence there arose this verse of Juvenal's:

Few kings descend to the family place of Ceres  
Without wounds and slaughter, and in this way tyrants die.

The dangers incurred in Conspiracies (as I said above) are great, being incurred at all times: for in such cases there is danger run in plotting it, in its execution, and after it has been executed. Those who conspire may be alone, or may be more than one. The one cannot be said to be a Conspiracy, but is a firm disposition rising in a man to kill the Prince. This alone, of the three dangers that Conspiracies run, lacks the first, because it does not carry any danger before the execution; since no others have his secret, there is no danger that his design will be carried to the ears of the Prince. Such a decision [plot] can be made by any man, of whatever sort, small or great, noble or ignoble, familiar or not, familiar with the Prince: for it is permitted to everyone at some time to talk to him, and to him who is permitted to talk it is allowed to give vent to his feelings. Pausanias, of whom was spoken at another place, killed Phillip of Macedonia who was going to the Temple surrounded by a thousand armed men, and between his son and son-in-law: but that man was a Noble and known to the Prince. A poor and abject Spaniard stabbed King Ferrando of Spain in the neck: the wound was not mortal, but from this it is seen that that man had the courage and opportunity to do it. A Turkish Dervish priest drew a scimitar on Bajazet, the father of the present Grand Turk: he did not wound him, but he too had the courage and the opportunity to have done it, if he wanted to. Of these spirits thusly constituted, I believe many could be found who would do such a thing (as there is no danger or punishment in wanting to do so) but few who do it. But of those who do, there are none or very few who are not killed in the deed.

But let us go from these plots by single individuals, and let us come to the Conspiracies formed by the many. I say that in history it is to be found that all the conspiracies were made by great men, or those most familiar with the Prince: for others, unless they are completely mad, are not able to conspire, that men of weak condition and not familiar with the Prince lack all that hope and opportunities that are needed for the execution of a conspiracy: First, weak men cannot be sure of the faith of accomplices, as no one will enter into their plot without having those hopes which cause men to expose

themselves to great dangers, so that as [the conspirators] are increased to two or three persons, they find an accuser and ruin them: but even if they were so lucky that such an accuser would not be found, they are surrounded by such difficulties in the execution (from not having an easy access to the Prince) that it is impossible that they are not ruined in its execution. For if great men and those who have easy access are oppressed by those difficulties that will be described below, it will happen that to the others those difficulties will increase without end. Men, therefore, (because where life and property are at stake, they are not all insane) when they see themselves weak guard themselves from them; and when they have cause for harming a Prince, attend to vilifying him, and wait for those who are more powerful than they who will avenge them. And if it should ever be found that any such as these should have attempted such an undertaking, they should be lauded for their intentions and not their prudence.

It will be seen, therefore, that those who have conspired are all great men, or familiars of the Prince. Of the many who have conspired, as many were moved thusly by too many benefits as by too many injuries; as was that of Perennius against Commodus, Plautianus against Severus, and of Sejanus against Tiberius. All of these men were loaded by their Emperors with so many riches, honors, and dignities, that it seemed nothing was wanting to them for the perfection of their power other than the Empire, and not wanting to be lacking this, they set themselves to conspire against the Prince, but their conspiracies all had that ending which their ingratitude merited. Although one of these was seen in recent times to have had a good ending, that of Giacopo D'Appiano against Messer Piero Gambacorti, Prince of Pisa, this Giacopo had been raised and nourished and given reputation by him, afterwards took away his State. Of this kind, in our times, was that of Coppola against King Ferrando of Aragon; this Coppola had come to such greatness that it seemed he lacked nothing except the Kingdom, [and] in wanting this, however, he lost his life. And truly if any conspiracy made by great men against a Prince ought to have succeeded, it should have been this, as it was made by another King, so to speak, and one who had so great an opportunity to fulfil his desire: but that cupidity for domination which blinds them, also blinds them in the managing of their enterprise, for if they should know how to accomplish this evil with prudence, it would be

impossible for them not to succeed. A Prince, therefore, who wants to guard himself from Conspiracies ought to fear more those men to whom he has given too many benefits, than those to whom he had caused too many injuries. For these latter lack the opportunity, the former abound in them; and the desire is the same, because the desire of dominating is as great or greater than is that of vengeance. They ought never, therefore, give so much authority to their friends, but that a distance should exist between them and the Principate, and that there should be something left [in the middle] for them to desire; otherwise it will be a rare occasion if it will not happen to them as to the above mentioned Princes.

But let us return to our subject. I say that they who conspire having to be great men and have easy access to the Prince, it remains to be discussed what successes there have been of their enterprises, and to see what were the causes which made them happy or unhappy. And (as I have said above) in all these conspiracies, there are to be found three dangerous periods of time; before, during, and after the fact. Few are found, however, which have had good endings, that it is almost impossible that all should have passed through [the first period] happily. And in beginning to discuss the dangers of the first period, which are the most important, I say that there is need to be very prudent and have great good fortune, that in conducting a conspiracy, it not be discovered [at this stage]. And they are discovered either by [someone] telling or by conjecture. The telling results from finding little faith or little prudence in the men to whom you have communicated it: the little faith [treachery] is so commonly found, that you cannot communicate it [the conspiracy] except to your trusted ones who, for love of you, risk their own deaths, or to those men who are discontent with the Prince. Of such trusted ones, one or two may be found, but as you extend this, it is impossible that many will be found. Moreover, there is good need that the good will they bear you is so great that the plot does not appear to them greater than the danger and fear greater than the punishment: also most of the times men are deceived by the love they judge others have for them, nor can they ever be sure of this except from experience; and to have such experience in this is most dangerous: and even if you should have had experience in some other dangerous occasion, where they had been faithful to you, you can not by that faith measure this one, as this one surpasses by

far all other kinds of danger. If you measure this faith from the discontent which a man has toward the Prince, you can be easily deceived in this: because as soon as you have opened your mind to that malcontent, you give him material to content himself, and to keep him faithful, his hate [for the Prince] must be very great or your authority [over him] must be greater. From this, it has followed that many [conspiracies] have been revealed and crushed in their very beginning, and that if one has been kept secret among many men for along time, it is held to be a miraculous thing; as was that of Piso against Nero, and in our times, that of the Pazzi against Lorenzo and Giuliano De'Medici, of which more than fifty thousand were cognizant, and which waited until its execution to be discovered.

As to being discovered because of little prudence, this occurs when a conspiracy is talked about with little caution, so that a servant or other third person learns of it, as happened to the sons of Brutus, who in arranging the plot with the legates of Tarquin were overheard by a slave who accused them; or when from thoughtlessness it comes to be communicated to a woman or a child whom you love, or to some similar indiscreet person, as did Dinnus, one of the conspirators with Philotas against Alexander the Great, who communicated the conspiracy to Nicomachus, a young boy loved by him, who quickly told it to his brother Ciballinus, and Ciballinus to the King. As to being discovered by conjecture, there is for an example the conspiracy of Piso against Nero, in which Scevinus, one of the conspirators, the day before he was to kill Nero, made his testament, ordered that Melichus his freedman should sharpen an old rusty dagger of his, freed all his slaves and gave them money, and caused bandages to be ordered for tying up wounds: by means of which conjectures, Melichus ascertained the plot, and accused him to Nero. Scevinus was taken, and with him Natales, another conspirator, with whom he had been seen talking the day before in secret and for a long time; and the reasons given [by each] not being in accord, they were forced to confess the truth, so that the Conspiracy was discovered to the ruin of all the conspirators. It is impossible to guard oneself from this cause of discovery of Conspiracies, as it will be discovered by the accomplices through malice, through imprudence, or through thoughtlessness, whenever they exceed three or four in number. And as soon as more than one is taken, it is impossible for it not to be discovered,

for two cannot agree together in all their statements. If only one of them is taken who is a strong man, he can with his courage and firmness remain silent on [the names of] the conspirators; but then it behooves the other conspirators not to have less firmness and courage, and not to discover it by their flight, for if courage be wanting on any side, either by he who is arrested or he who is free, the conspiracy is discovered. And a rare example is cited by Titus Livius in the conspiracy formed against Hieronymus, King of Syracuse, where Theodorus, one of the conspirators taken, concealed with great virtu all the conspirators, and accused the friends of the King; and on the other hand, all the conspirators placed so much confidence in the virtu of Theodorus, that no one left Syracuse or gave any sign of fear. The conduct of a Conspiracy, therefore, passes through all these dangers before it comes to its execution; and in wanting to avoid these, there exist these remedies. The first and most certain, rather to say it better, the only one, is not to give the conspirators time to accuse you, and therefore to communicate the plot to them just at the time you are to do it, and not sooner: those who do thusly are likely to avoid the dangers that exist in the beginning, and most of the time, the others also; actually they have all had happy endings: and any prudent man will have the opportunity of governing himself in this manner.

It should suffice for me to cite two examples. Nelematus, not being able to endure the tyranny of Aristotimus, Tyrant of Epirus, assembled in his house many relatives and friends, and exhorted them to liberate their country; several of them requested time to discuss and arrange it, whereupon Nelematus made his slaves lock the house, and to those whom he had called he said, either you swear to go now and carry out the execution of this [plot], or I will give you all as prisoners to Aristotimus: moved by these words they swore, and going out without any [further] intermission of time, successfully carried out the plot of Nelematus. A Magian having by deceit occupied the kingdom of the Persians, and when Ortanus, one of the great men of the kingdom, had learned and discovered the fraud, he conferred with six other Princes of that State seeking how they were to avenge the kingdom from the Tyranny of that Magian. And when one of them asked as to the time, Darius, one of the six called by Ortanus, arose and said: Either we go now to carry out the execution of this, or I will go and accuse you all;

and so by accord, without giving time to anyone to repent of it, they arose and easily executed their designs. Similar to these two examples also is the manner that the Aetolians employed in killing Nabis, the Spartan Tyrant; they sent Alexemenes, and enjoined the others that they should obey him in every and any thing, under pain of exile. This man went to Sparta, and did not communicate his commission until he wanted to discharge it, whence he succeeded in killing him. In this manner, therefore, these men avoided those dangers that are associated with the carrying out of conspiracies, and whoever imitates them will always escape them. And that anyone can do as they did, I want to cite the example of Piso referred to above. Piso was a very great and reputed man, and a familiar of Nero who confided in him much. Nero used to go often to his garden to dine with him. Piso could then have made friends for himself some men of mind, heart, and of disposition to undertake the execution of [such a plot], which is very easy for a great man to do; and when Nero should be in his garden, to communicate the matter to them, and with appropriate words animated them to do that which they would not have had time to refuse, and which would have been impossible not to succeed.

And thus, if all the other instances are examined, few will be found in which they [the conspirators] could not have been able to proceed in the same manner. But men, ordinarily little learned in the ways of the world, often make very great errors, and so much greater in those that are extraordinary, as is this [conspiracies]. The matter ought, therefore, never to be communicated except under necessity and at its execution; and even then, if you have to communicate it, to communicate it to one man only with whom you have had a very long experience [of trust], or who is motivated by the same reason as you. To find one such is much more easy than to find many, and because of this, there is less danger: and then, even if he should deceive you, there is some remedy of defending yourself, than where there are many conspirators: for I have heard many prudent men say that it is possible to talk of everything with one man, for (if you do not let yourself be led to write in your hand) the yes of one man is worth as much as the no of another: and everyone ought to guard himself against writing as from a shoal, because there is nothing that will convict you more easily than your handwriting. Plautianias, wanting to have the Emperor Severus and his son

Antoninus killed, committed the matter of the Tribune Saturninus; who wanting to accuse him and not obey him, and apprehensive that coming to the accusation, he [Plautianus] would be more believed than he [Saturninus], requested a copy in his handwriting so that he should have faith in this commission, which Plautianus, blinded by ambition, gave him: whence it ensued that he was accused by the Tribune and convicted; and without that copy and certain other countersigns, Plautianus would have won out, so boldly did he deny it. From the accusation of a single one, some remedy will be found, unless you are convicted by some writing or other countersigns, from which one ought to guard himself. In the Pisonian conspiracy there was a woman called Epicaris, who in the past had been a friend of Nero, who judged it to be advisable to place among the conspirators a Captain of some triremes whom Nero had as his guard; she committed the conspiracy to him, but not [the names of] the conspirators. Whence that the Captain breaking his faith and accusing her to Nero, but so great was the audacity of Epicaris in denying it, that Nero, remaining confused, did not condemn her.

There are two dangers, therefore, in communicating a plot to only one individual: the first, that he does not accuse you as a test: the other, that he does not accuse you, he being convicted and constrained by the punishment to do so: he being arrested because of some suspicion or some other indication on his part. But there is some remedy for both of these dangers; the first, being able to deny it, alleging the hate that the man had for you; and the other to deny it, alleging the force that had constrained him to tell lies. It is prudent, therefore, not to communicate the plot to anyone, but act according to those above mentioned examples; and even if you must communicate it, not to more than one, for while there is some danger in that, it is much less than in communicating it to many.

Next to this, there may be a necessity which constrains you to do to that Prince what you see the Prince would want to do to you, [and] which is so great that it does not give you time to think of your own safety. This necessity almost always brings the matter to the desired ending, and to prove it, I have two examples which should suffice. The Emperor Commodus had among his best friends and familiars Letus and Electus, Heads of the

Praetorian soldiers, and had Marcia among his favorite concubines and friends: and as he was sometimes reproached by these [three] for the way he stained his personal [dignity] and that of the Empire, decided to have them killed, and wrote the names of Marcia, Letus and Electus, and several others on a list of those whom he wanted killed the following night, and he placed this list under the pillow of his bed: and having gone to bathe, a favorite child of his playing in the room and on the bed found this list, and going out with it in his hand met Marcia who took it from him; and when she read it and saw its contents, she quickly sent for Letus and Electus, and when all three recognized the danger they were in, they decided to forestall it, and without losing time, the following night they killed Commodus. The Emperor Antoninus Caracalla was with his armies in Mesopotamia, and had for his prefect Macrinus, a man more fit for civil than military matters: and as it happens that bad Princes always fear that others will inflict on them that [punishment] which it appears to them they merit, Antoninus wrote to Maternianus his friend in Rome that he learn from the Astrologers if there was anyone who was aspiring to the Empire and to advise him of it. Whence Maternianus wrote back to him that Macrinus was he who aspired to it, and the letter came first into the hands of Macrinus than of the Emperor; and because of this the necessity was recognized either to kill him before a new letter should arrive from Rome, or to die, he committed to his trusted friend, the Centurion Martialis, whose brother had been killed by Antoninus a few days before, that he should kill him, which was executed by him successfully. It is seen therefore, that this necessity which does not give time produces almost the same effect as the means employed by Nelematus of Epirus described by me above. That of which I spoke of almost at the beginning of this discourse is also seen, that threats injure a Prince more, and are the cause of more efficacious Conspiracies than the injury itself; from which a Prince ought to guard himself; for men have to be either caressed or made sure of, and never reduced to conditions in which they believe they need either to kill others or be killed themselves.

As to the dangers that are run in its execution, these result either from changing the orders, or from the lack of courage of those who should execute it, or from an error that the executor makes from little prudence, or from not perfecting the plot leaving some of them alive who had been

planned to be killed. I say, therefore, that there is nothing that causes disturbance or impediment to all the actions of men as much as when in an instant and without having time, to have to change an order, and to change it from the one that had been ordered first: and if this change causes disorder in anything, it does so especially in matters of war and matter similar to those of which we are speaking; for in such actions there is nothing so necessary to do as much as firming the minds of men to execute the part assigned to them: and if men have their minds turned for many days to a certain matter and certain order, and that be quickly changed, it is impossible that all be not disturbed, and everything not ruined; so that it is much better to execute a plot according to the order given (even though some inconvenience is to be seen) than to want to cancel it to enter into a thousand inconveniences. This happens when one has no time to reorganize oneself, for when there is time, men can govern themselves in their own way.

The Conspiracy of the Pazzi against Lorenzo and Giuliano De' Medici is well known. The arrangement made was that they were to dine at the Cardinal of San Giorgio's, and at that dinner to kill them [the Medici]: in which place there were distributed those who were to seize the palace, and those who were to overrun the City and call the people to liberty. It happened that while the Pazzi, the Medici, and the Cardinal were at the solemn office in the Cathedral Church in Florence, it was learned that Giuliano was not dining that morning, which caused the conspirators to gather together, and that which they had to do in the house of Medici, they decided to do in the Church: which caused the disturbance of all the arrangements, as Giovanbattista da Monteseco did not want to consent to the homicide, saying he did not want to do it in the Church: so that they had to change to new members for every action who, not having time to firm up their minds, made such errors, that they were crushed in the execution.

The spirit is sometimes lacking to those who should execute [a plot] either from reverence or from the innate goodwill of the executor. So great is the majesty and reverence which surrounds the presence of a Prince, that it is an easy matter for it either to mitigate [the will of] or terrify an executor. To Marius (having been taken by the Minturnians) was sent a slave who was to

kill him, [but] who was so terrified by the presence of that man and by the memory of his fame, that he became cowardly, and lost all courage to kill him. And if this power exists in a man bound and a prisoner, and overwhelmed by bad fortune, how much more is it to be feared from a Prince free, with the majesty of ornaments, of pomp, and of his court: so that this pomp can terrify you, and that grateful welcome can humiliate you.

Some subjects conspired against Sitalces, King of Thracia; they fixed the day of its execution, they came to the appointed place where the Prince was, but none of them would move to attack him, so that they departed without having attempted anything, and without knowing what had impeded them, and they blamed one another. They fell into this error several times, so that the conspiracy was discovered, and they suffered the punishment for that evil which they could have committed, but would not.

Two brothers of Alfonso, Duke of Ferrara, conspired against him, and they employed as the executioner [of their plot] Giannes, Priest and Cantor of the Duke, who several times at their request had brought the Duke to them, so that they would have occasion to kill him: None the less, none of them ever dared to do it, so that it was discovered, and they bore the penalty of their wickedness and little prudence. This neglect of taking advantage of the opportunity resulted either from his presence dismaying them or from some humane act by the Prince humbling them. The failures that arise in such executions arise either from the error of little prudence or little courage; for when one or the other of these things invades you, and carried by that confusion of the brain, you are made to say and do that which you ought not.

And that men's minds are thus invaded and confounded, Titus Livius cannot demonstrate better than when he writes of Alexemenes, the Aetolian, who (when he wanted to kill Nabis, the Spartan, of which we talked about above), when the time came for the execution [of his design], discovered to his men what had to be done, Titus Livius speaks these words: He collected his own spirits, which were confused seeing the greatness of the undertakings. For it is impossible that anyone (even though he be of firm spirit and accustomed to the use of the sword and the killing of men) be not confused. Hence only men experienced in such affairs ought to be selected,

and none other be trusted, even though he held to be most courageous. For the certainty of anyone's courage cannot be promised without having had experience. Such confusion, therefore, can either make the arms fall from your hand, or make you say things that will have the same result.

Lucilla, the sister of Commodus, ordered Quintianus to kill him. This man awaited Commodus at the entrance of the amphitheatre, and encountering him, with drawn dagger, shouted, The Senate sends you this: which words caused him to be seized before he had lowered his arm to wound him.

Messer Antonio Da Volterra deputed (as is mentioned above) to kill Lorenzo De'Medici, in meeting him said, Ah traitor!, which word was the saving of Lorenzo and the ruin of the Conspiracy.

When the conspiracy is against only one Head, success of the affair cannot be obtained, for the reasons mentioned: but success is obtained even less easily when the conspiracy is against two Heads; actually, it is so difficult that it is almost impossible that it succeed: for to undertake the same action at the same time in different places is almost impossible, as it cannot be done at different times without one spoiling the other: so that conspiring against one Prince is a doubtful, dangerous and little prudent thing; to conspire against two is entirely vain and foolhardy. And if it were not for the respect I have of history, I would never believe that that would be possible which Herodianus says to Plautianus, when he commissioned Saturninus, the Certurian, that he alone should kill Severus and Antoninus [Caracalla] living in different places; for it is so far from reasonableness, that other than this authority would not have me believe it. Certain young Athenians conspired against Diodes and Hippas, Tyrants of Athens. They killed Diodes, but Hippas who remained avenged him. Chion and Leonidas, of Heraclea, and disciples of Plato, conspired against the Tyrants Clearchus and Satirus: they killed Clearchus, but Satirus who remained alive avenged him. The Pazzi, mentioned by us many times, did not succeed in killing anyone except Giuliano; so that everyone ought to abstain from such Conspiracies against several Heads, for they do no good to yourself, nor the country, nor anyone: rather those [tyrants] who remain become more harsh and unendurable, as Florence, Athens, and Heraclea know, as I have stated above. It is true that the conspiracy that Pelopidas made to deliver his country, Thebes, [from the

Tyrants] faced all the difficulties: none the less it had a most happy ending; for Pelopidas not only conspired against two Tyrants, but against ten: not only was he not a confidant and did not have easy access to the Tyrants, but he was also a rebel: none the less he was able to come to Thebes, kill the Tyrants, and free the country. Yet, none the less, he did all with the aid of one Charon, counsellor or the Tyrants, through whom he had an easy access to the execution of his [plot]. Let no one, none the less, take this as an example; for, as that enterprise was almost impossible, and a marvelous thing to succeed, [and] so regarded by the writers, who commemorate it as something rare and unprecedented. Such execution can be interrupted by a false alarm or by an unforeseen accident that arises in its doing.

