

HUI216

Italian Civilization

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25.0 Cody Center Walk for Developmental Disabilities

- The 1st annual Cody Center Walk for Developmental Disabilities is scheduled for Sunday, May 7, at 9:30 am
 - The Cody Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities is a unit of our Department of Pediatrics at the Stony Brook University Hospital
 - All Walk proceeds from registration and additional donations will benefit the Cody Center
- The Walk will begin at the Student Activities Center and follow a 2.2 mile circle around the Academic Mall
- Registration for the Walk is available online at
 - <https://naples.cc.sunysb.edu/UHMC/codyforms.nsf/signup>

25.1 Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527)

- 1498-1512: worked for the Florentine Republic
 - 1502-03: was in Romagna, at Cesare Borgia's court
 - was in Rome again in 1503
- When the Medici returned, Machiavelli was fired, then also arrested, tortured, and eventually confined to his villa in S. Andrea in Percussina
- 1513-14, 1515...: worked on *The Prince*
 - the book was rejected by the Medici
 - it was published only in 1530
 - later it was placed in the Index Librorum Prohibitorum

25.2 Machiavelli: other works

- *Discourses*
 - A commentary of Livy's *History of Rome*
- *Mandrake's Root*: if one of the most successful plays of the time
- 1518-19: he wrote *The life of Castruccio Castracani*
 - a more traditional biography: see the final speech, in which military/political leader Castruccio expresses remorse for his aggressive strategies
- 1520: starts working on the *Florentine history*
- 1527: in June, after the sack of Rome, dies
 - was rejected by the new Florentine government (once the Medicis were thrown out of the city again, before the siege of Florence 1529-30)

25.3 Letter to Francesco Vettori, Dec. 10, 1513

- Lunchtime comes, when my family and I eat that food which this poor farm and my meager patrimony permit.
- After eating, I return to the inn: there are I usually find the innkeeper, a butcher, a miller, and two bakers. With these men I waste my time playing cards all day and from these games a thousand disagreements and countless offensive words arise, and most of the time our arguments are over a few cents; nevertheless, we can be heard yelling from San Casciano.
- [*By doing this Machiavelli forgets about his bad Fortune, happy to be driven by her for now*]

25.3 Letter to Francesco Vettori, Dec. 10, 1513

- When evening comes, I return to my home, and I go into my study; and on the threshold, I take off my everyday clothes, which are covered with mud and mire, and I put on regal and curial robes; and dressed in a more appropriate manner I enter into the ancient courts of ancient men and am welcomed by them kindly, and there I taste the food that alone is mine, and for which I was born;

25.3 Letter to Francesco Vettori, Dec. 10, 1513

- and there I'm not ashamed to speak to them, to ask them the reasons for their actions; and they, in their humanity, answer me; and for four hours I feel no boredom, I dismiss every affliction, I no longer fear poverty nor do I tremble at the thought of death: I become completely part of them.

25.3 Letter to Francesco Vettori, Dec. 10, 1513: the first reference to *The Prince*

- And as Dante says that knowledge does not exist without the retention of it by memory, I have noted down what I have learned from their conversations, and I composed a little work, *De principatibus*, where I delve as deeply as I can into thoughts on this subject, discussing what a principality is, what kinds there are, how they are acquired, how they are maintained, why they are lost
- ...and to a Prince, and especially to a new Prince, it should be welcomed...

25.3 Letter to Francesco Vettori, Dec. 10, 1513

- I am urged to give it why the necessity that drives me: I'm wearing myself away, and I cannot remain in this state for long without being despised for my poverty, not to mention my desire that these Medici lords begin to make use of me, even if they start me off by rolling stones
- ... and in this work... they would see that I have been at the study of statecraft for 15 years and have not slept nor played about; and each one of them should be happy to obtain the services of one who is full of experience at another men's expense

25.3 Letter to Francesco Vettori, Dec. 10, 1513

- And they should not doubt my loyalty, for always having kept my word, I have not now learned to break it; and anyone who has been faithful and honest for 43 years, as I have been, cannot change his character; and my poverty is witness to my honesty and goodness.

25.4 *The prince*, dedication

- Wishing, therefore, to offer myself to your magnificence with some evidence of my devotion to you, I have not found among my belongings anything that I might value more or prize so much as the knowledge of the deeds of great men, which I learned from long experience in modern affairs and the continuous study of antiquity; having with great care and for a long time thought about and examined these deeds...

