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Andrea Cilotta-Rubery

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# Gender and Fathers:

## The Rejection of Spiritual Fathers in Machiavelli's *Castruccio Castracani of Lucca*

Andrea Cilotta-Rubery

The State College of New York

*Throughout many of Machiavelli's works, the status of "fathers" appears both exalted and revered. As the ultimate "father," Machiavelli's new founder seems protected from the cruel maxims, applied to all others. However, "spiritual fathers" do not appear to be extended this same favorable status. Instead, certain pontiffs are seen as expendable, due to the political hazards created by their temporal roles. One soon recognizes that while there is a strong gender bias in favor of fathers, there is an even stronger bias of impiety, on the part of Machiavelli. By looking closely at The Life of Castruccio Castracani of Lucca, one is witness to the depths of Machiavelli's impiety, as he deliberately creates and then rejects a wholly virtuous priest. Not only is the good cleric's profession rejected, but so also are the doctrinal foundation of his belief system and moral character, as well.*

As issues of gender continue to be of special interest for many political scientists, the relationship of Christianity and gender proves to be especially provocative for those studying the writings of Niccolo Machiavelli. Naturally, one cannot begin to think about gender and Machiavelli without turning to Hanna Pitkin's *Fortune Is A Woman*. In this highly regarded work, Pitkin claims that "fathers" receive both special and revered treatment within the corpus of Machiavelli's works (1984, 54). For the most part, such a claim appears credible, with ample textual support showing Machiavelli's disdain for those who commit patricide. However, in their article *Patricide and the Plot of The Prince: Cesare Borgia and Machiavelli's Italy*, John Scott and Vicki Sullivan find several occasions

whereby Machiavelli seems to both condone and endorse the act of patricide. The occasions involve the desired murder of two infamous Popes, Julius II and Alexander VI (Scott and Sullivan, 1994, 893-894). According to Scott and Sullivan, Machiavelli seems to make an exception to his general contempt towards patricide with the politically expedient murder of these politically active Pontiffs. While Scott and Sullivan do not look at these two examples from the express perspective of gender, they do examine them in relationship to Christianity. Claiming that the Church is the intended target of Machiavelli's select calls for patricide, Scott and Sullivan go on to argue that Machiavelli's intention is to do away with the earthly presence of the Church (1994, 896).

It is my intention to combine, first, the themes of gender and Christianity, demonstrating that the exalted status of fathers is not applicable to Church fathers, in general.<sup>1</sup> As the symbol of Christianity, these Church fathers lose the most favored status of other fathers precisely because of their association with Christian faith and the resulting political problems that ensue from their presence. Second, and in line with Scott and Sullivan's argument, I argue that the intended target of Machiavelli's contempt is indeed the Church. However, I set out to show this with the use of an example of a Church father who is neither political nor unjust. While Scott and Sullivan's use of Julius II and Alexander VI makes a strong case in support of the claim that Machiavelli wishes to do away with the Church, it may prove unconvincing for some who view these two Popes to be more po-

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<sup>1</sup>In her work *Fortune is A Woman*, Hanna Pitkin discusses the notable idea that fathers, unlike all other members of society, remain separate and protected from Machiavelli's cruel political maxims. Pitkin attributes such veneration towards fathers as the result of Machiavelli's world view that sees the male father figure as the true generative source of life within the most important of all associations, the political (Pitkin, 1984, 54).

litical than religious. For this reason, I examine the little known figure of Messer Antonio, the good priest of Machiavelli's *The Life of Castruccio Castracani of Lucca*. Through the character of a truly pious and selfless priest, we observe the most vivid rejection of a Church father and his way of life. This example takes on even greater significance given that it is a wholly fictitious creation by Machiavelli. The deliberate invention of a truly good Church father who has no political involvement and yet, whose way of life is rejected, may reveal best Machiavelli's hostility and ultimate rejection of Christianity within his new world order.