The morning that Brutus and the other conspirators wanted to kill Caesar, it happened that he [Caesar] talked at length with Gn. Popilius Lena, one of the conspirators, and the others seeing this long talk were apprehensive that the said Popilius might reveal the conspiracy to Caesar. They were tempted to kill Caesar here, and not wait until he should be in the Senate: and they would have done so except that the discussion ended, and as it was seen that Caesar did not do anything extraordinary, they were reassured. These false alarms are to be regarded and considered with prudence, and so much more as they come about easily, for he who had his conscience blemished, readily believes that [everyone] talks of him. It is possible to hear a word spoken by another so that it will make your mind disturbed, and to believe that it has reference to you, and causes you either to discover the Conspiracy by flight, or to confuse the action by accelerating it before its time. And this will happen much more readily, when there are many who know of the Conspiracy.

As to accidents (because they are unforeseen) they cannot be demonstrated except by examples which should serve to make men cautious. Julio Belanti of Siena (of whom we have made mention above), because of the anger he had against Pandolfo, who had taken his daughter from him before he had given her to him as a wife, decided to kill him, and chose the time. Almost every day Pandolfo went to visit an infirm relative, and on his way passed by the house of Julio. That man, therefore, having observed this, arranged to have his conspirators in the house so arranged as

to kill Pandolfo when he passed; and putting them, armed, behind the door, and kept one at the window who should give a sign when Pandolfo was near the door. It happened that Pandolfo came, that man gave the sign, but he [Pandolfo] met a friend who stopped him, while some who were with him went on ahead, and seeing and hearing the noise of arms discovered the ambush, so that Pandolfo was saved, and Julio with his companions had to flee from Sienna. That accident of that meeting impeded that action and caused Julio's enterprise to be ruined. Against which accidents (as they are rare) no remedy can be made. It is very necessary to examine all those things that can happen and remedy them.

It remains now only to discuss the dangers that occur after the execution [of a plot]; of which there is only one, and this is when someone is left who will avenge the slain Prince. There may remain, then, his brothers, or his sons, or other adherents who expect [to inherit] the Principality; and they can be left either because of your negligence, or for the reasons mentioned above, and who would undertake this vengeance; as happened to Giovan Andrea Da Lampognano, who, together with his conspirators, had killed the Duke of Milan, who left a son and two brothers, who in time avenged the dead man. And truly in these cases, the conspirators are to be excused, for they had no remedy: but when some are left alive because of little prudence or from negligence, they [the conspirators] do not merit to be excused. Some conspirators from Furli killed the Count Girolamo, their Lord, and took his wife and children, who were little: and as it appeared to them they could not live securely unless they had made themselves lords of the fortress; but as the castellan did not want to give it up to them, Madonna Caterina (as the Countess was called) promised the conspirators that, if they allowed her to enter it, she would have it consigned to them, and that they might retain her children with them as hostages. Under this pledge, these men allowed her to enter, but she, as soon as she was inside the walls, reproached them for the death of her husband, and threatened them with every kind of vengeance: and to show that she did not care for her children, she showed them her genital member, saying that she had the means of making more. Thus those men [conspirators], short of counsel and having too late seen their error, suffered the penalty of their too little prudence by a perpetual exile. But of all the perils that can happen after the execution [of a plot],

there is none more certain and which is to be feared more than when the people are friends of the Prince whom you have killed; for against this the conspirators do not have any remedy and against which they can never be secure. As an example, there is Caesar, who, by having the people or Rome friendly, was avenged by them; for having driven the conspirators out of Rome, they were the cause that they were all killed at various times and in various places.

Conspiracies that are made against the Country are less perilous for those who plan them, than are those made against Princes; for in plotting them there are less dangers than in the other, in the execution of them they [dangers] are the same, and after the execution there is none. In plotting it there are not many dangers, for a citizen can aspire to power without manifesting his mind and designs to anyone: and if those aspirations of his are not interfered with, his enterprise will turn out happily; or if they are interfered with by some law, he can wait a time and attempt it by another way. This is understood in a Republic which is partly corrupted; for in an uncorrupted one (there not being any bad principles there) these thoughts cannot occur in its citizens. The citizens, therefore, through many ways and means can aspire to the Principality where they do not run the dangers of being crushed: as much because Republics are slower than a Prince, and are less apprehensive, and because of this are less cautious; as well as because they have more respect for their Great citizens, and because of this are more audacious and courageous in conspiracy against them.

Everyone has read of the Conspiracy of Cataline written by Sallust, and knows that after the Conspiracy was discovered Cataline not only stayed in Rome, but came into the Senate, and mouthed villainies at the Senate and the Consul, so great was the respect which that City had for its citizens. And when he had departed from Rome, and was already with the army, Lentulus and the others would not have been taken, except that they had letters in their handwriting which accused them manifestly. Hanno, a very great citizen in Carthage, aspiring to the Tyrancy, had arranged to poison all the Senate during the nuptials of a daughter, and afterwards make himself Prince. When this was learned, nothing was done in the Senate than to pass

a law which placed a limit to the expenses of banquets and nuptials, so great was the respect they had for his kind.

It is indeed true that in the execution of a Conspiracy against one's Country there are more difficulties and greater perils; for it is rare that your own forces of the conspiracy are sufficient against so many, and not everyone is Prince of an army, as were Caesar, or Agathocies, or Cleomenes, and the like, who, through force, quickly occupied their Country; for to such men the way is sure and easy, but others who do not have the support of force must accomplish their purpose either through deceit and cunning, or by foreign forces.

As to deceit and cunning, Pisistratus, the Athenian, having overcome the Megarians and, because of this, had acquired good will among the people [of Athens]; one morning he went outside wounded, saying that the Nobility had injured him from envy, and demanded that he be able to keep armed men with him as his guard. From this authority, he easily rose to such power, that he became Tyrant of Athens. Pandolfo Petrucci returned with other exiles to Sienna, and he was assigned the guard of the government plaza, as a mechanical [secondary] matter and which others had refused: none the less those armed men in time gave him such reputation, that in a little time he became Prince. Many others have employed other means and perseverance, and in a [short] space of time and without peril have succeeded. Those who have conspired to occupy their country with their own forces or with foreign armies, have had various success, according to their fortune. Cataline, mentioned before above, was ruined. Hanno (of whom we made mention above) not having succeeded with poison, armed many thousand [persons] of his partisans, and both he and they were killed. Some of the first citizens of Thebes, in order to make themselves Tyrants, called a Spartan army to their aid, and seized the Tyrancy of that City. So that examining all the Conspiracies against the Country, none or few will be found, which were crushed in their plotting; but all either met with success or failure in their execution. Once they are executed, they do not bring other dangers than those which the nature of the Principality in itself bring: for once one has become a Tyrant, he has his natural and ordinary perils which

befall a Tyranny, against which there are no other remedies than those which have been discussed above.

This is as much as has occurred to me to write of Conspiracies, and if I have discussed those only where the sword was used and not poison, it is because both result in the same effect. It is true that those using poison are more dangerous because they are more uncertain; for everyone does not have the opportunity [of employing this means], and it must be reserved for the one who does have, and this necessity of reserving it for some makes it dangerous. Further, for many reasons, a drink of poison need not be fatal, as happened with those who killed Commodus; here, he having thrown up the poison which they had given him, they were forced to strangle him in order to kill him.

Princes, therefore, have no greater enemy than a conspiracy; for, once a conspiracy is made against him, it either kills or defames him. For if the conspiracy succeeds, he dies; if it is discovered and he kills the conspirators, it will always be believed that it was an invention of that Prince to give vent to his cruelty and avarice against the blood and possessions of those whom he has killed. I do not want, therefore, to omit advising that Prince or that Republic against whom there had been conspiracies, that, when they have knowledge that there is a conspiracy manifest against them, before they engage in an enterprise to avenge it, to seek to learn very well its nature, and to measure well the conditions of both themselves and the conspirators; and if they find it [the conspiracy] to be big and powerful, they must never discover it until they are prepared with sufficient force to crush it, otherwise by doing so they will discover their own ruin: therefore they ought with every industry conceal it, for the conspirators, seeing themselves discovered, driven by necessity, will act without consideration. As an example, there are the Romans, who had left two legions of soldiers to guard the Capuans from the Samnites (as we said elsewhere); the Heads of those legions conspired together to oppress the Capuans: when this was learned at Rome, they commissioned Rutilius, the new Consul, that this be prevented; who, to lull the conspirators to sleep, had published that the Senate had reaffirmed the quartering of the legions in Capua. Which, being believed by those soldiers, and it appearing to them to have time to execute

their design, did not seek to accelerate the matter, and thus they remained until they begun to see that the Consul was separating them from each other; which thing generating suspicion in them, caused them to be discovered and to go on with their desire to execute the plot. Nor could there be a better example for both parties; for through this, it is seen how much men are dilatory in things when they believe they have time, and how ready they are when necessity drives them. Nor can a Prince or a Republic who want, for their own advantage, to defer the discovery [of a conspiracy] use better means than to hold out another opportunity to the conspirators through slyness, so that they expecting it, or it appearing to them to have time, the [Prince] or [Republic] will have time to castigate them. Whoever has done otherwise has accelerated his ruin, as did the Duke of Athens and Guglieimo De Pazzi. The Duke, having become Tyrant of Florence, and learning that he was being conspired against, caused (without otherwise examining the matter) one of the conspirators to be taken, which quickly made the others take up arms, and take the State away from him. Guglieimo being commissioner in the Val Di Chiano in MDI <sup>1501</sup>, and having learned that there was a conspiracy in Arezzo in favor of the Vitelli, to take that town away from the Florentines, quickly went to that City, and without taking into consideration the strength of the conspirators, or of his own, and without preparing any force for himself, by the counsel of his son, the Bishop, caused one of the conspirators to be taken; after which seizure the others took up arms and took the town away from the Florentines and Guglieimo from being Commissioner became a prisoner.

But when Conspiracies are weak they can and ought to be crushed without regard. However, the two methods used, although almost the contrary of each other, are not in any way to be imitated: The one is that of the above named Duke of Athens, who, to show his belief in having the good will of the Citizens of Florence, put to death one who had discovered the Conspiracy to him: the other is that of Dion, the Syracusan, who, to test the loyalty of anyone of whom he had suspicion, ordered Callipus in whom he confided, that he should pretend to make a Conspiracy against him, and both of these fared badly: for the one took away courage from the accusers and gave it to whoever wanted to conspire; the other made the way easy for his own death, but actually was his own Head of a Conspiracy against

himself, as was proved by experience, for Callipus (being able to plot against Dion without regard) plotted so well, that he took away from him the State and his life.

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## CHAPTER 7. WHENCE THAT WHEN CHANGES TAKE PLACE FROM LIBERTY TO SLAVERY, AND FROM SLAVERY TO LIBERTY, SOME ARE EFFECTED WITHOUT BLOODSHED, AND SOME ARE FULL OF IT

Some may doubt whence it arises that many changes that are made from liberty to tyranny, and contrarywise, some are done with bloodshed, some without. For (as is learned from history) in such changes, some times an infinite number of men have been killed, some times no one has even been injured, as happened in the change that Rome made from Kings to Consuls, where only the Tarquins were driven out and no one else suffered injury. Which depends on this, whether that State that is changed does so with violence, or not: for when it is effected with violence, it does so with injury to many; then in its ruin, it is natural that the injured ones would want to avenge themselves, and from this desire for vengeance results bloodshed and the death of men. But when that change of State is made by common consent of the general public who had made it great, then there is no reason when it is overthrown, for the said general public to harm anyone but the Head. And the State of Rome was of this kind, and so was the expulsion of the Tarquins, as also was the State of De' Medici in Florence, when in the year one thousand four hundred ninety four <sup>1494</sup> no one was harmed but themselves. And such changes do not come to be very dangerous; but those are indeed very dangerous that are made by those who have to avenge themselves, which were always of a sort to make those who read (and others) to become terrified: but because history is full of these examples, I shall omit them.

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## CHAPTER 8. HE WHO WANTS TO ALTER A REPUBLIC OUGHT TO CONSIDER ITS CONDITION

And if there has already been discussed above how a bad Citizen cannot work evil in a Republic which is not corrupt, this conclusion is fortified (in addition to the reasons that have already been given) by the example of Spurius Cassius and Manlius Capitolinus; this Spurius being an ambitious man, and wanting to assume extraordinary authority in Rome, and to gain over to himself the plebs by giving them many benefits such as selling them those fields which the Romans had taken from the Hernicians; this ambition of his was discovered by the Fathers [Senate], and he was held in so great suspicion, that in talking to the people and offering to give them that money which they had received for the grain that the public had caused to be sent from Sicily, they [the people] refused it entirely, as it appeared to them that Spurius was wanting to give them the price of their liberty. But if this people had been corrupt, it would not have refused the said price, but would have opened the road to that Tyranny which they had closed to him.

The example of this Manlius Capitolinus is even a better one, for, through this man, it is seen how much virtu of the mind and body, and how much good works done in favor of the Country are afterward cancelled by the evil ambition to rule; which (as is seen) sprung up in this man because of the envy he had for the honors given to Camillus, and he came to such a blindness of the mind, that without considering the customs of the City, nor examining its condition, which was not yet prepared to accept a bad form of Government, he set himself to create tumults in Rome against the Senate and against the laws of the country. Here we see the perfection of that City, and the excellence of its people; for in his case, no one of the Nobility (although they were ardent defenders of each other) moved to favor him, none of his relatives made any enterprise to aid him: and where in the case of the other accused [their families] were accustomed to appear downcast, dressed in black, all sadness, in order to obtain mercy in favor of the accused, with Manlius not one was seen. The Tribunes of the plebs who were accustomed always to favor the things that seemed to them to benefit the people, and especially when they were against the nobles, in this case

they united with the Nobles to suppress a common pestilence. The people of Rome, most desirous of preserving its own interests, and lovers of things brought against the Nobility, had at first shown many favors toward Manlius; none the less, the Tribunes cited him and brought his cause to the judgment of the people; [and] that people from being defenders became judges, without any regard condemned him to death. I do not believe, therefore, that there is an example in history more suitable to show the excellence of all the Institutions of this Republic as much as this, seeing that no one of that City moved to defend a Citizen full of every virtue, and who publicly and privately had performed many laudable deeds. For the love of country had more power over all of them than any other consideration; and they considered much more the present dangers to which they were exposed than his past merits, so that they liberated themselves by his death. And Titus Livius said; Thus ended the career of this man, who would have been memorable had he not been born in a free society.

Here two things are to be considered: the one, that glory is to be sought by other means in a corrupt City than in one which still lives with its institutions: the other, (which is almost the same as the first) that men in their dealings, and so much more in their greatest actions, ought to consider the times and accommodate themselves to them: and those who from a bad choice or from a natural inclination are not in accord with the times, most of the times live unhappily and their actions have bad endings; and, on the contrary, those live happily who are in accord with the times. And without doubt, from the words mentioned by the historian, it can be concluded, that if Manlius had been born in the times of Marius and Sulla, when the people were corrupt, and when he could have shaped them according to his ambition, he would have obtained those same results and successes as Marius and Sulla, and the others who after them aspired to the Tyranny. Thus, in the same way, if Sulla and Marius had lived in the times of Manlius, they would have been crushed in their first enterprise. For a man can well by his methods and evil ways begin to corrupt the people of a City, but it is impossible that the life of one is [long] enough to corrupt them so that they, through it, can enjoy its fruit; and even if it were possible by the length of time that he should do so, it would be impossible from the manner in which men proceed, who, being impatient, cannot delay a passion of theirs for a

long time, so that they deceive themselves in their own affairs, and especially in those which they desire very much. So that either from little patience, or from deceiving themselves, they attempt an enterprise at the wrong time, and would end badly.

To want to assume authority in a Republic, and install there a bad form of a Government, therefore, there is need to find the people corrupted by the times and that, little by little, from generation to generation, it is led to this corruption; these are led by necessity to this, unless they are (as has been discussed above) reinvigorated frequently by good examples or brought back by good laws to their principles. Manlius, therefore, would have been a rare and memorable man if he had been born in a corrupt City. And therefore the Citizens in a Republic who attempt an enterprise either in favor of Liberty or in favor of Tyranny, ought to consider the condition of things, and judge the difficulty of the enterprise; for it is as difficult and dangerous to want to make a people free who want to live in servitude, as to want to make a people slave who want to live free. And as it has been said above that men in their actions ought to consider the kind of times and proceed according to them, we will discuss this at length in the following chapter.

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## CHAPTER 9. HOW ONE MUST CHANGE WITH THE TIMES, IF HE WANTS TO HAVE GOOD FORTUNE ALWAYS

I have many times considered that the causes of the good and bad fortunes of men depend on the manner of their proceeding with the times. For it is seen that some men in their actions proceed with drive, others with consideration and caution. And as in the one and the other of these suitable limits are exceeded, not being able to observe the true course in either, errors are made: but he who comes to err less and have good fortune, is he who suits the times (as I have said) with his methods, and always proceeds according to the impulses of his nature. Everybody knows that Fabius Maximus proceeded with his army with consideration and caution, far removed from all impetuosity and all Roman audacity, and his good fortune was that his method well suited the times. For Hannibal having come into Italy a young man and with his fortunes fresh, and having already twice overcome the Roman People, and that Republic being almost deprived of her good troops and discouraged, could not have experienced better fortune than to have a Captain who, with his slowness and caution, had kept the enemy at bay. Nor could Fabius also have found times more suitable to his methods, from which his glory resulted. And that Fabius had done this from his nature, and not by choice, is seen when Scipio wanting to pass into Africa with those armies to put an end to the war, Fabius contradicted this so greatly, as one who could not break away from his methods and his customs. So that, if he had been [master], Hannibal would still be in Italy, as he [Fabius] could not see that the times had changed. But being born in a Republic where Citizens and dispositions were different, as was Fabius, who was excellent in the times needed to protract the war, and as was Scipio in the times suited to win it. From this it happens that a Republic has a greater vitality and a longer good fortune than a Principality, for it can accommodate itself better to the differences of the times, because of the diversity of its Citizens, than can a Principality. For a man who is accustomed to proceed in one manner, will never change, as has been said, and it happens of necessity that, when times change in a way not in accordance with his manner, he is ruined. Piero Soderini, mentioned previously several

times, proceeded in all his affairs with patience and humanity. He and his country prospered while the times were in conformity with his manner of proceeding: but afterwards when the times came when it was necessary to break that patience and humility, he did not know how to do it; so that, together with his country, he was ruined. Pope Julius II proceeded during all the time of his Pontificate with impetuosity and with fury, and because the times well accorded with him, all his enterprises turned out successfully for him. But if other times had existed requiring other counsel, of necessity he would have been ruined, for he would not have changed his manner nor his conduct.

And there are two reasons that we cannot thus change; The one, that we cannot resist that to which nature inclines us: The other, that having prospered greatly by one method of procedure, it is not possible to persuade them they can do well to proceed otherwise: whence it happens that fortune varies in a man, as it varies with the times, but he does not change his methods. The ruin of Cities also happens from the institutions of the Republic not changing with the times, as we discussed at length above. But they [changes] arrive later [in a Republic] because they suffer more in changing, for times will come when the whole Republic will be unsettled, so that the changing in method of procedure by one man will not suffice.

And as we have made mention of Fabius Maximus, who held Hannibal at bay, it appears to me proper to discuss in the following chapter, how a Captain (wanting in any way to come to an engagement with the enemy) can be impeded by the [enemy] from doing so.