25.5 Traditional historiography and the truth

- Eyes → memory → intellect
- Seeing/experiencing → storing information/describing → selecting what is memorable and creating a convincing, coherent narration
- Autopsy
 - "The eyes are the most accurate witnesses" (Heraclitus, VI c. BCE)
 - Herodotus' ants (V c. BCE)
 - Medieval city states

25.6 Renaissance culture

- Leonardo da Vinci's idea of a realistic painting
 - The artist as an intellectual, not an artisan
 - A realistic painting is not simply a mirror
 - Eyes → memory/hand → artistic creation
 - Eyes → intellect → artistic creation
 - Vasari: Leonardo's dragon
 - A working model of reality

25.6 Vasari's Life of Leonardo

- And he suffered much in doing it, for the smell in the room of these dead animals was very bad, though Leonardo did not feel it from the love he bore to art. When the work was finished, Leonardo told his father that he could send for it when he liked.
- And Ser Piero going one morning to the room for it, when he knocked at the door, Leonardo opened it, and telling him to wait a little, turned back into the room, placed the picture in the light, and arranged the window so as to darken the room a little, and then brought him in to see it. Ser Piero at the first sight started back, not perceiving that the creature that he saw was painted, and was turning to go, when Leonardo stopped him saying, "The work answers the purpose for which it was made. Take it then, for that was the effect I wanted to produce."

25.7 Machiavelli's experience

- 1502-1503: at the court of Cesare Borgia
- Requests Plutarch's *Lives*
 - Hypothesis and verification
 - Plans and actions/predictions
- Multiple sources, multiple viewpoints
- Embracing different viewpoints
- Consistency vs. authority
 - Autopsy and gaps (Sanudo)
 - Consistency and trends/patterns, predictions (based on selective data)

25.8 Human nature

- The relevance of time
 - Aristotle's behaviorism
 - Psychological inertia
 - Pragmatism (Hell can wait / Hell is waiting)
 - Context
 - Rules are context-related, not universal
 - Limited in time
 - Well-defined in terms of space
- Nature and the individual's talents
 - The heroes vs. the sheep, the elite vs. the masses
- The centaur and the 'violence switch'
 - The fox and the lion
 - The power of one's image/reputation, as a means of control in alternative to violence (deterrence)

25.9 Chap. 7, New principalities acquired with help of others

- If, therefore, we consider all the steps taken by the Duke, we shall see that he laid sturdy foundations for his future power, and I do not judge it useless to discuss them, for I would not know of any better precepts to give to a new prince than the example of his deeds; and if he did not succeed in his plans, it was not his fault but was instead the result of an extraordinary and extreme instance of ill fortune.

25.9 Chap. 7, New principalities acquired with help of others

- Alexander VI, in his attempts to advance his son, the Duke, had many problems, both present and future.
- First, he saw no means of making him master of any state that did not already belong to the Church;
 - and if he attempted to seize anything belonging to the Church, he knew that the Venetians and the Duke of Milan would not agree to it because Faenza and Rimini were already under the protection of the Venetians.
- Moreover, he saw that the troops of Italy, and especially those he would have to use, were in the hands of those who had reason to fear the Pope's power;

25.9 Chap. 7, New principalities acquired with help of others

- Therefore, he had to disturb the order of things and cause turmoil among these states in order securely to make himself master of a part of them.
- This was easy for him to do, for he found that the Venetians, moved by other motives, had decided to bring the French back into Italy; not only did he not oppose this, but he rendered it easier by annulling King Louis' first marriage.
- The King, therefore, entered Italy with the aid of the Venetians and the consent of Alexander; and no sooner was he in Milan than the Pope procured troops from him for the Romagna campaign;

25.9 Chap. 7, New principalities acquired with help of others

- Having seized, then, Romagna and having beaten the Colonna, the Duke, wishing to maintain his gain and to advance further, was held back by two things:
 - first, his troops' lack of loyalty;
 - second, the will of France;
- ...As a consequence, the Duke decided to depend no longer upon the arms and fortune of others.

25.9 Chap. 7, New principalities acquired with help of others

- ...placing no trust either in France or other outside forces... he turned to deceptive methods.
- And he knew how to falsify his intentions so well that the Orsini themselves, through Lord Paulo, made peace with him; the Duke did not fail to use all kinds of gracious acts to reassure Paulo, giving him money, clothing, and horses, so that the stupidity of the Orsini brought them to Sinigaglia and into his hands.

25.9 Chap. 7, New principalities acquired with help of others

- Having removed these leaders and having changed their allies into his friends, the Duke had laid very good foundations for his power, having all of Romagna along with the Duchy of Urbino, and, more important, it appeared that he had befriended Romagna and had won the support of all of its populace once the people began to taste the beneficial results of his rule.