As "...the embodiment of a generative paternity...", the new founder's fatherly role manifests itself in his efforts to either give birth to a new political order, founded upon his own *virtu*, or to reduce a state to its most fundamental foundations (Pitkin, 1984, 54). As Pitkin notes, both scenarios require the greatest skill, innovation, and mastery of subjects, on the part of the new founder (1984, 54-55). His innate *virtu* and grand generative purpose necessarily precludes him from disrespecting, rejecting, or killing his father. Pointing to Machiavelli's harsh judgment of Oliverotto da Fermo and Giovanpagolo Baglioni, men to whom Machiavelli refers to as "parricide[s]," Pitkin believes Machiavelli to hold patricide to be incongruous with the purpose and being of the new founder (1984,60-61). For these reasons, Machiavelli's new founder "...saves and protects, rather than slays, his father" (Pitkin, 1984, 61).

The idea that fathers remained sacred and untouched from any kind of rejection or malice at the hands of their sons proves most provocative, especially in light of Machiavelli's teaching that a man must view his actions in relation to whether or not they lead to "...his ruin rather than his preservation" (*The Prince*, 1985, 61). What if a scenario arose where a father did

not provide any political benefit to his son's prosperous fortunes? Should such a father still be revered? Moreover, what if the most grand of souls, the new founder, could profit by carrying out a patricide? Would Machiavelli still see this act as odious, especially if the patricide led to the new founder's well-being?

These questions were answered in part by John Scott and Vickie Sullivan in *Patricide and the Plot of The Prince: Cesare Borgia and Machiavelli's Italy* (1994, 889). Here, Scott and Sullivan present a persuasive argument regarding the complex, yet consistent nature of Machiavelli's view toward the Church. First, as the driving force behind much of Italy's current problems, the Church is blamed by Machiavelli for its inability to be either a powerful or weak force within Italian politics. Scott and Sullivan cite the famous passage in Book I, chapter 12 of *The Discourses* where Machiavelli addresses this middle ground position of the Church, as he states,

...because, though she [Italy] has dwelt there and possessed temporal power, she has not been so strong or of such ability that she could grasp sole authority in Italy and make herself ruler of the country. Yet, on the other had she has not been so weak that, when she feared to lose dominion over her temporal possessions, she could not summon a powerful man to defend her against anyone who in Italy had become too powerful (Scott and Sullivan, 1994, 889).

Thus, as a political entity, the Church's half hearted commitment to its position as a world power proves ruinous to the stability of Italian politics. However, Scott and Sullivan point out, rightly, that increasing the strength of the Church would not necessarily improve the situation, so long as it re-

mained unwilling to maintain its own troops and continue to use mercenaries (1994, 889).

Second, Machiavelli suggests that Christianity, as a faith, renders men powerless, as they are discouraged from remedying the ills of this world with the necessary force required (*The Discourses*, 1996, II, 2). Machiavelli goes as far as to suggest that the Christian faith and its teachings need to be "interpreted" differently, moving away from its dedication to "...humility, abjectness, and contempt of things human...and emphasizing instead, grand and spectacular ceremony, celebrating man's accomplishments in this world (*The Discourses*, 1996, II, 2). As Scott and Sullivan point out here, as elsewhere (see Sullivan, 1993), such an earthly reinterpretation of Christianity "...would cease to be recognizably Christian" (1994, 890). For Scott and Sullivan, Machiavelli's overall posture towards Christianity is hostility. As an institution and as a belief system, Christianity renders both the state and the internal man weak, respectively. For this reason, both authors are convinced that Machiavelli wishes to do away with the Church as an institution and as a revealed doctrine of faith.