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## CHAPTER 10. THAT A CAPTAIN CANNOT AVOID AN ENGAGEMENT IF THE ADVERSARY WANTS TO DO SO IN EVERY WAY

Gneius Sulpitius, appointed Dictator in the war against the Gauls, not wanting to commit his fortunes against the host, whose [position] was daily deteriorating from the disadvantage of the place. When an error is followed in which all or a greater part of men deceive themselves, I do not believe it is bad sometimes to refute it. Therefore, although I have many times before shown how much the actions concerning great things are different from those of ancient times, none the less, it does not appear to me superfluous at present to repeat it. For, if we deviate in any part from the institutions of the ancients, we deviate especially in military actions, where at present none of those things greatly esteemed by the ancients are observed. And this defect arises because Republics and Princes have imposed this charge on others, and to avoid the dangers have far removed themselves from this practice: and even if a King of our times is sometimes seen to go in person, it is not to be believed therefore that methods meriting greater praise will arise; for even if he does follow that practice, he does it for pomp only, and not from any other laudable reason. Yet these make less error in showing themselves with their armies while retaining for themselves the title of Commander, than do the Republics; and especially the Italian ones, which, trusting in others, do not understand anything of what pertains to war, and on the other hand wanting (in order to appear as a Prince to them) to decide things, make a thousand errors in such decisions. And although I have elsewhere discussed some, I do not now want to be silent on one of the most important.

When these indolent Princes, or effeminate Republics, sent out their Captain, the wisest commission that it appears to them to give him is this, when they impose on him that he does not come to an engagement under any circumstance, but rather above everything to guard against coming to battle: and in this, they appear to imitate the prudence of Fabius Maximus, who by delaying the fighting saved the state for the Romans; but they did not understand that the greater part of the time such a commission is null or harmful; for this conclusion ought to be made, that a Captain who wants to

stay in the field, cannot avoid an engagement any time the enemy wants to do so in any way. And this commission is nothing else, but to say — make the engagement at the convenience of the enemy, and not at your own. For to want to stay in the field and not undertake an engagement, there is no more secure remedy than to keep oneself and at least fifty thousand men a good distance from the enemy and then to keep good spies who, when they see him coming toward you, give you time to distance yourself. Another procedure is this, to shut yourself up in a City; and both of these proceedings are harmful. In the first, one leaves his country prey to the enemy, and a valiant Prince would rather try the fortune of battle than to lengthen the war with so much harm to his subjects. In the second proceeding defeat is manifest; for it will happen if you bring yourself with the army into a City, you will come to be besieged, and in a short time suffer hunger and you will come to surrender. So that to avoid an engagement by these two methods is most injurious. The method employed by Fabius Maximus of staying in a strong place is good when you have an army of so much virtue that the enemy does not dare to come to meet you inside your advantageous position. Nor can it be said that Fabius avoided an engagement, but rather that he wanted to do it at his advantage. For, if Hannibal had gone to meet him, Fabius would have awaited him and fought an engagement with him: but Hannibal never dared to combat with him in the manner of his [Fabius]. So that an engagement was avoided as much by Hannibal as by Fabius: but if one of them had wanted to in any way, the other would have had three remedies, that is, the two mentioned above, or flight.

That what I say is true is clearly seen from a thousand examples, and especially in the war the Romans carried on with Philip of Macedonia, father of Perseus; for Philip being assaulted by the Romans, decided not to come to battle, and in order not to do first as Fabius Maximus had done in Italy, posting himself with his army on the summit of a mountain, where he greatly fortified himself, judging that the Romans would not dare to go to meet him. But they did go and combat him, and drove him from the mountain, and no longer being able to resist, fled with the greater part of his forces. And what saved him from being entirely destroyed was the irregularity of the country, which prevented the Romans from pursuing him.

Philip, therefore, not wanting to come to battle, but being posted with his camp adjacent to the Romans, was forced to flee; and having learned from this experience that keeping on the mountains was not enough in wanting to avoid a battle, and not wanting to shut himself up in towns, decided to take the other method of staying many miles distant from the Roman camp. Whence, if the Romans were in one province, he would go into another: and thus whenever the Romans left one place, he would enter it. And seeing in the end that in prolonging the war by this means only worsened his condition, and that his subjects were oppressed now by him, now by the enemy, he decided to try the fortune of battle, and thus came to a regular engagement with the Romans.

It is useful, therefore, not to combat when the armies have such conditions as the army of Fabius had, and which that of C. Sulpicius did not have, that is, to have an army so good that the enemy will not dare to come to meet you within your strongholds; or that he is in your territory without having taken many footholds, so that he suffers from lack of supplies. And in this case the procedure is useful, for the reasons that Titus Livius says; No one should commit his fortune against a host, which time and the disadvantage of the place makes to deteriorate daily. But in any other case, the engagement cannot be avoided without danger and dishonor to you. For to flee (as Philip did) is as being routed, and with more disgrace when less proof is given of your virtue. And if he [Philip] had succeeded in saving himself, another would not have succeeded who was not aided by the country, as he was. No one will ever say that Hannibal was not a master of war; and if, when he was at the encounter with Scipio in Africa, he should have seen advantage in prolonging the war, he would have done so: and for the future (he being a good Captain and having a good army) he would have been able to do as Fabius did in Italy, but not having done so, it ought to be believed that some important reason had persuaded him. For a Prince who has an army put together, and sees that from a want of money or of friends he cannot maintain such an army for any length of time, is completely mad if he does not try the fortune [of battle] before such an army would be dissolved, because by waiting he loses for certain, but by trying he may be able to win. There is something else to be esteemed greatly, which is, that in losing one ought also to want to acquire glory: and there is more glory in

being overcome by force, than by some other evil which causes you to lose. So must Hannibal also have been constrained by this necessity. And on the other hand Scipio, when Hannibal had delayed the engagement and lacked sufficient courage to go to meet him in his strongholds, did not suffer, for he had already defeated Syphax and acquired so much territory in Africa that he was able to remain there as secure and with convenience as in Italy. This did not happen to Hannibal when he was encountering Fabius, nor to those Gauls who were at the encounter with Sulpicius. So much less also can that man avoid an engagement who with the army assaults the country of others; for if he wants to enter the country of the enemy, he must (if the enemy comes to an encounter with him) come to battle with him; and if he besieges a town, he is so much more obliged to come to battle; as happened in our times to Duke Charles of Burgundy, who being in camp before Moratto, a town of the Swiss, was assaulted and routed by them; and as happened to the French army, while encamping before Novara, was routed by the Swiss in the same way.

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## CHAPTER 11. THAT HE WHO HAS TO DO WITH MANY, EVEN THOUGH HE IS INFERIOR, AS LONG AS HE RESISTS THE FIRST ATTACK, WINS

The power of the Tribunes of the plebs in the City of Rome was great and necessary, as has been discussed by us many times, because otherwise it would not have been able to place a restraint on the ambitions of the Nobles, who would have a long time before corrupted that Republic which was not corrupted. None the less, as in all human things (as has been said at other times) there is some inherent evil hidden which causes new accidents to spring up, it is necessary to provide against these by new institutions. The authority of the Tribunes had become insolent and formidable to the Nobility and to all Rome, and some evil would have arisen harmful to Roman liberty if the means had not been shown by Appius Claudius with which they could protect themselves against the ambitions of the Tribunes; this was that there was always to be found among themselves some one who was either afraid, or corruptible, or a lover of the common good, whom they would dispose to be opposed to the decisions of those others who should act contrary to the wishes of the Senate. Which remedy was a great tempering force against so much authority, and for a long time benefited Rome. Which thing has made me consider that whenever there are many powerful ones united against another powerful one, even though they all together may be more powerful than he, none the less hope ought always to be placed more in that one by itself and less strong than in the greater number of them even though stronger. For (taking into account all those things of which one can take advantage better than the many, which may be infinite) this will always occur, that by using a little industry he will be able to disunite the many and make weak that body which was strong. I do not want here to cite ancient examples, of which there are many, but I want those happening in our times to suffice me. In the year one thousand four hundred eighty four<sup>1484</sup> all Italy conspired against the Venetians, and then when they had lost everything and could no longer keep an army in the field, they corrupted Signor Lodovico who was governing Milan, and by this corruption made an accord in which they not only recovered the lost territories, but they usurped part of the State of Ferrara. And thus, those

who had lost in war, remained superior in peace. A few years ago all the world conspired against France, none the less before the end of the war had been seen, Spain rebelled from its confederates and made an accord with them [France], so that the other confederates were constrained a little later also to make an accord with them. So that without doubt, judgment ought always to be made when one sees a war fought by many against one, that the one will remain superior, if he is of such virtu that he can resist the first shock and await events by temporizing; for, if he cannot do this, he is faced with a thousand dangers, as happened to the Venetians in eight<sup>1508</sup>, who, if they could have temporized with French the army, and have had time to win over to themselves some of those colleagued against them, would have escaped that ruin; but not having armed men of such virtu able to temporize with the enemy, and because of this not having time to separate anyone, they were ruined: For it is seen that the Pope, after having recovered his possessions, made friends with them; and so did Spain: and both of these two Princes very willingly would have saved the State of Lombardy for the Venetians against the French, in order not to make them so powerful in Italy, if they had been able. The Venetians, therefore, were able to give up part in order to save the rest, which, if that had been done it in time before it appeared to have been a necessity, and before the war was begun, would have been a most wise proceeding; but once the war was set in motion, it would have been disgraceful, and perhaps of little profit. But before the war began, a few of the Citizens of Venice were able to see the danger, very few to see the remedy, and none advised it. But to return to the beginning of this discourse, I conclude that just as the Roman Senate had a remedy for saving the country from the ambitions of the Tribunes, who were many, so also any Prince will have a remedy, who is assaulted by many, any time he knew how to use with prudence the means suitable to disunite them.

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## CHAPTER 12. HOW A PRUDENT CAPTAIN OUGHT TO IMPOSE EVERY NECESSITY FOR FIGHTING ON HIS SOLDIERS, AND TAKE THEM AWAY FROM THE ENEMY

At another time we have discussed how useful necessity is to human actions, and to what glory they have been led by it; and it has been written by some moral Philosophers that the hands and the tongue of men, two most noble instruments to ennoble him, would not have operated perfectly, nor brought human works to the heights to which it has been seen they were conducted, unless they had been pushed by necessity. The ancient Captains having recognized the vertu of such necessity, therefore, and how much it caused the spirits of the soldiers to become obstinate in the fighting, did everything they could to see that the soldiers were constrained by it. And on the other hand they used all industry so that the enemy be freed [from fighting]; and because of this they often opened to the enemy that road which they could have closed, and closed to their own soldiers that which they could have left open. Whoever, therefore, desires that a City be defended obstinately, or that an army in the field should fight, ought above every other thing to endeavor to put such necessity into the hearts of those who have to fight. Whence a prudent Captain who has to go to destroy a City, ought to measure the ease or difficulty of the siege by finding out and considering what necessity constrains its inhabitants to defend themselves; and when much necessity is found which constrains them to the defense, he judges the siege will be difficult, if otherwise, he judges it to be easy. From this it follows that towns, after a rebellion, are more difficult to acquire than they were in the original acquisition; for in the beginning, not having cause to fear punishment because they had not given offense, they surrender easily: but if it appears to them (they having rebelled) to have given offense, and because of this fearing punishment, they become difficult under siege.

Such obstinacy also arises from the natural hatred the neighboring Princes and Republics have for one another, which proceeds from the ambition to dominate and the jealousy of their State; especially if they are Republics, as

happened in Tuscany: which rivalry and contention has made, and always will make, difficult the destruction of one by the other. Whoever, therefore, considers well the neighbors of the City of Florence and the neighbors of the City of Venice, will not marvel (as many do) that Florence has expended more in war and acquired less than Venice; for it arises from the fact that the Venetians did not have neighbors as obstinate in their defense as had Florence, and the neighboring Cities of Venice being accustomed to live under a Prince and not free; and those which are accustomed to servitude often esteem less a change of masters, and rather many times they desire it. So that Venice (although she had neighbors more powerful than did Florence), because of having found these [neighboring] lands more obstinate, was able rather to overcome them than that other [Florence], since it is surrounded entirely by free States.

A Captain ought, therefore, (to return to the beginning of this discourse) when he assaults a town, to endeavor with all diligence to deprive the defenders of such necessity, and thus also its obstinacy; promising them pardon if they have fear of punishment, and if they have fear of losing their liberty, to assure them he is not contriving against the common good, but against the few ambitious ones in the City. This has often facilitated the enterprise and the capture of towns. And although similar [artifices] are easily recognized, and especially by prudent men, none the less the people are often deceived; they, in their intense desire for present peace, close their eyes to any other snare that may be hidden under these large promises, and in this way, an infinite number of Cities have fallen into servitude; as happened to Florence in recent times, and to Crassus and his army [in ancient times] who, although he recognized the vain promises of the Parthians which were made to deprive the soldiers of the necessity to defend themselves, none the less, being blinded by the offer of peace which was made to them by their enemies, he could not keep them obstinate [in their resistance], as is observed reading of the life of [Crassus] in detail.

I say, therefore, that the Samnites, because of the ambitions of a few and outside the conventions of the accord, overran and pillaged the fields of the confederate Romans; and then sent Ambassadors to Rome to ask for peace, offering to restore the things pillaged and to give up as prisoners the

authors of the tumults and the pillaging, but were rebuffed by the Romans: and [the Ambassadors] having returned to Samnium without hope for any accord, Claudius Pontius, then Captain of the Army of the Samnites, pointed out in a notable oration that the Romans wanted war in any event, and even though they themselves should desire peace, necessity made them pursue the war, saying these words: War is just, where it is from necessity, and where there is no hope but in arms; upon which necessity he based his hope of victory with his soldiers.

And in order not to return to this subject further, it appears proper to me to cite those Roman examples which are more worthy of annotation. C. Manlius was with his army encountering the Veientes, and a part of the Veientan army having entered into the entrenchments of Manlius, Manlius ran with a band to their succor, and so that the Veientans would not be able to save themselves, occupied all the entrances to the camp: whence the Veienti, seeing themselves shut in, began to fight with such fury that they killed Manlius, and would have attacked all the rest of the Romans, if one of the Tribunes by his prudence had not opened a way for them to get out. Whence it is seen that when necessity constrained the Veienti to fight, they fought most ferociously: but when they saw the way open, they thought more of flight than of fighting. The Volscians and Equeans had entered with their armies into the confines of Rome. They [the Romans] sent Consuls against them. So that the army of the Volscians, of which Vettius Messius was Head, in the heat of battle found itself shut in between its own entrenchments which were occupied by the Romans and the other Roman army; and seeing that they needs much die or save themselves by the sword, he [Messius] said these words to his soldiers; Follow me, neither walls nor ditches block you, but only men armed as you are: of equal vertu, you have the superiority of necessity, that last but best weapon. So that this necessity is called by T. Livius THE LAST AND BEST WEAPON. Camillus, the most prudent among all the Roman Captains, having already entered the City of the Veienti with his army, to facilitate its taking and to deprive the enemy of the last necessity of defending themselves, commanded, in a way that the Veienti heard, that no one was to be harmed of those who should be disarmed. So that they threw down their arms and the City was taken

almost without bloodshed. Which method was afterwards observed by many Captains.

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### CHAPTER 13. WHERE ONE SHOULD HAVE MORE CONFIDENCE, EITHER IN A GOOD CAPTAIN WHO HAS A WEAK ARMY, OR IN A GOOD ARMY WHICH HAS A WEAK CAPTAIN

Coriolanus, having become an exile from Rome, went to the Volscians, where he raised an army with which he went to Rome in order to avenge himself against his Countrymen; but he left there more because of his affection for his mother than of the power of the Romans. On which occasion T. Livius says it was because of this that it was recognized that the Roman Republic grew more from the vertu of the Captains than of its soldiers, seeing that the Volscians had in the past been defeated, and that they only won because Coriolanus was their Captain. And although Livius holds such an opinion, none the less it is seen in many instances in history where soldiers without a Captain have given marvelous proof of their vertu, and to have been better ordered and more ferocious after the death of their Consuls, than before they died; as occurred with the army that the Romans had in Spain under the Scipio's which, after the death of its two Captains was able through its own vertu not only to save itself, but to defeat the enemy and preserve that province for the Republic. So that, everything considered, many examples will be found where only the vertu of the soldiers won the day, and other examples where only the vertu of the Captains produced the same result; so that it can be judged that they both have need for each other.

And it may be well here to consider first, which is more to be feared, a good army badly captained, or a good Captain accompanied by a bad army. And following the opinion of Caesar in this, both the one and the other ought to be little esteemed. For when he went into Spain against Afranius and Petreius who had a [good] army, he said he cared little of that: He was here going against an army without a leader, indicating the weakness of the Captains. On the other hand, when he went into Thessaly against Pompey, he said, I go against a leader without an army. Another thing to be considered is whether it is easier for a good Captain to create a good army, or a good army to create a good Captain. Upon this I say that the question

appears to be decided, for it is much easier for the many good to find or instruct one so that he becomes good, than the one to from the many. Lucullus, when he was sent against Mithradates, was completely inexpert in war: none the less, that good army in which there were very many good Heads, soon made him a good Captain. The Romans, because of a lack of men, armed many slaves and gave them to Sempronius Gracchus to be trained, who in a brief time made a good army of them. After Pelopidas and Epaminondas (as we said elsewhere) had delivered Thebes, their country, from the servitude of the Spartans, in a short time made very good soldiers of the Theban peasants, who were able not only to sustain the attack of the Spartan troops, but to overcome them. So the matter is equal; for one good finds another. None the less, a good army without a good Captain often becomes insolent and dangerous, as was the case with the army of Macedonia after the death of Alexander, and with the veteran soldiers in the civil wars [of Rome]. So that I believe that more reliance can be had in a Captain who has time to instruct his men and the facilities for arming them, than in an insolent army with a Head tumultuously made by them. The glory and praise of those Captains, therefore, is to be doubled, who not only had to defeat the enemy, but, before they met them hand to hand, were obliged to train their army and make them good. For in this is shown that double virtu that is so rare, that if the same task was given to many [Captains], they would not have been esteemed and reputed as much as they are.

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## CHAPTER 14. WHAT EFFECTS THE NEW INVENTION AND NEW VOICES HAVE THAT APPEAR IN THE MIDST OF BATTLE

Of what importance is some new incident which arises from something new that is seen or heard in conflicts and battles, is shown in many instances, and especially in the example that occurred in the battle which the Romans fought with the Volscians, where Quintus seeing one wing of his army give way, began to shout strongly that they should hold firm, as the other wing of the army was victorious. With which words he gave new courage to his soldiers and dismayed the enemy, so that he won. And if such voices have such great effects in a well organized army, they have even greater effect in a tumultuous and badly organized one, for all are moved by a similar impulse. And I want to cite a notable example which occurred in our own times. A few years ago the City of Perugia was divided into two parties, the Oddi and the Baglioni. The latter ruled and the former were exiles: who, having gathered an army through their friends, and established themselves in several towns adjacent to Perugia; one night, with the aid of their partisans, they entered that City, and without being discovered they succeeded in taking the piazza. And as that City had the streets in all of its parts barred by chains, the Oddi forces had one man in front, who broke the fastenings of the chains with an iron club, so that horses could pass; and only the one which opened on the plaza remained to be broken, and the cry to arms already had been raised; and he who was breaking [the chains] being pressed by the disturbance of those who came behind, could not, because of this, raise his arms to break the chain, in order to manage this called to them to fall back; which cry passing from rank to rank, saying “fall back”, began to make the last [rank] flee, and one by one the others followed with such fury, that they were routed by themselves: and thus the designs of the Oddi were in vain because of so slight an accident. Which shows the necessity of discipline in an army is not only necessary for them to be able to combat with order, but also to keep every slight accident from disorganizing them. Because not for any other reason are the undisciplined multitudes useless in war, as every noise, every voice, every uproar confuses them, and makes them flee. And therefore a good Captain, among his other

orders, ought to arrange who those should be who have to take up his voice [commands] and transmit them to others, and he should accustom his soldiers not to believe anything except those of his Heads, and those Heads of his to say nothing except what he commissions them to; it has often been seen that the nonobservance of this rule has caused the greatest misfortunes.

As to seeing new things, every Captain ought to endeavor to make some appear while the armies are engaged, which will give courage to his men and take it away from the enemy, because among incidents which will give you the victory, this is most efficacious. For which, the testimony of C. Sulpicius, the Roman Dictator, can be cited, who, coming to battle with the Gauls, armed all the teamsters and camp followers, and making them mount mule's and other beasts of burden, and with arms and ensigns made them appear as mounted forces; he placed them behind a hill, and commanded that at a given signal at the time the battle was hottest, they should discover and show themselves to the enemy. Which thing thus organized and carried out, gave the Gauls so much terror, that they lost the day. And, therefore, a good Captain ought to do two things: the one, to see that with some of these new inventions to dismay the enemy; the other, to be prepared, if these things are done against him by the enemy, to be able to discover them and make them turn useless; as did the King of India against Semiramis, who [the Queen] seeing that the King had a good number of elephants, to frighten him and to show him that hers were also plentiful, formed many with the hides of buffaloes and cows, and these she placed on camels and sent them forward; but the deceit being recognized by the King, that design turned out not only useless but damaging to her. The Dictator Mamercus was waging war against the Fidenati, who, in order to dismay the Roman army, arranged that, in the ardor of battle there should issue forth from Fidene, a number of soldiers with fire on their lances, so that the Romans, occupied by the novelty of the thing, would break ranks [and create confusion] among themselves. Here it is to be noted, that when such inventions contain more of reality than fiction, they can be shown to men, because as they appear strong, their weakness will not be readily discovered; as did C. Sulpicius with the muleteers. For where there is intrinsic weakness, if they come too near, they are soon discovered, and

cause you more harm than good, as did the elephants to Semiramis, and the fire to the Fidentes; which, although they did in the beginning disturb the army a little, none the less, when the Dictator saw through them, and, begun to shout to them, saying they should be ashamed to flee the smoke like insects, and shouted to them that they should return to the fight. [And] With their torches destroy Fidenes, which your benefits could not placate, he turned that artifice used by the Fidenati useless, and caused them to be the losers of the fight.