25.9 Chap. 7: Machiavelli simply adopts the point of view of the historical figure, the same way that Boccaccio did with his literary characters

- After the Duke had taken Romagna and had found it governed by powerless lords who had been more anxious to plunder their subjects than to govern them and had given them reason for disunity rather than unity, so that the entire province was full of thefts, fights, and of every other kind of insolence, he decided that if he wanted to make it peaceful and obedient to the ruler's law it would be necessary to give it good government.
- Therefore, he put Messer Remirro de Orco, a cruel and able man, in command there and gave him complete authority.

25.9 Chap. 7: even a prince with absolute power must worry about his public image (a modern strategy)

- This man, in little time, made the province peaceful and united, and in doing this he made for himself a great reputation.
- Afterward, the Duke decided that such excessive authority was no longer required, for he was afraid that it might become despised...
- And because he realized that the rigorous measures of the past had generated a certain amount of hatred, he wanted to show, in order to purge men's minds and to win them to his side completely, that if any form of cruelty had arisen, it did not originate from him but from the harsh nature of his minister.

25.9 Chap. 7, New principalities acquired with help of others

- And having come upon the opportunity to do this, one morning at Cesena he had Messer Remirro placed on the piazza in two pieces with a block of wood and a bloody sword beside him.
- The ferocity of such a spectacle left those people satisfied and amazed at the same time.

25.9 Chap. 7, New principalities acquired with help of others

- I say that the Duke, finding himself very powerful and partially secured from present dangers, having armed himself the way he wanted to, and having in large measure destroyed those nearby forces that might have harmed him, still had to take into account the King of France if he wished to continue his conquests, for he realized that the King, who had become aware of his error too late, would not support further conquest. And because of this, he began to seek out new allies and to temporize with France during the campaign the French undertook in the Kingdom of Naples...

25.9 Chap. 7, New principalities acquired with help of others

- ...as for future events, he had first to fear that a new successor in control of the Church might not be his friend and might try to take away from him what Alexander had given him.
- Against this possibility he thought to secure himself in four ways:
 - first, by putting to death all the relatives of those lords that he had dispossessed in order to prevent the Pope from employing that opportunity;

25.9 Chap. 7, New principalities acquired with help of others

- second, by gaining the friendship of all the noblemen of Rome... in order to hold the Pope in check by means of them;
- third, by making the College of Cardinals as much his own as he could;
- fourth, by acquiring such a large territory before the Pope died that he would be able to resist an initial attack without need of allies.

25.9 Chap. 7, New principalities acquired with help of others

- But Alexander died five years after he had drawn his sword. He left' his son, gravely ill, with only the state of Romagna secured and with all the others up in the air, between two very powerful enemy armies.
- And there was in the Duke so much ferocity and so much ability, and so well did he understand how men can be won or lost, and so firm were the foundations that he had laid in such a short time, that if he had not had those armies upon him or if he had been healthy, he would have overcome every difficulty.

25.9 Chap. 7: the first conclusion, with a positive judgment of Borgia's actions

- And he himself said to me, on the day when Julius II was crowned Pope, that he had thought of what might happen on his father's death, and he had found a remedy for everything, except he never dreamed that at the time of his father's death he too would be at death's door.
- Now, having summarized all of the Duke's actions, I would not know how to censure him; on the contrary, I believe I am correct in proposing that he be imitated by all those who have risen to power through Fortune and with the arms of others.

25.9 Chap. 7: the first conclusion, with a positive judgment of Borgia's actions

- Because he, possessing great courage and noble intentions, could not have conducted himself in any other manner; and his plans were frustrated solely by the brevity of Alexander's life and by his own illness.
- Anyone, therefore, who determines it necessary in his newly acquired principality to protect himself from his enemies, to win friends, to conquer either by force or by fraud, to make himself loved and feared by the people, to be followed and respected by his soldiers, to put to death those who can or should do him harm, to replace ancient institutions with new ones, to be severe and gracious, magnanimous and generous, to do away with unfaithful soldiers and to select new ones, to maintain the friendship of kings and of princes in such a way that they must assist you gladly or offend you with caution—that person cannot find more recent examples than this man's deeds.

25.9 Chap. 7: the second and final set of statements, with a different assessment/judgment of Borgia's actions (multiple points of views, like in Boccaccio)

- One can only censure him for making Julius Pope; in this he made a bad choice, since, as I said before, not being able to elect a Pope of his own, he could have kept anyone he wished from the papacy; and he should have never agreed to raising to the papacy any cardinal he might have offended or who, upon becoming Pope, might have cause to fear him. For men do harm either out of fear or hatred.
- ...And anyone who believes that new benefits make men of high station forget old injuries is deceiving himself. The Duke, then, erred in this election, and it was the cause of his ultimate downfall.