Scott and Sullivan set out to prove this well founded argument further, in *Patricide and the Plot of The Prince: Cesare Borgia and Machiavelli's Italy*, by revealing Machiavelli's desire to have the Papacy abolished. Looking at the extreme scenario of patricide, they turn to Machiavelli's discussion of Giovampagolo Baglioni for proof that Machiavelli was willing to endorse patricide, especially in the case of the spiritual father, the Pope. While Machiavelli does refer to Baglioni as a "parricide," suggesting disapproval of his past deeds, his real criticism of Baglioni rests with Baglioni's unwillingness to kill Pope Julius II. Wasting a grand opportunity, "...for which everyone would have admired his courage, and which would have secured

him eternal fame...," Baglioni revealed his petty soul when he proved unable to carry out the justifiable patricide of killing the Holy Father (*The Discourses*, 1996, I, 27). As Scott and Sullivan conclude, had Baglioni carried out such a deed, "Machiavelli would certainly rank him beside Romulus and the others as 'one of the most excellent of princes'" (1994, 894).

More intriguing, however, is their main argument that Machiavelli's most powerful "endorsement" of patricide can be found in the plot of *The Prince*. Relying again on Machiavelli's many harsh criticisms of the Church, especially as they appear in *The Discourses* I, 12, Scott and Sullivan suggest that Machiavelli's true disappointment with Cesare Borgia was not with his allowing Julius II to become the next pope after his father's death, but with his allowing the papacy to continue, at all (1994, 894). Scott and Sullivan find proof for this with Machiavelli's admission in *The Prince* that "One could only indict him in the creation of Julius as pontiff, in which he made a bad choice; for, as we said, ...he could have kept anyone from being pope." In fact, they seem to suggest that Machiavelli's real solution to the problem of papal succession could have been remedied earlier had Cesare Borgia acted offensively and killed his father, Alexander VI. Had Cesare capitalized on this opportunity, he would have removed those political problems caused by and associated with the Church, for "...like Baglioni, Cesare is to be censured because he lacked the insight to capitalize on his criminal character and thus to become truly great" (1994, 896). As Scott and Sullivan argue, the true revelation of *The Prince* is not only its teaching on patricide, but its intent to do away with the Catholic Church completely (1994, 896).

Scott and Sullivan's conclusion regarding Machiavelli's intent to do away with the Church represents a significant challenge to the question of Machiavelli's piety. One cannot ignore

the fact that in an opus of works deifying fathers, spiritual fathers seem to have been singled out and removed from such a protected status. Machiavelli's definitive endorsement of patricide against Pope Julius II and possibly, Alexander VI, support such a claim. For Scott and Sullivan, the explanation for such patricides against these popes is simple. In the cases of both Alexander VI and Julius II, the presence and actions of these Holy Fathers proved a political liability to the state being created by Cesare Borgia. Unlike other fathers who serve a political good, Holy Fathers can prove the greatest of liabilities because of their dual role as both spiritual and political forces. With their spiritual role precluding them from carrying out openly those necessary tasks required of successful political rule, these Holy Fathers serve as a dividing and debilitating presence within Italy. Thus, the only reasonable remedy proves to be the killing of a particular Pope or the removal of the papacy, altogether.

In spite of its sound and persuasive argument, Scott and Sullivan's essay may not convince all Machiavelli scholars of the Florentine's profane scheme to do away with the Church. For those committed to the belief that Machiavelli remains, fundamentally, a Christian, their argument may not be persuasive, precisely because of its use of such examples as Julius II and Alexander VI.<sup>2</sup> One could argue that the dual roles carried out by these two men, both as political and spiritual leaders, may serve to compromise their status as true Church fathers. While these men were spiritual fathers, they were also political leaders who knowingly and willingly participated in politics, making them susceptible to the most treacherous of Machiavelli's teachings.

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<sup>2</sup>For those who do not view Machiavelli as impious, see Sebastian de Grazia, *Machiavelli in Hell* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), Sheldon S. Wolin, *Politics and Vision* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1960), and Dante Germino, "Second Thoughts on Leo Strauss's Machiavelli," *Journal of Politics* 28 (1966).