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## CHAPTER 15. THAT AN ARMY SHOULD HAVE ONE, AND NOT MANY, IN CHARGE, AND THAT MANY COMMANDERS ARE HARMFUL

The Fidenati having revolted, and having killed the Colony that the Romans had sent to Filene, the Roman, in order to remedy this insult, created four Tribunes with Consular power, one of whom they left to guard Rome, and the other three were sent against the Fidenati and the Veienti; who [the Tribunes], because they were divided among themselves and disunited, gained dishonor but experienced no injury. For this dishonor they themselves were the cause, the virtue of the soldiers was the cause of their not receiving injury. Whence the Romans, seeing this disaster, had recourse to the creation of a Dictator, so that one alone would restore that which three had destroyed. Whence the uselessness of many commanders in an army, or in a town that has to be defended is recognized: and Titus Livius could not more clearly state it with these forcible words: Three Tribunes with Consular power, proved how useless it was to give the conduct of the war to any; for each having his own counsel, each different from the others, they afforded the enemy [hosts] an opportunity to take advantage of the situation. And although this is a good example to prove the disorder which a plurality of commanders create in a war, I want to cite some others, both modern and ancient, to clarify this further. In the year one thousand five hundred <sup>1500</sup>, after King Louis XII of France had retaken Milan, he sent his forces to Pisa to restore her to the Florentines; where [Florence] sent as Commissioners Giovanbattista Ridolfi and Luca Antonio Degli Albizzi. And as Giovanbattista was a man of reputation and the older [of the two], Luca left the management of everything to him: and although he did not show his ambition by opposing him, he showed it by his silence and by the indifference and contempt toward everything, so that he did not aid him in the actions in the field either with deeds or counsel, as if he had been a man of no importance. But then the very opposite was seen when Giovanbattista, because of certain incidents that occurred, had to return to Florence; then Luca remaining alone showed how much he was worth by his courage, industry, and counsel, all of which were lost as long as there was a colleague. I want again to cite in confirmation of this the words of Titus

Livius, who, referring to the Romans sending of Quintus and Agrippa, his colleague, against the Equeans, tells of how Agrippa wanted the entire administration of the war be given to Quintus, and said: For the success of the administration of great things, the principal authority is to exist in one man. Which is contrary to that which is done by our Republics and Princes today, who sent more than one Commissioner or more than one Head to [different] places in order to administer them better, which created an inestimable confusion. And if the causes of the ruin of the Italian and French armies of our times should be sought, this would be found to have been the most powerful of [all the] causes. And it may be truly concluded that it is better to send only one man of prudence on an expedition, than two most valiant men together with the same authority.

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## CHAPTER 16. THAT TRUE VIRTU IS DIFFICULT TO FIND IN DIFFICULT TIMES, AND IN EASY TIMES IT IS NOT MEN OF VIRTU THAT PREVAIL, BUT THOSE WHO HAVE MORE FAVOR BECAUSE OF RICHES OR [POWERFUL] RELATION

It has always been, and always will be, that rare and great men are neglected in a Republic in times of peace; for through envy of their reputation which that virtu has given them, there are in such times many other citizens, who want to be, not only their equals, but their superiors. And of this, there is a good account by Thucydides, the Greek historian, who shows that the Athenian Republic having become superior in the Peloponnesian war, and having checked the pride of the Spartans, and almost subjected all of Greece, arose in reputation so much that she designed to occupy Sicily. This enterprise came to be debated in Athens. Alcibiades and some other Citizens counselled that it be done, as they thought more of honor and little of the public good, and planning to be heads of such an enterprise. But Nicias, who was first among men of reputation in Athens, dissuaded her, and the major reason he cited in addressing the people (as they had faith in him) was this, that in counselling her not to undertake this war, he was counselling something that was not being done for his interest, for as long as Athens was at peace he knew there were an infinite number of men who wanted to take precedence over him, but in making war he knew no citizen would be his equal or superior. It is seen, therefore, that in Republics there is this evil of having little esteem for men of valor in tranquil times. Which thing causes them to be indignant in two ways: the one, to see themselves deprived of their rank; the other, to see unworthy men [and] of less capacity than they become their colleagues and superiors. This defect in Republics has caused much ruin, for those Citizens who see themselves deprecated undeservedly, and knowing that the reasons for it are the easy and unperilous times, endeavor to disturb the Republic by setting new wars in motion to its detriment.

And in thinking of what those remedies could be, there are two to be found: the one, to keep the Citizens poor so that their wealth and lack of virtu

should not enable them to corrupt either themselves or others; the other, to organize themselves for war in a way that war may always be undertaken and that there would always be undertaken and that there would always be need for Citizens of reputation, as did Rome in her early times. For as that City always kept armies [outside] in the field, there was always a place for men of virtue; nor could rank be taken away from one who merited it, and given to one who did not merit it. For, even if this was done some time either by mistake or by way of trial, so many disorders and dangers would occur to it that they quickly returned to the true course. But other Republics, which are not organized as she [Rome] was, and who wage war only when necessity constrains them to, cannot defend themselves from such inconvenience, but rather always run into them; and disorders will always arise when that virtuous but neglected Citizen is vindictive, and has reputation and adherents in that City. And if the City of Rome was defended from this [evil] for a time, and (after she had overcome Carthage and Antioch, as was said elsewhere) no longer fearing war, she seemed to be able to commit [the conduct of] the armies to whoever wanted it, not regarding virtue as much as the other qualities which would obtain for him the good will of the people. For it is seen that Paulus Emilius was refused the Consulship many times, nor was he made Consul until the Macedonian war had sprung up, which being thought perilous, [the command of the army] was committed to him by the consent of all the City.

Many wars having occurred in our City of Florence after [the year] one thousand four hundred ninety four <sup>1494</sup>, and the Florentine Citizens all having given bad proof [of their ability], by chance there was found in the City one who showed in what manner the army should be commanded; this was Antonio Giacomini: and as long as they had dangerous wars to wage, all the ambition of her citizens ceased, and he had no one as competition in the choice as Commissary and Head of the armies: but when a war was to be waged where there was no doubt [of the outcome], and where there were to be only honors and rank [obtained], many competitors were to be found; so that having to select three Commissaries to besiege Pisa, he [Antonio] was left out. And although the evil that should ensue to the public for not having sent Antonio was not evident, none the less a conjecture of it could be made most easily; for the Pisans not having provisions with which to

defend themselves, would have been in such straits that they quickly would have given themselves up to the discretion of the Florentines, if Antonio had not been there [in command]. But being besieged by Heads who did not know either how to press them or force them, they were so long delayed, that the City of Florence purchased it [Pisa]. Such an indignity might well have had an effect on Antonio and it was necessary that he should have been good and very patient not to have desired to avenge himself either by the ruin of the City (he being able to) or by the injury of some particular citizen. From which a Republic ought to guard itself, as will be discussed in the ensuing chapter.

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## CHAPTER 17. THAT ONE WHO HAS BEEN OFFENDED OUGHT NOT TO BE PLACED IN ANY ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNMENT OF IMPORTANCE

A Republic ought to take great care not to promote anyone to any important administration who has been done a notable injury by someone. Claudius Nero (who had left the army which he had confronting Hannibal, and with a part of it went into the Marca to meet the other Consul in order to combat Hasdrubal before he could join up with Hannibal) found himself in Spain in front of Hasdrubal, and having locked him with his army in a place where he had to fight Hasdrubal at a disadvantage to himself, or to die of hunger; but he was so astutely detained by Hasdrubal with certain proposals of an accord, that he escaped and took away his [Nero's] opportunity of crushing him. Which thing being known in Rome, the Senate and the People became greatly saddened, and he was discussed in shame throughout the entire City, not without great dishonor and indignity to him. But after having been made Consul and sent to encounter Hannibal, he took the above mentioned proceeding, which was most dangerous: so that all Rome remained troubled and in doubt until there came the news of the rout of Hasdrubal. And Claudius, afterwards being asked what the reason was why he had taken so dangerous a proceeding, in which without any extreme necessity he had almost gambled away the liberty of Rome, he answered that he had done so because he knew that if it succeeded, he would reacquire that glory that he had lost in Spain; and if he did not succeed, and their proceeding had had a contrary ending, he knew he would be avenged against that City and those Citizens who had so ungratefully and indiscreetly offended him. And if these passions could so exist in a Roman Citizen, and in those times when Rome was yet incorrupt, one ought to think how much they could exist in a Citizen of a City that was not like she was. And as similar disorders which arise in Republics cannot be given a certain [adequate] remedy, it follows that it is impossible to establish a perpetual Republic, because in a thousand unforeseen ways its ruin may be caused.

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## CHAPTER 18. NOTHING IS MORE WORTHY OF A CAPTAIN THAN TO PENETRATE THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE ENEMY

Epaminondas the Theban said nothing was more necessary and more useful for a Captain, than to know the decisions and proceedings of the enemy. And as such knowledge is difficult [to obtain], so much more praise does he merit who acts in a way that he conjectures it. And it is not so difficult to learn the designs of the enemy as it is sometimes difficult to understand his actions, and not as much his actions that he does at a distance, as those he does at the moment and near by. For it has happened many times that (the battle having lasted until nightfall) he who had won believed he had lost, and he who had lost believed he had won. Such an error had made men decide things contrary to the welfare of the one who made the decision; as happened to Brutus and Cassius, who by such an error lost the war, for Brutus having won on his wing, Cassius thought it had lost, and that the whole army had been routed, and despairing of his safety because of this error, killed himself. And in our times in the engagement which Francis, King of France, made in Lombardy at Santa Cecilia against the Swiss, night having fallen, that part of the Swiss who had not been broken believed themselves to have won, not knowing that the others had been routed and killed: which error caused them not to save themselves, for they awaited the morning to fight at such a disadvantage to them, that they also made another error; and this same error came near ruining the army of the Pope and of Spain, which, on the false news of victory, crossed the Po, and, if it had advanced any further, would have become prisoners of the French, who were victorious.

Such a similar error occurred in the camps of the Romans and those of the Equeans, where Sempronius the Consul with his army having come to an encounter with the enemy, and the battle having been enkindled, they fought all day until night with varying fortunes for the one and the other: the one went with the Consul, the other with one Tempanius, a Centurion, through whose virtue that day the Roman army was not entirely routed. When morning had come, the Roman Consul (without knowing anything more of the enemy) withdrew himself toward Rome, and the army of the Equeans did similarly; for each of these believed that the enemy had won,

and therefore each one retreated without regard to leaving their encampment a prey [to the other]. It happened that Tempanius, who was with the rest of the army and also retreating, learned from certain wounded of the Equeans that their Captains had departed and had abandoned their encampments; whence he, on this news, returned to the Roman encampments, and saved them, and afterwards sacked those of the Equeans, and returned to Rome victorious. Which victory (as is seen) consisted only in which of them first learned of the disorder of the enemy. Here it ought to be noted that it can often occur that two armies confronting themselves, are in the same disorder, and suffering from the same necessity; and he will become the victor who is the first to learn of the necessity of the other.

I want to give a domestic and modern example of this. In the year one thousand four hundred ninety eight <sup>1498</sup>, when the Florentines had a big army before Pisa and pressed that city strongly; the Venetians having undertaken its protection and seeing no other way of saving her, decided to make a diversion from that war by assaulting from another side the dominion of the Florentines, and raising a powerful army, they entered it by way of the Val Di Lamona, and occupied the Borgo Di Marradi, and besieged the Rock [Fort] of Castiglione, which is on the top of the hill. The Florentines hearing of this, decided to succor Marradi, without diminishing the force they had before Pisa: and raising new infantry and organizing new cavalry forces, they sent them there, of which the heads were Jacopo Quarto D'Appian, Lord of Piombino, and the Count Rinuccio Da Marciano, When these forces were brought to the hill above Marradi, the enemy [Venetians] withdrew from around Castiglione and retired into the Borgo: and both of these armies having been facing each other for several days, both suffered from [lack of] provision and every other necessary thing; and one not daring to face the other, nor one knowing of the disorganization of the other, both decided to raise their camp the following morning and withdraw, the Venetians toward Berzighelli and Faenza, the Florentines toward Casaglia and the Mugello. When morning came, therefore, and each of the camps had commenced to send away its baggage, by chance a woman departed from the Borgo Da Marradi, and came toward the Florentine camp, being secure because of her old age and poverty, and desired to see certain of her

people who were in the camp: from whom the Captains of the Florentine forces learning that the Venetian camp was departing, they were encouraged by this news, and changing their counsel, went after them, as if they had dislodged the enemy; and wrote to Florence that they had repulsed [the Venetians] and won the war. Which victory did not result from anything else other than to have learned before the enemy that they were departing, which news, if it had first gone to the other side, it would have had the same result against us.

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## CHAPTER 19. WHETHER OBSEQUIES ARE MORE NECESSARY THAN PUNISHMENT IN RULING A MULTITUDE

The Roman Republic was disturbed by the enmity between the Nobles and the Plebs: none the less, when a war occurred [to them], they sent out Quintius and Appius Claudius with the armies. Appius, because he was cruel and rude in commanding, was ill obeyed by his soldiers, so that being almost overcome he fled from his province. Quintius, because he was of a benign and humane disposition, had his soldiers obedient to him, and brought back the victory. Whence it appears that it is better to be humane than haughty, gentle than cruel, when governing a multitude. None the less, Cornelius Tacitus (with whom many other writers are in agreement) in one of his opinions concludes the contrary, when he says: In governing the multitude Punishment is worth more than Obsequies. And in considering if it is possible to reconcile both of these opinions, I say that you have to rule men who ordinarily are colleagues, or men who are always your subjects. If they are your colleagues, punishment cannot entirely be used, nor that severity which Cornelius recommends: and as the Roman Pleb had equal sovereignty with the Nobility in Rome, anyone who had temporarily become a Prince could not manage them with cruelty and rudeness. And many times it is seen that better results were achieved by the Roman Captains who made themselves beloved by the armies, and who managed them with obsequies, than those who made themselves extraordinarily feared, unless they were already accompanied by an excessive virtue, as was Manlius Torquatus: But he who commands subjects (of whom Cornelius talks about), ought to turn rather to punishment than to gentleness, so that they should not become insolent and trample on you, because of your too great easiness. But this also ought to be moderate so that hatred is avoided, as making himself hated never returns good to a Prince. And the way of avoiding [hatred] is to let the property of the subjects alone; as to blood (when one is not under the desire of rapine), no Prince desires it unless it is necessary, and this necessity rarely arises; when it is mixed with rapine, it always arises, nor will there ever be reasons and the desire for shedding it lacking, as has been discussed at length in another treatise on this matter. Quintius, therefore,

merits more praise than Appius; and the opinion of Cornelius within his own limitations, and not in the cases observed by Appius, merits to be approved. And as we have spoken of punishment and obsequies, it does not appear to me superfluous to show that an example of humanity can influence the Faliscians more than arms.

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## CHAPTER 20. AN EXAMPLE OF HOW HUMANITY DID INFLUENCE THE FALISCIANS MORE THAN ALL THE POWER OF ROME

When Camillus was with his army around the City of The Faliscians, and besieging it, a [school] teacher of the more noble children of that City, thinking to ingratiate himself with Camillus and the Roman people, under pretext of exercising them, went with them outside the City and led them all to the camp before Camillus, and presenting them to him said, that by means of them [the children] that town would be given into his hands: Which offer was not only not accepted by Camillus, but having had the teacher stripped and his hands bound behind his back, put a rod into the hands of each of the children, made him be beaten by them back to the town. When this was learned by those citizens, they liked the humanity and integrity of Camillus so much, that they decided to give up the town to him without wanting to defend themselves further. Whence it is to be observed by this true example how some times an act of humanity and full of charity can have more influence on the minds of men, than a ferocious and violent act; and that many times that province and that City, which, with arms, instruments of war, and every other human power, could not be conquered, was conquered by an example of humanity, of mercy, of chastity, or of generosity. Of which there are many other examples in the histories (in addition to this). And it is seen that Roman arms could not drive Pyrrhus out of Italy, but the generosity of Fabricus in making known to him the offer which his familiar [servant] had made to the Romans of poisoning him, did drive him out. It is also seen that the capture of New Carthage in Spain did not give Scipio Africanus so much reputation, as that example of chastity gave him, of having restored the young beautiful wife untarnished to her husband, the fame of which action made all Spain friendly to him. It is also to be seen how much people desired this vertu in great men, and how much it is praised by writers, and by the biographers of Princes, and by those who describe how they should live. Among whom Xenophon makes a great effort to show how many honors, how many victories, how much fame came to Cyrus by his being humane and affable, and by his not giving example of himself either of cruelty or haughtiness, or of luxuriousness, or

of any other vice which stains the lives of men. Yet, none the less, seeing that Hannibal had acquired great victories and fame by contrary means, it appears proper to me to discuss in the following chapter whence this happens.

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## CHAPTER 21. WHENCE IT HAPPENED THAT HANNIBAL, WITH A DIFFERENT METHOD OF PROCEEDING THAN SCIPIO, ACHIEVED THE SAME RESULT IN ITALY AS THE LATTER [DID IN SPAIN]

I think that some can marvel to see some Captains, notwithstanding that they have employed contrary methods, to have none the less achieved the same results as those who have employed the methods described above; so that it appears the cause for victories does not depend on the aforesaid reason, rather it appears that those methods do not render you more powerful or more fortunate, as you are able by contrary methods to acquire glory and reputation. And so that I do not leave the above mentioned men, and to clarify more what I have wanted to show, I say that it is seen that as soon as Scipio entered Spain, he quickly made himself a friend of that province, and with that humanity and goodness of his, was adored and admired by the People. The contrary is seen when Hannibal entered Italy, and with every contrary method, that is, with violence, cruelty, rapine, and every kind of perfidy, obtained the same result that Scipio did in Spain; for all the Cities of Italy rebelled in favor of Hannibal, and all the people followed him. And in considering why this should result, many reasons are seen. The first is, that men are desirous of new things, which most of the times are desired as much by those who are well off as by those who are badly off; for (as had been said another time, and is true) men get tired of the good, and afflict themselves with the bad. This desire, therefore, opens the door to anyone in a province, who is the head of an innovation; and if he is a foreigner they run after him, if he is a provincial they surround him, favoring him and increasing his influence. So that in whatever way he proceeds, he will succeed in making great progress in those areas. In addition to this, men are pushed by two main things, either by love or by fear; so that he who makes himself loved commands as well as he who makes himself feared, although most of the times he who makes himself feared will be followed and obeyed [more readily] than he who makes himself loved. It matters little, therefore, to any Captain by which of these ways he proceeds, as long as he is a man of virtu, and that that virtu makes him reputed among

men. For when this is great, as it was with Hannibal and Scipio, it cancels all those errors which are made either from making oneself loved too much or from making oneself feared too much. For from both of these two methods great evils may arise and apt to cause a Prince to be ruined. For he who desires too much to be loved becomes condemned every little he departs from the true path: the other who desires too much to be feared, becomes hated every little that he goes too far in that manner. And holding to the middle path cannot be done, because our nature does not permit this. But it is necessary to mitigate these extremes by an excessive virtue, as did Hannibal and Scipio. None the less it is seen that both of them were both hurt as well as exalted by this method of proceeding of theirs.

The exaltation of these two has been mentioned. The harm concerning Scipio, was that his soldiers in Spain rebelled with part of his friends, which resulted from nothing else other than they did not fear him: for men are so restless that with every little opening of the door to their ambitions, they quickly forget all the love that they had for the Prince because of his humanity, as the aforesaid soldiers and friends did; so that Scipio in order to remedy this evil was constrained to employ some of that cruelty which he had avoided. As to Hannibal, there is no particular example where his cruelty and perfidy caused him to be harmed. But it can indeed be presumed that Naples and many other towns which remained faithful to the Roman people, remained so because of fear of them [his cruelty and perfidy]. This much is seen, that that method of his of acting unmercifully made him more odious to the Roman people than any other enemy which that Republic ever had. So that while they informed Pyrrhus (while he was with the army in Italy) of he who wanted to poison him, yet they never forgave Hannibal (though disarmed and a fugitive), so much so that they caused him to kill himself. This disaster happened to Hannibal, therefore, because of his being held unmerciful, cruel, and a breaker of the faith; but, on the other hand, he derived a great advantage from it, which is admired by all the writer, that in his army (even though composed of various races of men) there never arose any dissension, either among themselves, or against him. This could not derive from anything else other than from that terror which arose from his person, which was so great, and combined with that reputation which his virtue gave him, that he kept his soldiers quiet and united.

I conclude, therefore, that it does not matter much in what way a Captain proceeds, as long as there is in him such great virtu that it permits him to succeed with either method: for (as has been said) there are dangers and defects in both these methods, unless corrected by an extraordinary virtu. And if Scipio and Hannibal, one by praiseworthy means, the other by detestable ones, obtained the same results, it does not appear proper to me to omit the discussion also of two Roman Citizens who acquired the same glory by different methods, though both praiseworthy.

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## CHAPTER 22. HOW THE HARSHNESS OF MANLIUS TORQUATUS AND THE HUMANITY OF VALERIUS CORVINUS ACQUIRED THE SAME GLORY FOR EACH

There were in Rome at the same time two excellent Captains, Manlius Torquatus and Valerius Corvinus, who, of equal virtue and of equal triumphs and glory, were living in Rome; and each of them, as far as pertained to the enemy, acquired them by equal virtue, but, as far as pertained to the armies and their treatment of soldiers, they proceeded most differently; for Manlius commanded his with every kind of severity, [subjecting them] without intermission to hard work and punishment; Valerius, on the other hand, treated them with every kind and degree of humanity, and full of affability. Thus it is seen that in order to obtain the obedience of his soldiers, one put to death even his own son, and the other never harmed anyone. None the less, in such difference of procedure, each reaped the same fruit, both against the enemy and in favor of the Republic, as well as in their own interests. For no soldier refused to fight, or rebelled against them, or was in any way opposed to their will; although the commands of Manlius were so harsh that all other decrees which exceeded the ordinary were called Manlian Decrees. Here it is to be considered, first, whence it came that Manlius was constrained to proceed so rigidly; next, whence it happened that Valerius was able to proceed so humanely; another, what was the reason that these different methods obtain the same result; and lastly, which of them is it better and more useful to imitate.

If anyone well considers the nature of Manlius, from when T. Livius began to make mention of him, he will see him a very strong man, gentle toward his father and his country, and most respectful to his elders. These things we know from the defense of his father against a Tribune, and from the slaying of that Gaul, and how before he went to fight the Gaul he went to the Consul with these words: I will never fight the enemy without your order, not even if certain victory is in view. When a man thus constituted comes to the rank of command, he desires to find all men like himself, and his strong spirit makes his commands as strong, and these same (once they are

commanded) he wants observed. And it is a true ruler, that when harsh things are commanded, they must be made to be observed with harshness, otherwise you will find yourself deceived. Here it is to be noted that in wanting to be obeyed, it is necessary to know how to command, and those who know how to command are those who make a comparison of their strength with that of those who have to obey; and when they are seen to be in proper proportion, then they command, when out of proper proportion, they abstain. And, therefore, it was said by a prudent man, that to hold a Republic by violence it must be necessary that there be a proper proportion between he who forces and he who is forced. And anytime this proportion exists, it can be believed that that violent [regime] will endure. But when the oppressed is stronger than the oppressor, it can be feared that the violent [regime] should cease any day.

But returning to our discussion, I say that to give vigorous orders, one must be strong, and he who is of this strength and commands them, cannot then make them to be observed by gentle means: But he who is not of this strength of mind ought to guard himself from extraordinary decrees; but in the ordinary ones he can use his humanity, for ordinary punishments are not imputed to a Prince, but to laws and institutions. It ought therefore, to be believed that Manlius was constrained to proceed so rigorously by the extraordinary decrees of his, to which his nature inclined him, and which are useful in a Republic as it brings her back to her ancient virtue. And if one Republic should be so fortunate as to have often (as we said above) men who by their example restore the laws, and not only retain those which should not incur her ruin, but carry her in the opposite direction and perpetuate her existence. So that Manlius was one of those who by the harshness of his decrees retained the military discipline in Rome, constrained first by his nature, then by the desire he had for the observance of those [orders] which his natural temperament had made ordinary for him. On the other hand, Valerius was able to proceed humanely, as one to whom it sufficed that those things be observed which customarily were observed in the Roman armies. Which custom (because it was good) was enough to have him honored, and was not hard to be observed, and did not necessitate Valerius punishing the transgressors, as much because there weren't any, as also, if there were any, they imputed (as was said) their

punishment to the ordinances and not to the cruelty of the Prince. So that Valerius was able to arouse in himself every humaneness, from which he acquired the good will of his soldiers and their contentment. Whence it happens that both obtaining the same obedience, they were able to act differently and obtain the same results. Those who may want to imitate these men can be exposed to those vices of contempt and hatred, which as I have said above of Scipio and Hannibal, can be avoided by an excessive virtue which is in you, and not otherwise.

It remains now to be considered which of these methods of proceeding is more laudable, and this I believe is disputable, as writers praise both methods. None the less, those who write about how a Prince has to govern approach more toward Valerius than to Manlius, and Xenophon whom I have quoted before, in giving many examples of the humaneness of Cyrus, greatly conforms to what T. Livius says of Valerius. For when he was made Consul against the Samnites, and the day arriving when he was to do battle, he spoke to his soldiers with that humanity with which he governed them, and after relating this speech T. Livius says these words. No other leader was so familiar with his soldiers, sharing all burdens cheerfully, amongst even the lowest soldiers. In military exercises, he contested equally with his men, in tests of speed, and whether he won or was defeated, it was the same to him; nor did he ever object to any one who offered; in his actions he was benign in all things; in speech, he was no less concerned with the liberty of others, as of his own dignity; and in the arts of the magistrate, he acted as if he was their petitioner (even though not of the people). T. Livius similarly speaks honorably of Manlius, showing that the severity in putting his son to death made the army so obey the Consul, that it was the cause of the Roman people obtaining the victory over the Latins; and in fact he goes on to praise him, that after such a victory, he describes all the orders of battle and shows all the dangers to which the Roman people were exposed, and the difficulties that were encountered in the winning, and makes this conclusion, that only the virtue of Manlius gave the victory to the Romans: And making a comparison of the strengths of both armies, he affirms that the portion which had Manlius as Consul had gained the victory. So that considering everything that the writers have said, it is difficult to judge. None the less, so as not to leave this part undecided, I say, that in a citizen

who lives under the laws of a Republic, I believe the procedure of Manlius is more praiseworthy and less dangerous, because this method is all in favor of the public, and does not regard in any part private ambitions; for by such a method, partisans cannot be acquired; showing himself harsh to everyone and loving only the common good, a [commander] does not acquire particular friends (as we said above), such as we call partisans, So that such methods of procedure cannot be more useful or of more value in a Republic, as it does not lack usefulness to the public, and there not being able to be any suspicion of private power. But in the method of procedure of Valerius the contrary is the case; for although the same effects are produced as far as the public is concerned, none the less, many apprehensions spring up because of the particular [individual] good will which he acquires with the soldiers having, in a long rule, had effects against [public] liberty. And if these bad effects did not happen with [Valerius] Publicola, the reason was that the minds of the Romans were not yet corrupt, and he had not been long and continuously governing them.

But if we have to consider a Prince, as Xenophon considers it, we must come near to Valerius in everything, and leave Manlius; for a Prince ought to seek obedience and love in his soldiers and subjects. Obedience will obtain for him their observance of the ordinances, and his being held a man of virtue: love will give him that affability, humanity, mercy, and all those other qualities which existed in Valerius, and which Xenophon writes also existed in Cyrus. For, a Prince being individually greatly desired, and having the army as his partisan, conforms with the other interests of the State. But in a citizen who has the army as his partisan, this part does not conform to the other institutions, which cause him to live under the laws and obey the Magistrates. Among the other ancient history of the Venetian Republic, it is to be read that when the Venetian galleys returned to Venice, a certain difference arose between the men of the galleys and the people, whereupon it came to tumults and arms; and the matter not being able to be quelled, either by the power of the ministers, or by the respect for the [principal] citizens, or by fear of the Magistrates, but as soon as a Gentleman who had been their captain the previous year appeared before the sailors, because of their love for him, they departed and left the fight. Which obedience excited the suspicions of the Senate so much, that soon

afterwards the Venetians assured themselves of him by imprisonment and putting him to death.

I conclude, therefore, that the procedure of Valerius is useful in a Prince, but pernicious in a citizen, not only towards the country, but towards himself: to the country because these methods prepare the way for Tyranny: to himself, because his city becoming suspicious of the method of his proceeding, is constrained to assure itself with injury to him. And, on the other hand, I affirm the procedure of Manlius to be harmful in a Prince, but useful in a citizen and especially to the country; and although it rarely harms him, unless this hatred which it engenders be made more severe by the suspicions which your other virtues and great reputation inspire, as we will discuss below [speaking] of Camillus.

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## CHAPTER 23. FOR WHAT REASON CAMILLUS WAS DRIVEN OUT OF ROME

We have concluded above that proceeding as Valerius did is harmful to the country and to oneself, and proceeding as Manlius did is beneficial to the country, but sometimes harmful to oneself. This is very well proved by the example of Camillus, who in his proceedings resembled Manlius rather than Valerius. Whence T. Livius, speaking of him, says that He was hated by the soldiers, but was admired for his virtues, what kept him admired was the solicitude, the prudence, the greatness of mind, that good organization he observed in the operation and the command of the armies. What made him admired was his being more severe in castigating them than liberal in rewarding them. And T. Livius cites these reasons for the hatred: the first, that the money which was brought in from the goods of the Veienti which were sold, he applied to the public [treasury] and did not divide it with the plunder: the other, that in the triumph he had his triumphal carriage drawn by four white horses, where they said that from pride he had wanted to rival the sun: the third, that he made a vow to give Apollo the tenth part of the plunder from the Veienti, and which (wanting to satisfy the vow) he had to take from the hands of the soldiers who had already appropriated it.

Here those things can surely and easily be noted which make a Prince odious to his people, the principal one of which is to deprive them of something useful to them: which thing is of the greatest importance, because when a man is deprived of those things which are useful in themselves, he never forgets it, and every least necessity makes him remember; and because necessities happen every day, they remind you of them every day. The other thing is to appear haughty and presumptuous, which cannot be more odious to a people, and especially to a free people. And although this pomp and pride may not give rise to any inconvenience to them, none the less, it makes those who use them to be hated. From which a Prince ought to guard against as from a rock; for to draw hatred upon himself without profit to him, is entirely reckless and imprudent.

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## CHAPTER 24. THE PROLONGATION OF [MILITARY] COMMANDS MADE ROME SLAVE

If the proceedings of the Roman Republic is considered well, two things will be seen to have been the causes of the dissolution of that Republic: the one was the contentions that arose from the Agrarian law, the other the prolongation of the [military] Commands; if these matters had been well understood from the beginning, and proper remedies taken she would have existed free longer, and perhaps more tranquil. And although it is seen that the prolongation of Commands never caused any tumult to arise, none the less facts show how much that authority which the citizens took because of such decisions was harmful to the City. And if the other citizens for whom the Magistracy was prolonged had been wise and good, as was L. Quintius, this inconvenience would not have incurred. His goodness is a notable example; for when the terms of an accord were completed between the Plebs and the Senate, and the Plebs having prolonged the Commands of the Tribunes for a year, because they judged it would help to enable them to resist the ambitions of the Nobles, the Senate wanted, in competition with the Plebs not to appear less [powerful] than they, to prolong the Consulship of L. Quintius; but he completely negated this decision, saying that they should seek to destroy the evil example not to increase their number with other worse examples, and he desired they create new Consuls. If this goodness and prudence had existed in all the Roman citizens, they would never have allowed that custom of prolonging the Magistracies to be introduced, which in time ruined that Republic.

The first to whom the Command was extended was P. Philo, who being at the siege of the City of Paleopolis, and the end of his Consulship having arrived, and as it appeared to the Senate that he had the victory in hand, they did not send him a successor but made him Proconsul. So that he was the first Proconsul. Which thing (although it was moved by the Senate as being useful to the public) was what in time brought Rome to servitude. For the further away the Romans sent their armies [from Rome], so much more did such prolongations appear necessary, and the more they employed them. This caused two evils. The one, that a smaller number of men were

given experience in the Command [of armies], and, because of this, reputation [authority] came to be restricted to a few: the other, that a citizen being a command of an army for a long time, he gained it over to himself and made it his partisan, for that army in time forgot the Senate and recognized him as chief. Because of this Sulla and Marius were able to find soldiers willing to follow them against the public good. Because of this Caesar was able to seize the country. Thus, if the Romans had not prolonged the Magistracies and Commands, although she would not have come to so great power, and her conquests would have been slower, she would also have come to her servitude more slowly.

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## CHAPTER 25. OF THE POVERTY OF CINCINNATUS AND MANY ROMAN CITIZENS

We have argued elsewhere that the most useful thing which is established in a republic is that its Citizens are to be kept poor. And although there did not appear to be those ordinances in Rome which would have that effect (the Agrarian law especially having had so much opposition) none the less, from experience, it is seen that even after four hundred years after Rome had been founded, there still existed a very great poverty; nor can it be believed that any other great institution caused this effect than to observe that poverty did not impede the way [to you] to any rank or honor, and that merit and virtu could be found in any house they lived in. Which manner of living made riches less desirable. This is manifestly seen when the Consul Minitius with his army was besieged by the Equeans, Rome was full of apprehension that the army should be lost, so that they had recourse to the creation of a Dictator, their last remedy in times of affliction. And they created L. Quintius Cincinnatus [Dictator], who was then to be found on his little farm, which he worked with his own hands. Which event is celebrated in words of gold by T. Livius, saying, Let everyone not listen to those who prefer riches to everything else in the world and who think there is neither honor nor virtu where wealth does not flow. Cincinnatus was working on his little farm, which did not exceed beyond four jugeri, when the Legate came from Rome to announce to him his election to the Dictatorship, and to show him in what peril the Roman Republic found itself. He put on his toga, went to Rome and gathered an army, and went to liberate Minitius; and having routed and despoiled the army, and freed that man [Minitius], he did not want the besieged army to share in the booty, saying these words to them: I do not want you to share in the booty of those to whom you had been about to become prey; and he deprived Minitius of the Consulship, and made him Legate, saying to him: You will remain in this grade until you have learned to be Consul.

He [Cincinnatus] had made L. Tarquinius master of his cavalry, who because of his poverty fought on foot. It is to be noted here (as has been said) the honor which was given to poverty in Rome, and how to a good and valiant

man, as was Cincinnatus, four jugeri of land was enough to support him. Which poverty was also seen [to be honored] in the times of Marcus Regulus, for when he was in Africa with the armies, he asked permission of the Senate to be able to return to look after his farm, which was being spoiled by his laborers. Here two notable things are to be observed: one, how they were content to remain in such poverty, and that it was enough for those citizens to obtain honors from war, and to leave all the useful things to the public; for if they thought of enriching themselves from the war, they would have given little concern to their fields being spoiled. The other is to consider the generosity of spirit of those citizens who, when placed in charge of an army, rose above every Prince through the greatness of their souls; they not esteeming Kings or Republics, nor did anything dismay or frighten them, and afterwards when they returned to private life, they became frugal, humble, carers of their small facilities, obedient to the Magistrates, reverent to their elders, so that it appears almost impossible that the same mind should be able to bear such changes. This poverty lasted even up to the times of Paulus Emilius, which were about the last of the happy times of that Republic, when a citizen who had enriched Rome with his triumph, none the less kept himself poor. And so much was this poverty still esteemed, that Paulus in honoring those who conducted themselves well in the war, presented his son-in-law with a silver cup, which was the first [piece of] silver that came into his house.

And I could demonstrate with a long discussion how many better fruits are produced by poverty than are by riches; and that the first has honored Cities, Provinces, Sects, while the other has ruined them, — if this matter had not been many times illustrated by other men.

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## CHAPTER 26. HOW A STATE IS RUINED BECAUSE OF WOMEN

A difference arose in the City of Ardea between the Patricians and the Plebeians, because of a marriage contract, in which an heiress about to be married, was asked for at the same time by a Plebeian and a Noble; and as she did not have a father, her guardians wanted to unite her to the Plebeian, her mother to the Noble: and such a tumult arose from this that they came to arms; in which all the Nobility armed themselves in favor of the Noble, and all the Plebeians in favor of the Plebeian. So that the Plebs being overcome, they went out from Ardea and sent to the Volscians for aid, while the Nobles sent to Rome.

The Volscians arriving first, surrounded Ardea and besieged it. When the Romans arrived, they shut in the Volscians between the town and themselves, so that they constrained them (being pressed by hunger) to surrender themselves at discretion. And when the Roman entered the City, they put to death all the heads of the sedition, and restored order in that City.

There are several things to note in this text. First it is seen that Women have been the cause of many ruinations, and have done great damage to those who govern a City, and have caused many divisions in them: and (as has been seen in our history) the excess committed against Lucretia deprived the Tarquins of their State; and the other committed against Virginia deprived the Ten [Decemvirs] of their authority. And Aristotle, among the first causes of the ruin of the Tyrants, places the injury they committed on Women, either by seduction, by violence, or corruption of marriages, as we have discussed this subject at length in the Chapter in which we treated of Conspiracies.

I say, therefore, that absolute Princes and governors of Republics do not have to take little account of this subject, but ought to consider the disorders which may arise from such incidents, and remedy them in time that it does not injure and disgrace their State or Republic; as happened to the Ardeans, who, for allowing the rivalry to increase among their citizens, were led to become divided among themselves, and wanting to reunite, had

to send for outside succor, which is a great beginning to a sure servitude. But let us come to another notable way of reuniting a City, of which we will treat in the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER 27. HOW A DIVIDED CITY IS TO BE UNITED, AND HOW THAT OPINION IS NOT TRUE WHICH SUPPOSES THAT IT IS NECESSARY TO KEEP A CITY DISUNITED IN ORDER TO HOLD IT

From the example of the Roman Consuls who reconciled together the Ardeans, the method is to be noted of how a divided City ought to have its order restored, which is none other than to kill the leaders of the tumults, and it is not otherwise to be cured, and it is necessary to take one of three ways: either to kill them as the Romans did, or to remove them from the City, or for them to make peace together under an obligation not to offend each other again. Of these three methods this last is the most harmful, less certain, and more useless; for it is impossible where much blood has run or other similar injuries inflicted that a peace made by force should endure; for seeing themselves together face to face each day, it is difficult that they should abstain from injuring each other, as new causes for quarrel can arise among themselves because of their intercourse every day. A better example of this cannot be given than that of the City of Pistoia.

Fifteen years before, that City was divided (as it is now) into the Panciatichi and Cancellieri, but at that time they were under arms, and today they have laid them down. And after many disputes among themselves they came to bloodshed, to the razing of houses, at plundering possessions, and to every other kind of enmity. And the Florentines who had to restore order to them, always employed this third method, and always there arose serious tumults and troubles: so that, becoming weary they came to employ the second method of removing the Leaders of the parties, of whom some they imprisoned and others they exiled to various places, in order that accord could exist, and has existed to this day. But without doubt, the most secure would have been the first method. But as this has need of power and courage, a weak Republic does not know how to accomplish it, and they go so far afield, that the effort required induces them to the second method.