Indeed, Machiavelli does seem to endorse the killing of at least one pope, and possibly more, but these were men for whom lying, cheating, and acts of duplicity were commonplace. To say that Machiavelli wished to do away with Christianity because he wanted some politically active popes murdered, might be difficult to assert. As long as Machiavelli calls for the murder or rejection of spiritual fathers who carry out political acts of deception, one can never be sure of his enemy: Christianity in general, or merely, a political actor who wears the cloak of the Church. For this reason, there might remain a degree of uncertainty surrounding Scott and Sullivan's use of two politically tainted prelates as proof of Machiavelli's desire to do away with Christianity.

While Machiavelli's desired patricide of two politically corrupt Popes may not convince some audiences of his impiety, the rejection of a spiritual father who is good, lives according to Christ's teachings, and most important, has no involvement in politics, may. Such an example can be found with Machiavelli's largely fictional work *The Life of Castruccio Castracani of Lucca*. Written towards the end of Machiavelli's life, this short essay may prove to be a most important piece in solving the puzzle regarding Machiavelli's true position towards fathers, both temporal and spiritual alike, as well as the desired relationship between new founders and the Church. Its significance is two fold. First and most obvious, it is a work that deals with the themes of father/son relationships, potential new founders, and Christianity. Exhibiting traits of the new founder, Castruccio will take part in three parental relationships; first, with Messer Antonio, the priest; second, with Francesco Guinigi, the soldier and last, as father to Pagolo Guinigi. Here, readers have the opportunity to view the evolution of three parental relationships,

each different in nature and each revealing of the author's view towards fathers and the Church.

Second, while it is based upon the real life figure of Castruccio Castracani, Machiavelli's story remains marginally grounded in fact. Embellishing the circumstances of both his birth and death, Machiavelli's Castruccio is shaped to conform to several of his idealized traits of a new founder, namely, being of orphaned birth and suffering from early hardship. Machiavelli's ability to shape Castruccio proves most significant, for unlike his other political works, where Machiavelli steps into the role of judge, analyst, or political commentator, *Castruccio* presents Machiavelli as a creator, developing a model ruler whose actions and ideas will instruct audiences. While this might seem to be an odd departure in literary style for Machiavelli, it was a common practice amongst his Humanistic contemporaries. In his work *The Renaissance Interest in History*, Felix Gilbert writes of Renaissance authors, "they were not adverse to stylizing and embellishing the event or the person about whom they were writing, for their intention was to make the lessons which history taught as clear as possible" (1967, 377). We can be confident that this was Machiavelli's intention, for shortly after he wrote the *Castruccio* biography, he completed *The History of Florence*, whereby he provides a more accurate depiction of Castruccio's battles, his relationships with persons who influenced his life, and his tumultuous relationship with Guelf Florence (*History of Florence*, 1965a, 1109-1116). Since the historical facts surrounding Castruccio's life were known and recorded elsewhere by Machiavelli, we may assume that this biography is largely a work of fiction, stylized in a manner that is meant to reveal Machiavelli's teaching on great leaders and their relationship with the Church and its teachings.

The case can be made that *The Life of Castruccio Castracani of Lucca* may serve as one of the most critical indictments against Machiavelli's piety. Not only does it prove the point that "spiritual fathers" remain outside the protected embrace offered to all other fathers, but it also suggests that Machiavelli's real rejection of these "fathers" may have less to do with their political involvement and more to do with who and what they represent. By creating a fictitious spiritual father who is uncorrupted by the world but whose being and way of life are rejected, Machiavelli seems to suggest that Christianity, as an institution and as a belief system, has little place in his new order of politics. In the end, such a suggestion seems to add further doubt to any claim of piety. The seriousness of this conclusion warrants a closer look at *The Life of Castruccio Castracani of Lucca*.