And these are some of those errors, of which I spoke in the beginning, that the Princes of our time make, who, when they have to judge serious matters, ought to want to see how the ancients governed who had to judge

in similar cases. But the weakness of present day men, caused by their feeble education and little knowledge of affairs, makes them regard the ancient judgments as partly inhuman, partly impossible of application. And certainly their modern opinions are very far from the truth, as those which the wise men of our City said at one time, that is, That it was necessary to hold Pistoia by parties, and Pisa by fortresses: and they do not see how useless are both of these methods. I want to omit talking of fortresses, as we have talked of them above at length, but I want to discuss the uselessness that results from the holding of towns by having a divided government. First it is impossible for a Prince or a Republic to maintain both old parties. For, by nature it is given to men to take sides in any difference of opinion, and for them to prefer the one more than the other. So that, having one party of the town discontented, the first occasion of war will cause you to lose it, for it is impossible to guard a City that has enemies outside and inside. If it is a government of a Republic, there is no better way to make your citizens bad, and to make your City divided, than to have a division of parties in the City; for each side seeks to obtain aid, and by corruption of every king to make friends for themselves. So that two very great evils arise. The one, that you do not make friends of them because you are not able to govern well, often changing the government, now with one humor, now with another. The other, that such favoring of parties of necessity keeps your Republic divided. And Biondo [the historian] speaking of the Florentines and Pistoians gives testimony when he says, While the Florentines were endeavoring to reunite Pistoia, they divided themselves. The evils that arise from such division, therefore, can easily be seen. In the year one thousand five hundred and one <sup>1501</sup> when Arezzo was lost, and all the Val Di Tevere and Val Di Chiana were occupied by the Vitelli and the Duke Valentino, there came a Monsignor Di Lante sent by the King of France to cause a restitution to be made of all the towns they had lost; and Lante finding in the castles only men who, in visiting them, said they were of the party of Marzocco<sup>4</sup>, censured this division most severely, saying that, if in France any one of the subjects should say he was of the King's party, he

<sup>4</sup> Marzocco is the name Florentines gave a marble lion [attributed to Donatello] with the coat of arms, at the gate of the Palazzo Vecchio; hence, the party supporting the government was called the party of Marzocco

would be castigated, because such a remark would signify nothing else other than there should be forces hostile to the King in that town, and that the King wanted all the towns to be friendly, united, and without parties. But all these methods and opinions that differ from the truth, arise from the weakness of those who are the Lords, who, seeing they are unable to hold the State by force and virtu, turn to similar expedients, which some times in times of tranquillity may be of some benefit, but with the advent of hard times, their fallacy is demonsrated.

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## CHAPTER 28. THAT THE ACTIONS OF CITIZENS OUGHT TO BE OBSERVED, FOR MANY TIMES A BEGINNING OF TYRANNY IS HIDDEN UNDER A PIOUS ACT

The City of Rome was afflicted by a famine, and as the public provisions were not enough to end it, one Spurius Melius, who was very rich according to those times, had the mind of privately making a provision of grain and feed the plebs at his expense. For which thing a great assembly of people gave him their favor, that the Senate thinking of the evil that could arise from that liberality of his, and in order to suppress it before it should gather greater strength, created a Dictator against him, who had him put to death. Here it is to be noted that many times actions that appear merciful, and which cannot be reasonably condemned, may become cruel, and very dangerous to a Republic if not corrected at the proper time. And to discuss this matter in more detail, I say that a Republic cannot exist without Citizens of repute, nor govern itself well in any way. On the other hand, the reputation of such Citizens is the cause of tyranny in Republics. And in order to regulate this thing, it [the Republic] needs to be so organized, that the reputation of Citizens be based on the benefits it gives to the City and not on any harm to it and its liberty. And, therefore, the methods with which they assume reputation ought to be examined, and these, in effect, are two, either public or private. The public methods are when one acquires reputation by counselling well and acting well for the common benefit. The way to such honors ought to be opened to every Citizen, and rewards proposed for their good counsels and good works, so that they may obtain honors and be satisfied: and when such reputation is obtained through these pure and simple ways, it will never be dangerous: but when it is obtained through a private way (which is the other method mentioned) it is most dangerous and wholly harmful. The private ways are by doing good to this and that private individual by lending them money, marrying their daughters, defending them in front of Magistrates, and doing them similar private favors, which make men partisans, and give encouragement to whoever is thus favored to be able to corrupt the public and break the laws. A well organized Republic ought, therefore, to open the ways (as has been

said) to whoever seeks favors through public means, and close them to whoever seeks them through public means, as was seen that Rome did; for as a reward to whoever acts well for the public she ordered triumphs and all the other honors which she gave to its Citizens; and she ordered accusations be brought against whoever, under various pretexts of theirs, by private means sought to make themselves powerful: and when these did not suffice because of the people being blinded by a species of false benefits, they ordered [the creation of] a Dictator, who, [armed] with Regal power made those who had gone astray to return within the fold, as she did in punishing Spurius Melius. And if one of these is allowed impunity, it is apt to ruin a Republic, as, with that as an example, it will be difficult to return later to the true path.

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## CHAPTER 29. THAT THE FAULTS OF THE PEOPLE ARISE FROM THE PRINCES.

Princes should not complain of any fault that is committed by the People who are under their authority, for such faults result either from their negligence or because they are stained by similar faults. And whoever discusses those people who in our time have been given to robberies and similar faults, will see that these arise entirely from those who govern them, who were of a similar nature. The Romagna, before those Lords who ruled her were crushed by Pope Alexander VI, was an example of all the most criminal life, as here a great many killings and robberies were seen to happen for any slight reason. Which resulted from the wickedness of the Princes, and not from the wicked nature of men, as was said. For those Princes being poor, but wanting to live as rich men, were forced to turn themselves to many robberies and employ various methods in doing them. And among the other dishonest means they employed, they made laws and prohibited some activities, then they were the first who give cause for their non-observance, and they never punished the non-observers except when they saw there were many others guilty of the same, and then they turned to punishing them, not from any zeal for the law which was enacted, but from the cupidity [for money] expected from commuting the penalty. Whence many evils arose; and, above all of them, that the people were impoverished without being corrected, and those who were impoverished endeavored to make good [their losses] from those less powerful. Whence all those evils sprung up that were mentioned above, of which the Prince was the cause. And that this is true, T. Livius shows when he narrates, how, when the Roman legates brought the gift of the booty of the Veienti to Apollo, they were seized by the corsairs of Lipari in Sicily, and carried to that land. And Timastheus, their Prince, learning what gift this was, where it was going, and who was sending it, conducted himself (although born in Lipari) as a Roman, and showed his people how impious it was to seize such a gift. So that by general consent, he allowed the Legates to go with all their things. And the words of the historians are these: Timasitheus implanted

religion in the multitude, who always imitate their rulers. And Lorenzo De'Medici in confirmation of this opinion says:

And that which the Lord does, many then do,  
Whose eyes are always turned on their Lord.

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## CHAPTER 30. FOR A CITIZEN WHO WANTS TO DO SOME GOOD DEED IN HIS REPUBLIC ON HIS OWN AUTHORITY, IT IS FIRST NECESSARY TO EXTINGUISH ENVY; AND HOW THE DEFENSE OF A CITY OUGHT TO BE ORGANIZED ON THE COMING OF THE ENEMY

The Roman Senate learning that Tuscany had made new levies to come to attack Rome, and that the Latins and the Hemicians, who had been in the past friends of the Roman people, had allied themselves with the Volscians, the perpetual enemies of Rome, judged that this war would be a dangerous one. And Camillus, finding himself Tribune with consular power, thought he would be able to do without creating a Dictator, if the other Tribunes, his colleagues, would yield the supreme Command to him. Which the other Tribunes did voluntarily. Believing (says Livius) that this would not detract from their authority, conceded that authority to him. Whence Camillus taking this consent at its word, commanded that three armies should be raised. The first he wanted to Head and go against the Tuscans: the second, of which he made Quintus Servilius Head, he wanted kept near Rome to restrain the Latins and Hemicians if they should make a move. The third, he placed Lucius Quintus at its Head, and was to serve to keep the City guarded, [and] to defend the gates and the Curia [Senate] in any event that might arise. In addition to this, he ordered that Horatius, one of his colleagues, should provide arms and grain and all the other things requested in times of war. He placed Cornelius, also a colleague of his, in charge of the Senate and the public council, so that he should be able to counsel what actions were to be taken and executed daily. Thus were the Tribunes in those times disposed to command and obey where the safety of the country was involved. It is to be noted from this test what a good and wise man does, and of what good he is the cause, and how much usefulness he can accomplish for his country, when, by his goodness and virtu, he has extinguished envy; this, many times, is the reason that men are not able to act well, the said envy not permitting them to have that authority which is necessary to have in important events.

This envy can be extinguished in two ways: either by some extraordinary and difficult incident, where everyone seeing himself about to perish, lays aside every ambition and runs voluntarily to obey him who he believes can, by his virtue, liberate him; as happened to Camillus, who, having given many proofs [of himself] of being a most excellent man, and having been made Dictator three times, and having always employed that rank for public usefulness and not for his own advantage, had caused men not to fear his power; and as he was as powerful as he was reputed to be, they did not esteem it a disgrace to be inferior to him. And therefore Titus Livius wisely spoke those words, Believing that this, etc. The other way of extinguishing envy is, when either by violence or by natural orders, those men die who have been your rivals in arriving at some reputation and power, and who on seeing you reputed more than they, find it impossible ever to acquiesce and remain patient. And, if there are men accustomed to live in a corrupt City, where education has not resulted in any goodness in them, it is impossible that they should be restrained by any accident: but so as to obtain their desires and satisfy their perversity of mind, they would be content to see the ruin of their country. To overcome such envy, there is no other remedy than the death of those who have it: and when fortune is so propitious to that man of virtue as to make them die naturally, he becomes glorious without trouble, and may then display his virtue without any obstacle and without offense to anyone. But when he does not have such good fortune, he must think of every way to cut them off beforehand, and before he does anything he needs to overcome this difficulty. And whoever reads the Bible attentively, will see Moses, in wanting that his laws and his orders be observed, was forced to kill an infinite number of men who opposed his designs, moved by nothing else other than envy. Brother Girolamo Savonarola recognized this very well: Pietro Soderini, Gonfalonier of Florence also recognized it. The one would not overcome it because he did not have the authority to be able to do it, and this was the Brother; but because he was not well understood by those who followed him, he did not have the authority. None the less, he did all he could, and his preachings are full of accusations and invective against the wise of the world, for he thus called the envious and those who opposed his doctrines. The other [Soderini] believed that with time, with goodness, with his good fortune,

and by benefiting some, to be able to extinguish this envy; seeing himself young and with so many new favors that his method of proceeding were adding to him, he believed he could overcome the many who opposed him from envy, without any trouble, violence, and tumult: but he did not know that time cannot wait, goodness is not enough, fortune changes, and malignity does not find gifts which placate it. So that both of these men were ruined, and their ruin was caused by their not having known how or having been able to overcome this envy.

The other thing to be noted is the orders given by Camillus, both inside and outside the City, for the safety of Rome. Truly and not without reason good historians (as is our T. Livius) wrote distinctly and in detail of certain cases, so that future people may learn how they have to defend themselves in similar incidents. And it ought to be noted from this text that there is no more dangerous or more useless defense than that which is done tumultuously and without order. And this is shown by that third army which Camillus had raised to have in Rome to guard that City; for many had judged and still would judge this part to be superfluous, since that people were warlike and ordinarily armed, and therefore it was not necessary to raise it as it was enough to have the citizens armed when the need should arise. But Camillus, and whoever was as wise as he was, judged otherwise; for he never permitted a multitude to take up arms except with certain orders and in a certain way. And, therefore, based on this example, one in charge of guarding a City ought to avoid as a dangerous rock the arming of men tumultuously, but ought first to have enrolled and chosen those he wants armed, and whom they must obey, where are the places of assembly, and where they are to go; and to command those who are not enrolled to remain in their homes to guard them. Those who follow these orders in a City under attack, are able easily to defend themselves: those who do otherwise do not imitate Camillus, and will not be able to defend themselves.

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## CHAPTER 31. STRONG REPUBLICS AND EXCELLENT MEN RETAIN THE SAME COURAGE AND DIGNITY IN ANY FORTUNE

Among the other admirable things that our historian has Camillus say in order to show how an excellent man ought to be constituted, he puts these words in his mouth: My Dictatorship neither gave me courage, nor did my exile diminish it. By which words it is seen how great men are always the same in any fortune; and if it should change, exalting him now, oppressing him then, he does not change but always keeps his courage, and this is joined with his way of living so that everyone easily knows that fortune does not have power over him. Weak men conduct themselves otherwise; for becoming vain and inebriated by good fortune, they attribute all the good that they obtained to that virtue which they will never know: Whence it arises that they become unbearable and odious to all those who are around them. And when there is a sudden change of fortune, as soon as they come face to face with the cause, they come quickly into that other defect, and become vile and abject. From which it happens that Princes thus constituted, in adversity, think more of fleeing than of defending themselves, like those who, for having ill used that good fortune, are unprepared for any defense [against a reverse]. This virtue and this vice which I say are found in an individual, are also found in a Republic, and in example there are the Romans and the Venetians.

No ill fortune ever made the Romans become abject, nor did good fortune ever make them become insolent, as was manifestly seen after the defeat they experienced at Cannae, and after the victory they obtained against Antiochus: for this defeat, although it was most grave for having been the third one, never made them cowardly, but sent out new armies: they did not want to go against their institutions by ransoming their prisoners, nor did they send to Hannibal or Carthage to seek peace: but keeping out all these abject thoughts, they thought always of [continuing] the war, arming old men and slaves for want of men. When this thing became known to Hanno, the Carthaginian, (as was said above) he pointed out to that Senate how little account they [the Romans] took of the defeat at Cannae. And thus it is seen that times of difficulty did not dismay them or render them humble. On

the other hand, prosperous times did not make them insolent; for when Antiochus, before they had come to the battle with them, and in which he had been defeated, sent ambassadors to Scipio seeking an accord, [and] Scipio gave him certain conditions for peace, which were that he should retire inside Syria, and leave the rest [of the country] to the control of the Romans: Which accord Antiochus refused, and coming to battle, and losing it, he again sent ambassadors to Scipio with the commission that they should accept all those conditions which were given them by the victor: to whom he [Scipio] did not propose other terms than those which he had offered before he he had won, adding these words: The Romans do not lose their courage when defeated, nor become insolent when they win.

The opposite of this was seen to be done by the Venetians, who, in good fortune (which they seemed to think they gained by that virtu which they did not have), had come to such insolence that they called the King of France a son of Saint Mark, they did not respect the Church, nor recognize any other [power] in Italy, and had presupposed in their minds the creation of an empire similar to the Roman one. Afterwards, when good fortune abandoned them, and they suffered a partial defeat at Vaila at the hands of the King of France, they not only lost all their State by rebellion, but, through cowardice and abjection of spirit, gave a good part [of their territory] to both the Pope and the King of Spain, and were so demoralized that they sent ambassadors and made themselves tributary to him, and wrote letters full of humility and submission to the Pope in order to move him to compassion. To which infelicity they came in four days, and after only a partial defeat; for their army, after having fought, in the retreat about half of it was attacked and beaten, so that only one of the Proveditori who saved himself, arrived in Verona with more than twenty five thousand soldiers, both horse and foot. So that if there had been any kind of virtu in Venice and in their institutions, they could easily have reorganized and shown a new face to their fortune, and would have been in time either to have won or lost more gloriously, or to have obtained a more honorable accord. But the baseness of their spirit, caused by the bad quality of their military organization, made them lose at a single blow their courage and their State. And thus it will always happen to whoever is governed as they were; for this becoming insolent in good fortune, and abject in bad, arises from your mode

of procedure and from the education in which you are raised, which, when they are weak and vain makes you likewise, but when it has been otherwise, makes you also otherwise; it will make you know the world better, less joyful in good fortune, and less depressed in bad [fortune]. And that which is said of an individual, is said also of the many who live in a Republic, and who will perfect themselves according to the manner in which they live there.

And although at another time it has been said that the foundation of all States is a good military organization, and that where this does not exist there cannot be any good laws or any other good thing, it does not appear superfluous to me to repeat it; for the necessity of this is seen to appear at every point in the reading of this history; and it is seen that the military organization cannot be good unless it is disciplined, and that it cannot be done unless it is composed of your subjects. For a State is not always at war, or can be: therefore it must be able to train troops in times of peace, and this cannot be done with others except subjects on account of the expense. Camillus had gone out with the army (as we said above) against the Tuscans, and his soldiers, having seen the size of the enemy army, were all dismayed, as they deemed themselves inferior and unable to sustain their [enemy's] attack. And this bad disposition of the troops coming to the ears of Camillus, he showed himself outside, and going about the camp, he spoke to this soldier and that one, and then without making any change in arrangements, he said: What every man has learned and is accustomed to do, let him do it. And whoever considers these circumstances well, and the words he said to reanimate them to go against the enemy, will realize that he could neither say nor do any of those things to the army, unless it had first been organized and trained both in peace and in war. For a Captain cannot trust those soldiers who have not learned to do anything or believe that they will do anything well. And if a new Hannibal were to command them, he yet would be ruined; for a Captain (while the engagement is going on) cannot be in every place, and unless he has first disciplined them to have the same spirit as himself, and trained them well in his method of proceeding, of necessity it must happen that he be ruined. If, therefore, a City would be armed and organized as Rome, and its citizens every day both privately and publicly are required to make a test of their virtue and the power of fortune, it will always

happen that they will maintain the same courage and dignity as the Romans under similar conditions. But if they are disarmed and rely only on the vagaries of fortune, and not on their own virtue, they will change with changes of fortune, and will give of themselves the same example as the Venetians had given.

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## CHAPTER 32. WHAT MEANS SOME HAVE HAD TO DISTURB A PEACE

Circea and Velitrae, two of her [Roman] colonies, having rebelled from the Roman people, under the hope of being defended by the Latins, and the Latins afterwards having been defeated, they were deprived of that hope, many citizens counselled that Ambassadors be sent to Rome to submit themselves to the Senate; which proceeding was disturbed by those who had been the authors of the rebellion, who feared that all the punishment would fall on their heads. And to take away all discussion of peace, they incited the multitude to arm themselves and make incursions into the confines of Rome. And truly, if anyone sees a People or a Prince abandon all idea of an accord, there is no other more sure or more effective way, than to make them commit some grave wickedness against those with whom you do not want the accord made. For the fear of that punishment which seems to them to be merited because of the error they committed will always keep them apart. After the first war that the Carthaginians fought with the Romans, those soldiers who had been employed by the Carthaginians in that war in Sicily and Sardinia, as soon as peace was made, went to Africa; where, not being satisfied with their stipend, turned their arms against the Carthaginians, and creating two chiefs for themselves, Mathus and Spendius, they occupied many towns of the Carthaginians, and sacked many of them. The Carthaginians, in order to try every other means than battle, sent their citizen Hasdrubal as an ambassador to them, thinking he should have some influence with them as he had been their Captain in the past. And when he arrived, Mathus and Spendius wanting to oblige all those soldiers never to have peace again with the Carthaginians and therefore to oblige them to make war, persuaded them it was better to kill him together with all the other Carthaginians who were their prisoners. Whereupon they not only killed them, but first tore them to pieces with a thousand torments, adding to this wickedness and edict that all Carthaginians who might be taken in the future, should be killed in similar fashion. Which decision and execution made that contest against the Carthaginians cruel and obstinate.

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### CHAPTER 33. IN WANTING TO WIN AN ENGAGEMENT, IT IS NECESSARY TO MAKE THE ARMY HAVE CONFIDENCE BOTH IN THEMSELVES AND IN THEIR CAPTAIN

In wanting an army to win an engagement, it is necessary to make it confident so that it believes it ought to win in any circumstance. The things that make it confident are, that it be well armed and organized, and each man should know the other. Nor can this confidence or discipline result unless those soldiers are natives and live together. It is necessary also that the Captain be esteemed in a way that they have confidence in his prudence, and will always consider him so when they see him orderly, watchful, and courageous, and maintains the majesty of his rank by a good reputation: and he will always maintain it when he punishes their errors, does not fatigue them in vain, observes his promises to them, and shows them that the path to victory is easy, and conceals and makes light of those dangers which he is able to discern from afar. Which things well observed are good reasons why the army becomes confident, and being confident, wins. The Romans used to make their armies assume this confidence by way of Religion, whence it happened that they created Consuls, levied troops, sent out the armies, and came to the engagement, by the use of auguries and auspices: and without doing these things a good and wise Captain would never hazard any action, thinking he could easily lose it if his soldiers should not first have learned that the Gods were on their side. And if any Consul or other Captain had fought contrary to the auspices, they would have punished him as they punished Claudius Pulcher. And although this part is observed in all Roman histories, none the less it is most certainly proved by the words Livius put in the mouth of Appius Claudius, who, complaining to the people of the insolence of the Tribunes of the plebs, points out how, by their means, the auspices and other things pertinent to Religion were corrupted, says thusly: It pleases them now to deride religion; Do they not care if the fowl are fed, or if they come out of their cages slowly? These things are small; but small things are not to be condemned. By them our ancestors made this Republic great. For in these little things is the strength to hold the soldiers united and confident, which are the principal causes of every victory. None the less it is

necessary that these things be accompanied by virtue, otherwise they are of no value.

The Praenestines, having taken the field against the Roman army, they went to encamp on the river Allia, the place where the Romans had been overcome by the Gauls. They did this in order to put confidence in their soldiers, and to frighten the Romans because of the fortune of the place. And although this proceeding of theirs was probable for those reasons that have been discovered above, none the less the way the event turned out showed that true virtue does not fear every least incident. The historian expresses this well with the words placed in the mouth of the Dictator, who speaks thusly to his Master of the horse: You see the enemy, trusting to fortune, placed on the Allia; and you, trusting to arms and valor, attack the center of their battle line. For a real virtue, a good organization, a sureness derived from so many victories, cannot be extinguished in a moment; nor does a vain thing make them fear, or a disorder injure them; as is certainly seen where the two Consuls Manlius, when they were going against the Volscians, foolishly sent part of their camp to pillage the country, it happened that at the same time, both those who had gone out and those who remained found themselves besieged; from which danger, it was not the prudence of the Consuls, but the virtue of the soldiers themselves which freed them. Whence Titus Livius says these words: The soldiers, even without a leader, were saved by their own virtue. I do not want to omit an expedient employed by Fabius, when he first entered into Tuscany with his army in order to make them confident, as he judged such confidence more necessary in leading them into a new country and against new enemies, he addressed his soldiers before the battle, and after giving them many reasons through which they could hope for victory, he said he could also tell them other good things which would make their victory certain, except that it would be dangerous to reveal them. This method so wisely used, also merits to be imitated.

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## CHAPTER 34. WHAT FAME OR VOICE OR OPINION WHICH A PEOPLE MAKE BEGINS TO FAVOR A CITIZEN; AND WHETHER THEY DISTRIBUTE THE MAGISTRACIES WITH GREATER PRUDENCE THAN A PRINCE

At another time we have spoken of how Titus Manlius, who was afterwards called Torquatus, saved L. Manlius, his father, from an accusation that had been made against him by Marcus Pomponius, Tribune of the Plebs. And although the manner of saving him was somewhat violent and extraordinary, none the less, that filial piety toward the father was so agreeable to the general public, that not only was he not censured, but when they had to create Tribunes of the legions, T. Manlius was named to the second place. This success, I believe, should make the manner to be considered well, in which the people have to judge men in their distribution of offices, and because of this we see whether what had been concluded above is true, that the people are better distributors of offices than a Prince. I say, therefore, that the people in their distribution are guided by what is said of one by the public voice and fame, even if by his noted deeds he appears different; or by the preconceptions or opinion which are had of him. Which two things are caused either by the fathers of such men who had been great and valiant men in the City and so it was believed that the sons ought to be like them, until the contrary is found out by their deeds; or by the opinion that the speaker holds. The better means that can be employed is to have as companions serious men, of good habits, and reputed wise by everyone. And because no better index can be had of a man than the companion with whom he keeps company, and meritedly one who keeps company with honest companions acquires a good name, for it is impossible that he does not have some similitude with them. Or truly this public fame is acquired by some extraordinary and notable act, even though it may be a private matter, which has turned out honorably. And of all these three things, which in the beginning give a good reputation to one, none gives it best than this last; for the first is based on relatives and fathers, and is so fallacious, that it comes to men so slowly and in a little while is consumed if the individual virtue of that man who is to be judged does not accompany

him. The second, which makes you known by way of your practices, is better than the first, but is much inferior to the third; for until some sign arising from you is seen, your reputation is founded on opinion, which is most easy to stamp out. But that third, being begun and founded on your actions, gives you such a name in the beginning that it will be necessary that you many times do contrary deeds if you want to destroy it. Men who are born in a Republic ought, therefore, to adopt this last course and endeavor to begin to elevate themselves by some extraordinary action.

This is what many of the young men did in Rome, either by promulgating a law that served some common usefulness, or by accusing some prominent citizen as a transgressor of the laws, or by doing some similar new and notable things for which he is talked about. Not only are such things necessary in order to begin to give oneself reputation, but they are also necessary to maintain and increase it. And to want to do this, it is necessary to repeat them, as Titus Manlius did in his entire lifetime; for, having defended his father so extraordinarily and with so much virtue, and because of this act acquired this original reputation, and after a few years he fought that Gaul and, killing him, took from his that chain of gold which gave him the name of Torquatus. This was not enough for him, for afterwards when he was already of mature age, he killed his own son for having fought without permission, even though he had defeated the enemy. Which three acts gave him fame at that time, and will make him more celebrated for all the centuries to come, than all the victories and all the triumphs with which he was honored, as much as any other Roman, gave him. And the reason is, that in that victory Manlius had very many rivals, but in these particular acts he did not have any or only a very few.

The elder Scipio did not gain as much glory with all his triumphs as was given him by his having defended his father on the Ticino while a youth, and by having, after the defeat at Cannae, animatedly with bloody sword made many young Romans swear that they would not abandon their country, as they had already decided; which two acts were the beginning of his reputation, and made for him the ladder for the triumphs of Spain and Africa.

Which opinion was also increased by him when, in Spain, he sent back a daughter to her father and a wife to her husband. Such conduct is necessary not only for those Citizens who want to acquire fame in order to obtain honors in their Republic, but is also necessary for Princes to enable them to maintain their reputation in their Principality; for nothing makes itself so esteemed as his giving some example of some rare deed or saying concerning the common good, which show the lord to be magnanimous, liberal, or just, and which is such that it becomes as a proverb among his subjects, But to return whence we begun this discussion, I say, that when the people begin to bestow a rank upon one of its Citizens, if founded on those three reasons mentioned above, it is not badly founded: but when, however, the many examples of his good conduct make him more noted, it is better founded; for in such a case they are almost never deceived. I speak only of those ranks that are given to men in the beginning, and before they are known from firm experience, and before they pass from one act to another dissimilar one.

Here, both as to false opinion and corruption, the people always make smaller errors that do Princes. Although it could happen that the people might be deceived by the fame, opinions, and acts of a man, esteeming them greater than, in truth, they are; which does not happen to a Prince, for he would be told and advised of it by those who counsel him; for although the people do not lack these counsels, yet the good organizers of Republic have arranged that, when appointments have to be made to the highest offices of the City, where it would be dangerous to place inadequate men, and where it is seen that the popular will is directed toward naming some that might be inadequate, it be allowed to every citizen, and it should be imputed to his glory, to make public in the assemblies to defects of that one [named for public office], so that the people (lacking knowledge of him) can better judge.

And that such was the custom in Rome is witnessed by the speech of Fabius Maximus which he made to the people in the second Punic war, when in the creation of consuls their favors turned to the creation of T. Otacilius: and Fabius judging him inadequate to govern in the Consulship in those times, spoke against him and turned the favor of the people to one who merited it

more than he. The people, therefore, in the election of Magistrates judge according to the best evidence that they can obtain, and err less than Princes: and the Citizen who desires to begin to obtain the favor of the people ought to gain it for himself (as T. Manlius did) by some notable deed.

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## CHAPTER 35. WHAT DANGERS OCCUR IN MAKING ONESELF HEAD IN COUNSELLING A THING, AND HOW MUCH THE DANGER INCREASES WHEN IT IS AN EXTRAORDINARY THING

It would be too lengthy and important a matter to discuss here what a dangerous thing it is to make oneself Head of a new thing which relates to many people, and how difficult it is to direct and achieve it, and having achieved it to maintain it: reserving it to a more convenient place, therefore, I will speak only of those dangers that Citizens are exposed to in counselling a Prince to make himself head of a grave and important decision in such a manner that the entire counsel given him is imputed to him. For as men judge a matter by its result, all the evil that may result is imputed to the author of the counsel, but if the result is good he is commended, but the reward does not counterbalance by far the punishment. The present Sultan Selim, called the Grand Turk, having prepared himself (according to what was reported by some who came from his country) to make an enterprise against Syria and Egypt, was advised by one of his Pashas whom he had stationed at the borders of Persia, to go against the Sofi [Shah]: motivated by this counsel, he went on that enterprise with a very large army, and having arrived in that very large country where there are great deserts and rivers are rare, and finding those same difficulties that had already caused the ruin of many Roman armies, was so overwhelmed by them that (even though he had been superior in the war) he lost a great part of his forces by famine and pestilence. So that angered against the author of the counsel, he killed him. You will read of many Citizens having been advisors [in favor] of an enterprise, and because that resulted badly, they were sent into exile. Some Roman Citizens advised that in creating Chiefs, that Plebs should be made Consuls in Rome. It happened that the first who went in the field with an army was defeated, whence harm would have come to those counsellors if that party, in whose honor that particular decision had been made, had not been so powerful. It is a most certain thing, therefore, that those who counsel a Republic and those who counsel a Prince, are placed between these two hazards; that if they do not counsel the things which appear to them useful either to the Prince or to the City [Republic] without regard [to

the consequences to themselves], they fail in their office: if they do counsel it, they do so at the peril of their lives and their States; for all men are blind in these things, and are accustomed to judge the good or evil of a counsel by its result.

And in thinking of how they may be able to avoid this infamy or danger, no other way is seen than to take things moderately, and not to undertake any as one's own enterprise, and to give an opinion without passion, and without passion to defend it modestly: so that if the Princes or the City follows it, they do so voluntarily and does not appear as though they were drawn into it by your importunity. When you act thusly, it is not reasonable that a Prince or a People will wish you ill because of your counsel, as it was not followed against the wishes of the many. For here the danger arises when it is contradicted by many, who then, when the result is unhappy, come "together in causing your ruin. And, if in such a case that glory is lacking which is acquired in being alone against the many in counselling a thing which chances to have good ending, yet there are two benefits which result: The first, danger is avoided: The second, that if you counsel a thing modestly, and because of contradiction your counsel is not taken, but ruin results from the counsel of others, you will obtain a very great glory. And although you cannot enjoy the glory that is acquired from the misfortune that happens to your City or your Prince, none the less it is to be held of some account.

I do not believe other advice can be given to men in this case, for in counselling them to remain silent and not speak their opinion, would be a useless thing to the Republic or to their Princes, and they would not avoid danger as in a little while they would become suspect: and it could happen to them as to those friends of Perseus, King of the Macedonians, who, when he was defeated by Paulus Emilius, having fled with a few friends, it happened that, in discussing the past events, one of them begun to tell Perseus of the many errors committed by him which had been the cause of his ruin; to which Perseus, turning to him, said: Traitor, you have waited to tell me this until now when I no longer have a remedy; and upon these words he killed him with his own hands: and thus this man suffered the punishment for having been silent when he should have spoken, and to

have spoken when he should have been silent, and he did not avoid the danger by not having given his counsel. I believe, therefore, that the course mentioned above is the one to be held and observed.

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## CHAPTER 36. THE REASON WHY THE GAULS HAVE BEEN, AND STILL ARE, JUDGED AT THE BEGINNING OF A BATTLE TO BE MORE THAN MEN, AND AFTERWARDS LESS THAN WOMEN

The boldness of that Gaul who defied any Roman at the river Arno to combat [singly] with him, and the subsequent fight he had with T. Manlius, makes me remember what T. Livius often says, that the Gauls at the beginning of a fight are more than men, and in the course of the fight they turn out then to be less than women. And in thinking whence this arises, it is believed by many that it is because of their nature, and which I believe it true: but it is not because of this that this nature of theirs which makes them ferocious in the beginning, cannot be so disciplined that they might maintain that ferocity until the end. And in wanting to prove this I say that there are three kinds of armies: the one, where there is ardor and discipline, for from discipline there arises ardor and virtu, like that of the Romans: For it is seen in all histories that there was discipline in those armies, such military discipline had prevailed for a long time: for in a well-ordered army no one ought to perform any action except by regulation: and therefore it will be found that in the Roman army (which having conquered the world, all other armies ought to take as an example) no one ate, slept, traded, or did any other military or domestic act, without an order from the Consul. For those armies which do otherwise are not truly armies, and if they sometimes give some proof of it, they do this by their ardor and impulse, not because of virtu. But where virtu is disciplined, it employs its ardor with moderation and at the right time; and no difficulty debases it, or makes it lose courage, because good order renews this courage and ardor, nourished by the hope of victory, which is never missing while discipline is preserved. The contrary happens in those armies where there is ardor but no discipline; as were the Gauls, who were completely lacking in this while combatting, for if they did not succeed in winning with the first onset, in which they hoped, and not being sustained by a well regulated virtu, and not having anything outside of their fury in which to confide, they failed when that [first ardor] cooled. The Romans were the opposite; they were less apprehensive of danger because of their good discipline, were not mistrusting of victory, fought with the

same courage and virtu at the end as at the beginning [of a battle], the heat of battle actually inflaming them. The third kind of armies is where there is no natural ardor or chance discipline; as are our Italian armies of our time, which are all useless, and unless they fall upon an army that by some accident is fleeing, they never win. And without citing other examples, it is seen every day that they give proof of not having any virtu. And as everyone knows from the testimony of T. Livius how good military organizations are created and how bad ones are made, I want to cite the words of Papirius Cursor when he wanted to punish Fabius, his Master of cavalry, when he said: Let no one have fear of men or Gods; but let them observe neither the Imperial edicts nor the auspices: let the soldiers, without provisions, roam in packs when going in the territory of the enemy; forgetting their oaths, from which they absolve themselves as they wish; let them desert their ensigns in large numbers, nor follow the edicts for assembling: let them indiscriminately fight by day and by night, in favorable and unfavorable positions, with or without the orders of the Commanders; and let them observe neither the ensigns nor discipline, blind and confused like robbers — than being like a sacred and solemn army.

From this text, therefore, it can be easily seen whether the military of our times are blind and confused, or sacred and solemn, and how much they lack in being like that which can be called military, and how far they are from being arduous and disciplined like the Romans, or furious only as the Gauls.

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## CHAPTER 37. WHETHER SKIRMISHES BEFORE AN ENGAGEMENT ARE NECESSARY, AND HOW TO RECOGNIZE A NEW ENEMY IF THEY ARE AVOIDED

It appears that in the actions of men (as we discussed at other times) there is found, in addition to the other difficulties when it is desired to conclude something successfully, that good is always accompanied by some evil, which so easily arises with that good, that it appears impossible to do without the one when desiring the other; and this is seen in all the things that men do. And, therefore, good is acquired with difficulty, unless you are aided by fortune in a way that she, with her power, overcomes the ordinary and natural difficulties.

The combat between Manlius Torquatus and the Gaul makes me remember this, of which Titus Livius says: So much influence did the momentous outcome of that fight have on the whole war, that the army of the Gauls, having precipitously retreated from their camps, fled across the Tiber, and then into the fields of Campania. For, on the one hand I consider that a good Captain ought to avoid entirely doing anything of little importance which can have a bad effect on his army; for to begin a battle where he cannot employ all his strength and where he risks his entire fortune, is a completely foolhardy thing, as I said above when I condemned the guarding of passes. On the other hand. I consider that a wise Captain, when he comes to encounter a new enemy which has reputation, finds it necessary before coming to an engagement for his soldiers to probe such enemies by skirmishes, so that they begin to know him and how to handle him and lose any terror which their fame and reputation may have given them. And this part [of his duties] in a Captain is most important, for he feels almost a necessity in himself which constrains him to do it, as it appears to him he would be going to a certain defeat unless by these light experiences he first removes that terror which the reputation of the enemy may have placed in their hearts. When Valerius Corvinus was sent by the Romans with the armies against the Samnites, who were new enemies, and in the past had never had a test of arms against each other, he made the Romans engage

the Samnites in some skirmishes, where as Titus Livius says: Neither a new war or a new enemy should make them fear. None the less, there is a very great danger that if your soldiers are defeated in those slight battles, their fear and apprehension will increase, and that the opposite effects will ensue from what you designed, that is, you may have discouraged them where you had planned to reassure them. So that this is one of those things which has evil so near the good, and are so joined together, that it is an easy thing to adopt one [course] believing to have taken the other.

Upon this I say, that a good Captain ought to see to it with all diligence, that nothing springs up which, by some accident, can discourage his army. And that which can begin to discourage is to begin to lose, and, therefore, he should guard against small combats and not permit them unless he can engage in them with the greatest advantages and certain hope of victory: he ought not to engage in guarding passes where he cannot employ all his army: he ought not to engage in guarding towns except those which, if lost, would of necessity cause his own ruin, and in those that he does guard so organize himself that if faced with the possibility of siege, he can with the guards and the army employ all his strength, and ought to leave the other places undefended: For whenever something is lost which is abandoned but the army remains intact, he neither loses reputation in the war nor the hope of winning it. But when something is lost which you had planned to defend, and everyone believed you would defend it, then there is damage as well as defeat, and you have almost, like the Gauls, lost the war through a matter of little moment. Philip of Macedonia, father of Perseus, a military man and of great renown in his times, having been assaulted by the Romans, abandoned and laid waste many of his territories which he judged he could not defend; for in his prudence he judged it would be more pernicious to lose his reputation by not being able to defend that which he set himself to defend, than by leaving it a prey to the enemy lose it as something neglected [and of no value]. The Romans, after the defeat at Cannae, when their affairs were afflicted, refused aid to many of their allies and subjects, advising them to defend themselves as best they could. Which proceedings are much better than to undertake their defense and then not defending them: for in such a proceeding both friends and strength are lost, while in the other they lose only friends.

But to return to skirmishes, I say, that even if the Captain is constrained to engage in some because of the newness of the enemy, he ought to do so only with so much advantage on his side that there is no danger of losing; or certainly do as did Marius (which is the better proceeding) when going against the Cimbrians, a most ferocious people who came to plunder Italy; and their coming spread fear because of their numbers and ferocity and because of having already overcome one Roman army; and Marius judged it necessary, before coming to battle, to do something by which his army might lose that terror which fear of the enemy may have given them; and as a most prudent Captain, he placed his army several times in positions whence the Cimbri with their army should have to pass. And thus, he wanted his soldiers, from within the strongholds of his camp, to see and accustom their eyes to the sight of that enemy, so that seeing a disorganized multitude, encumbered with impediments, partly armed with useless weapons and partly without arms, they would be reassured and become desirous of the battle. Which proceeding, as it was wisely taken by Marius, so also should it be diligently imitated by others, so as not to incur those dangers which I have mentioned above, and not to have to do as the Gauls: who in fear from some small thing, retreated to the lands behind the Tiber and into Campania. And as we have cited Valerius Corvinus in this discourse, I want (through the medium of his words) in the following chapter to show how a Captain ought to be constituted.

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## CHAPTER 38. HOW A CAPTAIN OUGHT TO BE CONSTITUTED, IN WHOM IN ARMY CAN CONFIDE

Valerius Corvinus (as I have mentioned above) was sent with his army against the Samnites, new enemies of the Roman people, whence, in order to reassure his soldiers and to make them recognize the enemy, had them engage in some skirmishes; nor was this enough for him, as he wanted to speak to them before the engagement; and with great efficacy he showed them how little they should esteem such enemies, recalling to them the virtue of his soldiers and his own. Here it can be noted, from the words which Livius makes him say, how a Captain ought to be constituted in whom an army has to confide: Which words are these: Think of him under whose lead and auspices you are going to fight: whether he you are hearing is only a magnificent exhorter, ferocious only in words, or expert in military matters, and himself a thrower of weapons, to lead before the ensigns, and to combat in the thickest of the fight. Follow my actions, I do not want to say to you soldiers my words, and not only my orders, but the example of him who by his right arm has fought for the consulship and the highest glory. Which words, well considered, teach anyone how he ought to proceed in wanting to hold the rank of Captain: and he who acts otherwise will find in time that rank (to which he may have been led by ambition or fortune) to have been taken away and not have given him reputation; for titles do not honor men, but men titles. It ought also to be considered from the beginning of this discourse, that, if great Captains have employed extraordinary means to firm up the courage of a veteran army, how much more he has to use that industry with those unaccustomed to face the enemy in a new army that has never seen the enemy face to face. For if an unaccustomed enemy creates terror in an old army, how much more ought any enemy create it in a new army. Yet all these difficulties have many times been seen to have been overcome by the prudent acts of a good Captain; as were Gracchus, the Roman, and Epaminondas, the Theban, of whom we have spoken another time, who with new armies overcame the veteran and best disciplined armies. The methods they employed were to exercise their troops in sham battles for several months, accustom them to obedience and

order, and afterwards with maximum confidence lead them into the real battle. Any military man, therefore, ought not to despair of being able to create a good army as long as he does not lack men; for that Prince who abounds in men but lacks soldiers, ought not to complain of the baseness of men, but only of his indolence and little prudence.