After a decade of little or no involvement in Florentine political affairs, Machiavelli found himself being cautiously welcomed back into the same political arena which had banished him in 1512, following the fall of the Republic. The Medici government, now securely in control, had begun to use the former Secretary's vast knowledge of politics, in an attempt to procure some minor business dealings and political efforts for both itself and private Florentine citizens. It was in this capacity that Machiavelli was sent to Lucca in 1520 to settle some unresolved financial transactions of Florentine merchants, whose loans made to the Lucchese businessman Michele Guinigi, were unlikely to be honored (Machiavelli, 1986, 15). In an effort to recover some of the merchant's losses, Machiavelli found himself involved in a very long, deliberative process with local officials, judges and bankers. With much free time, he began to write a small biography of the famous Lucchese tyrant, Castruccio Castracani (Machiavelli, 1986, 15-16).

From the onset of this work, one has the impression that Castruccio is a significant figure in the world of Machiavelli's important men. Dedicating this work to "his very dear friends" Zanobi Buondelmonti and Luigi Alamanni, for whom he knows "more than other men...delight in noble acts," Machiavelli writes that Castruccio was a man who "did very great things—and like the others, did not have more fortunate or better-known beginning..." (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 534). Here, Machiavelli has set the stage for Castruccio's greatness by likening Castruccio to all of those great men in the past who "...in their birth and origin been humble and obscure, or at least have been beyond all measure afflicted by Fortune" (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 533). Like many of the great men for whom Machiavelli would come to view as new founders in *The Prince*, Castruccio too, will be abandoned and have an orphaned childhood. This alteration will prove to be the most significant change made to his life, for it provides readers with an opportunity to examine an invented father/son relationship.

Castruccio's fictitious origins begin with his being abandoned in a back vineyard behind the home of a local priest. A member of the "noble" Castracani family, this priest served as the Canon of St. Michael of Lucca and was referred to by all as "Messer" Antonio, as a sign of respect (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 534). He shared his home with his widowed sister, Madonna Dianora, who had no children of her own and who would discover the abandoned Castruccio crying in the vineyard (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 534). Being "full of compassion and amazement," she soon took the baby home, cared for it properly and showed him to her brother (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 535). Like his sister, Messer Antonio felt the same sense of "wonder and pity..." for the baby and thus, after some discussion with his sister, they agreed to raise the child (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 535). As Machiavelli writes,

"...they took care of him with the same love as though he were their own son," and as a sign of respect towards their own father, named him "Castruccio" at the time of his baptism (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 535).

From the initial description of Castruccio's orphaned beginning, one cannot help but notice the good and kind nature of both Messer Antonio and Madonna Dianora. Unlike the many corrupt and scandalous clerics present in Machiavelli's other works, Messer Antonio is depicted as wholly virtuous. Machiavelli has created a scenario whereby his readers cannot help but be impressed by this priest's character. Coming from the noble "Castracani" family and being worthy of the title of "Messer," this cleric seems to conform to the idyllic notion of a good priest, making him worthy of the audience's respect. Moreover, his kindness and pity towards the baby are matched by his considerate treatment of his sister, as he solicits her opinion as to the fate of the child. The nobility of his character is complete with Machiavelli's admission that the priest loved the child as his own and by naming the child after his own father, demonstrated the proper respect sons are to have towards their fathers.

However, the goodness of this priest was to go unrewarded. Hoping that the child would become a priest like himself, Messer Antonio schooled the young boy in lessons of the faith. Unfortunately, Castruccio had not the interest nor the "character" for becoming a priest (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 535). By the age of fourteen, Machiavelli writes that Castruccio had already felt confident enough to challenge Messer Antonio's intentions and instead, began to "...busy himself with weapons" (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 535). With no other purpose than to study the arts of battle and sport, Castruccio made himself noticed amongst his peers, for he proved more skilled and adept than any other his age. Such turn of events brought great sadness to

Messer Antonio, as he saw that his son had no interest in him or his vocation.