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## CHAPTER 39. THAT A CAPTAIN OUGHT TO BE ONE HAVING A KNOWLEDGE OF SITES

Among the other things that are necessary to a Captain of armies is the knowledge of sites [localities] in the countries, for without this general and particular knowledge, a Captain of armies cannot do anything well. And although wanting to possess successfully every science requires practice, yet this one requires more than others. This practice, or rather this particular knowledge, is acquired more by means of the chase, than by any other exercise. For the ancient writers say that those Heroes who governed the world in their time, were brought up in forests and in the chase: for, in addition to this knowledge, the chase teaches infinite things that are necessary in war. And Xenophon, in his life of Cyrus, shows that, when Cyrus was going to assault the King of Armenia, in dividing the army [among the commanders] recalled to his men that this was nothing more than one of those chases which they had many times made with him. And he recalled to those whom he sent in ambush in the mountains, that they were very similar to those who went to rouse the game from their den, so that they would drive them into the nets. This is said to show how the chase, according to its proof by Xenophon, is an image of a war. And because of this such exercise is honorable and necessary to great men. This knowledge of countries cannot be learned in any other convenient manner than by way of the chase, for the chase makes those who indulge in it to know in detail the character of the country where the army is. And when one has become familiar with a region afterwards he easily knows the character of all new countries, for every country and every part of them have together some conformity, so that the knowledge of one facilitates the knowledge of others. But he who has not experienced one, with difficulty or never learns [of another country] except after a long time. And whoever has had that experience will in a glance know how the plain lies, how that mountain rises, where that valley leads to, and all other such things of which in the past he has made a firm study.

And that this is true Titus Livius shows us with the example of Publius Decius, who was Tribune of the Soldiers in the army which the Consul

Cornelius led against the Samnites, and the Consul having come to a valley where the army of the Romans could be closed in by the Samnites, and [Publius Decius] seeing it in so great danger, said to the Consul: Do you see that point above the enemy, Aulus Cornelius? That strong point is our hope and our safety, if we (as the Samnites blindly have left it) seize it quickly. And before these words were spoken by Decius, T. Livius says: Publius Decius, the Tribune of the army, had observed a hill immediately above the camp of the enemy, difficult to get on [by an army] with its impediments, but expeditiously by light armed [soldiers]. Whence being sent by the Consul to take it with three thousand soldiers, he saved the Roman army; and designing with the coming of night to depart and save his soldiers as well as himself, [T. Livius] has him say these words: Come with me, and while daylight remains, let us explore where the enemy strong points are placed, and how we can exit from here. And lest the enemy about should note him from among his soldiers, he changed his clothing. He who considers all this text, therefore, will see how useful and necessary it is for a Captain to know the nature of countries; for if Decius had not known and recognized them, he could not have judged how useful the taking of that hill was to the Roman army, nor would he have been able to recognize from a distance if that hill was accessible or not, and having then brought himself to it, and having the enemy around him, he would not have been able from a distance to reconnoiter the path of his departure, nor the places guarded by the enemy. So that of necessity it behooved Decius to have such perfect knowledge [of the country] which enabled him, by the taking of that hill, to save the Roman army, and afterwards (being besieged) knowing how to find the way to save himself and those who he had with him.

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## CHAPTER 40. THAT TO USE DECEIT IN THE MANAGING OF A WAR IS A GLORIOUS THING

Although to use deceit in every action is detestable, none the less in the managing of a war it is a laudable and glorious thing; and that man is equally lauded who overcomes the enemy by deceit, as is he who overcomes them by force. And this is seen by the judgment which those men make who write biographies of great men, and who praise Hannibal and others who have been very notable in such ways of proceeding. Of which so many examples have been cited that I will not repeat any. I mention only this, that I do intend that that deceit is glorious which makes you break your trust and treaties that you made; for although it sometimes acquires a State and a Kingdom for you, as has been discussed above, will never acquire them for you gloriously. But I speak of that deceit which is employed against that enemy who distrusts you, and in which properly consists the managing of a war; as was that of Hannibal when he feigned flight on the lake of Perugia in order to close in the Consul and the Roman army; and when to escape from the hands of Fabius Maximus he fired [the fagots on] the horns of his cattle. A similar deceit was also employed by Pontius, the Captain of the Samnites, in order to close in the Roman army within the Caudine forks, who, having placed his army behind a mountain, sent some of his soldiers under the dress of shepherds with a large herd upon the plain; who, being taken by the Romans and asked where the army of the Samnites was, all agreed according to the orders given by Pontius to say that it was at the siege of Nocera. Which was believed by the Consuls, and caused them to be enclosed within the defiles [of Claudium], where [having entered] they were quickly besieged by the Samnites. And this victory obtained by deceit would have been most glorious to Pontius, if he had followed the counsels of his father, who wanted the Romans either to be liberally set free, or all put to death, and would not take the middle way: Never make a friend or remove an enemy. Which way was always pernicious in the affairs of a State, as has been discussed above in another place.

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## CHAPTER 41. THAT ONE'S COUNTRY OUGHT TO BE DEFENDED, WHETHER WITH IGNOMINY OR WITH GLORY, BUT IT CAN BE DEFENDED IN WHATEVER MANNER

The Consul and the Roman army (as mentioned above) were besieged by the Samnites, who had proposed the most ignominious conditions to the Romans, which were to put them under the yoke, and to send them back to Rome disarmed; the Consuls were astonished and the entire army was in despair because of this; but L. Lentulus, the Roman legate said, that it did not appear he should avoid any procedure in order to save the country, for as the life of Rome depended on the life of that army, it appeared to him it should be saved in whatever way, and that the country is well defended in whatever way it is defended, either with ignominy or with glory; for by saving that army, Rome would in time wipe out that ignominy; but by not saving it, even though they should die most gloriously, Rome and its liberty would be lost. Which thing merits to be noted and observed by any citizen who finds himself counselling his country; for where the entire safety of the country is to be decided, there ought not to exist any consideration of what is just or unjust, nor what is merciful or cruel, nor what is praiseworthy or ignominious; rather, ahead of every other consideration, that proceeding ought to be followed which will save the life of the country and maintain its liberty. Which counsel is imitated by the words and deeds of the French in defending the majesty of their King and the power of the Kingdom, for they listen to no voice more impatiently than that which says: Such a proceeding is ignominious to the King; for they say that their King cannot suffer disgrace in any of his decisions either in good or adverse fortune, because, whether he wins or loses, they all say it is a matter that only concerns the King.

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## CHAPTER 42. THAT PROMISES MADE BY FORCE OUGHT NOT TO BE OBSERVED

When the Consuls returned to Rome with the disarmed army and the ignominies received, the first who said that the peace made at Claudium [the Caudine Forks] ought not to be observed was the Consul Sp. Posthumius; he said that the Roman people were under no obligation, but only he and the others who had promised the peace were obligated: and, therefore, if the People wanted to free themselves from every obligation, they had only to give him and the others who had promised it as prisoners into the hands of the Samnites. And he held this conclusion with such obstinacy that the Senate agreed to it, and sent him and the others as prisoners to Samnium, protesting to the Samnites that the peace was of no value. And so favorable was fortune to Posthumius in this case, that the Samnites did not keep him, and when he returned to Rome, Posthumius was received by the Romans more gloriously for having lost, than was Pontius by the Samnites for having won. Here two things are to be noted: the one, that glory can be acquired in any action; for it is ordinarily acquired in victory and in defeat it is acquired either by showing that this defeat was not due to your fault, or by quickly doing some act of virtue which counteracts it: the other, that it is not a disgrace not to observe those promises which were made by force: and always forced promises regarding public affairs, will be disregarded when that force is removed, and he who disregards them is without shame. Many examples of this are to be read in all histories. And, not only are forced promises not observed among Princes when that force is removed, but also other promises are not observed when the causes for making those promises are removed. Whether this is praiseworthy or not, and whether or not a Prince ought to observe them in a similar manner, has been discussed at length by use in the treatise on the Prince: therefore we will be silent for the present.

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## CHAPTER 43. THAT MEN BORN IN A PROVINCE OBSERVE FOR ALL TIME ALMOST THE SAME NATURES

Prudent men usually say (and not by chance or without merit) that whoever wants to see what is to be, considers what has been; for all the things of the world in every time have had the very resemblance as those of ancient times. This arises because they are done by men who have been, and will always have, the same passions, and of necessity they must result in the same effects. It is true that men in their actions are more virtuous in this province than in another, according to the nature of the education by which those people have formed their way of living. It also facilitates the knowledge of future events from the past, to observe a nation hold their same customs for a long time, being either continuously avaricious, or continuously fraudulent, or have any other similar vice or virtue. And whoever reads of past events of our City of Florence, and takes in consideration also those which have occurred in recent times, will find the French and German people full of avarice, haughtiness, ferocity, and infidelity, because all of these result in things at different times; which have greatly harmed our City. And as to bad faith, everyone knows how many times money was given to King Charles VIII on his promise to restore to them the fortresses of Pisa, but he never restored them: in which the King showed the bad faith and great avarice of his. But let us come to more recent events. Everyone may have heard of what ensued in the war which the Florentine people carried on against the Visconti, Dukes of Milan, and how Florence, deprived of other expedients, decided to call the Emperor into Italy, who, with his reputation and strength, would assault Lombardy. The Emperor promised to come with a large force, and to undertake the war against the Visconti, and to defend Florence against their power if the Florentines would give him a hundred thousand ducats when starting, and a hundred thousand more when they would enter Italy. The Florentines consented to these terms, and paid them the first moneys, and later the second, but when he arrived at Verona, he turned back without doing anything, alleging as a reason for leaving, that they had not observed the conventions that existed between them.

So that, if Florence had not been constrained by necessity or carried away by passion, and having studied and known the ancient customs of the barbarians, she would not have been deceived by them on this and other occasions; for they [the Gauls] have always been the same and conducted themselves on every occasion and towards everyone, as is seen they did in ancient times to the Tuscans; who, having been hard pressed by the Romans, having been routed and put to flight by them many many times, and seeing that they could not by their own forces be able to resist the assaults [of the Romans], came together with the Gauls who lived in Italy on this side of the Alps, to give them a sum of money, for which they should be obliged to join their armies with theirs [Tuscans], and go against the Romans. Whence it happened that the Gauls, having taken the money, did not then want to take up arms for them, saying that they had received it, not for making war against the enemy, but for abstaining from plundering the Tuscan country. And thus the Tuscan people were, because of the avarice and bad faith of the Gauls, suddenly deprived of their money and the aid they had hoped to obtain from them. So that it is seen from the example of the ancient Tuscans and from that of the Florentines, that the Gauls [and French] have employed the same means; and from this, it can be easily conjectured how much Princes can have confidence in them.

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## CHAPTER 44. IMPETUOSITY AND AUDACITY MANY TIMES CAN OBTAIN THAT WHICH, WITH ORDINARY MEANS, CAN NEVER BE OBTAINED

The Samnites being assaulted by the Roman army, and being unable to stay abreast of the Romans in the field, decided, (having placed guards in the town of Samnium) to pass with all their army into Tuscany, during a time of truce with the Romans, to see whether, by such a passage and the presence of their army, they could induce the Tuscans to take up arms again, which they had refused to their Ambassadors. And in the talks which the Samnites had with the Tuscans (especially in showing them the reason which induced them to take up arms) they used a notable term, where they said: They had rebelled, for peace was more of a burden to slaves than war is to free men. And thus, partly by persuasion, partly by the presence of their army, they induced them to take up arms. Here it is to be noted that when a Prince desires to obtain something from another, he ought not (if the occasion permits him) to give him time to deliberate, but to act so as to make the other see the necessity for quick decision, who, when it is demanded of him, will see that to refuse or delay it, a sudden and dangerous indignation may arise.

This method has been seen to be well employed in our times by Pope Julian against the French, and by Monsignor De Foix, Captain of the King of France against the Marquis of Mantua; for Pope Julius, wanting to drive the Bentivogli from Bologna, and judging therefore to have need of the French forces and for the Venetians to remain neutral, and having sought the one and the other and obtaining dubious and various replies, decided that, by not giving them time, to make both come to terms with him; and departing from Rome with as much of a force as he could gather, went toward Bologna, and sent to tell the Venetians to remain neutral and to the King of France to send his forces to him. So that, as they were both pressed by the short space of time and seeing that an open indignation would arise in the Pope if they were refused or delayed, they yielded to his desires, and the King sent him aid and the Venetians remained neutral. The Monsignor De

Foix was still with his army at Bologna, and having learned of the rebellion at Brescia, and wanting to go to recover it, had two paths [available]: the one, long and tedious, through the dominion of the King, and the other, short, through the dominion of that Marquis; but he had to enter there over certain dikes between the swamps and the lakes of which that region is full, and which are closed and guarded by him by fortresses and other means. Whence that De Foix decided to go by the shorter route and to overcome every difficulty, and not give the Marquis time to decide, he at once moved his forces by that road, and signified to the Marquis to send him the keys to [the fortress which guarded] that pass. So that the Marquis, occupied by this quick decision, sent him the keys, which he would never have sent if De Foix had conducted himself more lukewarmly; for the Marquis, being in league with the Pope and the Venetians, and having one of his sons in the hands of the Pope, had reasons which could have given him an honest excuse to refuse them to him. But assaulted by the quick proceeding (for the reasons given above) he yielded them. The Tuscans also acted likewise toward the Samnites, being forced by the presence of the army of the Samnites to take up those arms which they had refused to take up at other times.

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## CHAPTER 45. WHAT IS THE BETTER PROCEEDING IN BATTLE, EITHER TO SUSTAIN THE FIRST SHOCK OF THE ENEMY, AND HAVING SUSTAINED IT, HURL THEM BACK, OR RATHER TO ASSAULT HIM FIRST WITH FURY

The Roman Consuls, Decius and Fabius, were with their two armies at the encounter with the armies of the Samnites and Tuscans, and both coming to battle on the same day, it is to be noted which of the two different methods of proceeding adopted by the two Consuls was better. Decius assaulted the enemy with all his strength and all impetuosity: Fabius only sustained [his attack], judging a slow assault to be more useful, reserving his fury for the last when the enemy should have lost his first ardor for combat, and (as we said before) his vehemence. Here it is seen that the success resulting from the plan of Fabius turned out much better than that of Decius, who, weary from the first shocks and seeing his band disposed rather to flee than otherwise, to acquire that glory by death which he was unable to gain by victory, in imitation of his father, sacrificed himself for the Roman legions. When this was heard by Fabius, so as not to acquire less honor by living than his colleague had acquired by dying, he rushed to the front all those forces which he had reserved for such a necessity, whence it gained him a most happy victory. From this it is seen that the method of proceeding of Fabius is more certain and worthy of imitation.

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## CHAPTER 46. WHENCE IT HAPPENS THAT A FAMILY IN A CITY FOR A TIME, HAVE THE SAME CUSTOMS

It appears that one City not only has certain ways and institutions different from another, and produces men who are either more harsh or effeminate, but within one City such differences are seen between one family and another. This is proved in every City, and many examples are seen in the City of Rome; for there are seen that the Manlii were hard and obstinate, the Publicoli benign and lovers of the people, the Appii ambitious and enemies of the plebs, and thusly many other families, each having its own qualities apart from the others. This cannot only result from blood (for it must be that it changes from the diversity of marriages) but must result from the different education that one family has from another. For it is very important that a young man of tender years begins to hear the good and bad of a thing, as it must of necessity make an impression on him, and from that afterwards regulate the method of proceeding all the rest of his life. And if this were not so it would be impossible that all the Appii should have had the same desires, and should have been stirred by the same passions, as Titus Livius has observed in many of them, and [especially] in that last one who was made Censor; and when his colleague at the end of eighteen months (as the law called for) laid down the magistracy, Appius did not want to lay down his, saying he could hold it five years according to the original laws ordained by the Censors. And although many public meetings were held on this question, and many tumults were generated, yet no remedy was ever found to depose him [from the office which he held] against the wishes of the people and the greater part of the Senate. And whoever reads the oration he made against P. Sempronius, the Tribune of the plebs, will note all the insolence of Appius, and all the good will and humanity shown by infinite Citizens in obeying the laws and auspices of their country.

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## CHAPTER 47. THAT FOR THE LOVE OF HIS COUNTRY, A GOOD CITIZEN OUGHT TO FORGET PRIVATE INJURIES

Manlius, the Consul, was with his army against the Samnites when he was wounded in a battle, and as this was bringing danger to his forces, the Senate judged it necessary to send Papirus Cursor as Dictator to supply the place of the Consul. But as it was necessary that the Dictator should be named by Fabius, who was then with the armies in Tuscany, and being apprehensive that as he was hostile he would not want to name him, the Senators sent two Ambassadors to entreat him that he lay aside his personal hatred and name him for the public benefit: which Fabius did, moved by his concern for the Country, although he showed by his silence and in many other ways that this nomination was pressed on him; for which, all those who seek to be regarded as good citizens ought to take an example.

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## CHAPTER 48. WHEN A GOOD ERROR IS SEEN TO BE MADE BY THE ENEMY, IT OUGHT TO BE BELIEVED THAT IT IS DONE UNDER DECEIT

Fulvius, having been left as Legate in the army that the Romans had in Tuscany, while the Consul had gone to Rome for some ceremonies, the Tuscans to see if they could trap him, placed an ambush near the Roman camp; and they sent some soldiers dressed as shepherds with a large flock, and had them come in the sight of the Roman army, and thus dressed approached the entrenchments of the camp: whence the legate wondering at this presumption of theirs, and as it did not appear reasonable, took means to discover the deceit, and thus defeated the designs of the Tuscans. Here it can be conveniently noted that a Captain of armies ought not to trust in an error which he sees done by the enemy, as it always is done under deception, for it is unreasonable that men are so incautious. But often, the desire for victory blinds the minds of men who do not see anything else other than that which favors them. After the Gauls had overcome the Romans on the Allia, they came to Rome, and finding the gates open and unguarded, remained all that day and night without entering in fear of a deception, unable to believe that there should be so much baseness and so little counsel in the hearts of the Romans that they should abandon their country. When the Florentines in the year one thousand five hundred eight <sup>1508</sup> went to besiege Pisa. Alfonso Del Mutolo, a Pisan citizen, was [found to be] a prisoner of the Florentines, and promised that if they should free him, he would deliver a gate of Pisa to the Florentine army. He was set free. Afterward, to carry out the promise, he often came to talk with those sent by the commissioners, but never came concealed, but openly and accompanied by Pisans, whom he left to one side when he talked with the Florentines. Hence his duplicity could have been conjectured, for it was not reasonable that he should treat the proceeding so openly if he had been acting faithfully. But the desire they had to obtain Pisa so blinded the Florentines that, being led through his arrangement to the gate at Lucca, where, by the double treachery of the said Alfonso, they lost many of their Leaders and other forces in a dishonorable manner.

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## CHAPTER 49. A REPUBLIC WANTING TO MAINTAIN ITSELF FREE HAS SOME NEED OF NEW PRECAUTIONS, AND IT WAS BY SUCH METHODS THAT Q. FABIVS WAS CALLED MAXIMVS

Of necessity (as we mentioned other times) it happens that in a great City incidents arise every day which have need of a doctor, and according as they are more important, a wiser doctor must be found. And if such strange and unforeseen incidents ever arose in such a City, they arose in Rome; as was that where it seemed that all the Roman women had conspired against their husbands to kill them, so that many were found who had [actually] poisoned them, and many who had prepared the poison to poison them; and as also was the conspiracy of the Bacchanals which was discovered at the time of the Macedonian war, where many thousands of men and women were implicated; and if it had not been discovered, it would have been dangerous for that City, and if the Romans had not been accustomed to punish the great number of guilty men.

For, if the greatness of this Republic and its power of execution had not been seen from infinite other signs, it is seen from the kind of penalty imposed on those who erred. It did not hesitate through a judicial decision to put to death an entire legion at one time, or [to destroy] an entire City, and to exile eight or ten thousand men with such extraordinary conditions as could be observed, not by one man alone, but by many; as happened to those soldiers who fought unhappily at Cannae, who it exiled in Sicily, and imposing on them that they not live in towns and should eat standing. But the most terrible of all other executions was the decimation of the army, where by lot, one out of ten in the army was put to death.

Nor in punishing a multitude could a more frightening punishment than this be found, for when a multitude errs, and where the author is not certain, everyone cannot be punished because they are too many: to punish a part and leave a part unpunished, would be wrong to those who would be punished, and the unpunished would have a mind to en another time. But to put to death part by lot when all merited it, those who are to be punished will complain of their lot, those who are not punished fear that another time

the lot might fall to them, and will guard themselves from error. The Poisoners and the Bacchanals, therefore, were punished according as their crimes merited.

And although these maladies in a Republic have a bad effect, they are not fatal, for there is always time to correct them; but there is no time for those that affect the State, which, if they are not corrected by a prudent man, ruin the City. Because of the liberality which the Romans showed in giving their civil privileges to foreigners, many new people sprung up in Rome, and these begun to have a part in the elections; so that the government began to change and depart from those institutions and principles of those men who had been accustomed to direct it. When Quintus Fabius, who was Censor, became aware of this, he put all the new people, from whom this disorder derived, into four Tribes, so that they should be unable (reduced to such small a space) to corrupt all Rome.

This was well recognized by Fabius, and put into effect a suitable remedy, which without change, was so well accepted by the Society [Republic], that he merited being called Maximus.

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