Castruccio's "turning away" from his father would be complete with his introduction to Francesco Guinigi, an accomplished Ghibelline mercenary whose "...business was war..." (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 535). Having observed the young Castruccio's mastery of sport and arms, Guinigi inquired as to his family situation and after being told, asked the boy where he would prefer to live "...in the house of a gentleman who would teach him to ride and to handle arms, or in the house of a priest where he would never hear anything other than holy offices and masses" (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 536). After hearing Castruccio's admission that he desired to become a soldier, Guinigi would soon arrange for Castruccio to leave Messer Antonio's home and move into his own, whereby he would become Castruccio's teacher and parent. After this change in homes, Castruccio would never again speak of Messer Antonio and would refer, exclusively, to Messer Guinigi as his father, until the time of his death.

While the transferal of Castruccio from one father to another occurs in a rather matter of fact manner, its significance is anything but matter of fact. Machiavelli's purposeful construction of Castruccio's orphaned birth is designed to connect Castruccio with other grand leaders of the same initial obscurity. However, what remains unclear are Machiavelli's reasons for choosing a priest to become this orphan's first father. The meaning of this choice seems to be linked to Machiavelli's long standing view towards fathers, the Church, and the value of Christianity.

The case can be made that Machiavelli's choice of a priest as father, and then subsequent rejection of him, may be seen as an attempt to show that the priestly profession is not a

worthy paternal model for an extraordinary young son. Since it is his intent to create a version of Castruccio that is more in keeping with his vision of a new founder, as discussed in *The Prince*, Machiavelli may not believe that a priest is capable of educating a new founder with the "external" essentials necessary for earthly success. Nowhere is this point better demonstrated than with Messer Francesco's contemptuous inquiry as to whether or not Castruccio wishes to remain in the "...house of a priest where he would never hear anything other than holy offices and masses" (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 536). Here, the whole tone and language of this question suggests that priestly skills are repetitive and useless. One cannot mistake this passage as anything other than Machiavelli's bias against the negative influence of such skills upon the worldly education of a potentially great man. For this reason, the priestly vocation must be rejected, for its skills and daily duties prove counterproductive in educating Castruccio with the necessary artistry required of Machiavelli's new founder.

This same view is posited by Joseph C. Macfarland in his recent article *Machiavelli's Imagination of Excellent Men: An Appraisal of the Lives of Cosimo de' Medici and Castruccio Castracani* (1999). Here, Macfarland argues, quite correctly, that Machiavelli has deliberately "fabricated" this priestly adoption in order that he can again reinforce the principle that the "virtuous life of arms..." is always superior to the life of the priesthood, with the latter necessarily precluding one from greatness (1999, 139). Such a profession offers little opportunity or resources for the achievement of great worldly acts, thus making it impossible for this grand soul to fully develop his earthly potential. Macfarland goes on to argue further that once Castruccio discards this priestly profession as a possible way of life, he becomes free to carry out the necessary acts of conspir-

acy, duplicity, and murder requisite for founding a new order. Castruccio's embrace of these latter acts could only be possible with an abandonment of the priestly profession and an overall "...indifference toward Christianity" (1999, 140).

Macfarland is certainly correct in asserting that the fabricated father/son relationship between Messer Antonio and Castruccio is an attempt on Machiavelli's part to disavow the possibility that great men can evolve within the priesthood. Machiavelli points out repeatedly the inadequacy of this profession in preparing young men for the rigors and challenges of the external, political world. However, it may also be indicative of something much more grave. Indeed, this fabricated relationship demonstrates Castruccio's "indifference" towards Christianity, as Macfarland suggests. However, one cannot help but wonder whether or not the same can be said of Machiavelli's view towards Christianity? In the end, the case can be made that the rejection of Messer Antonio is not merely an act of "indifference" but in fact, a rejection of Christianity as a spiritual and doctrinal entity within itself and thus, an expression of Machiavelli's impiety.

The first issue to consider in defense of this claim is Machiavelli's construction of the character of Messer Antonio. Here, we see no ordinary example of a priest and his priestly profession. Instead, Machiavelli has deliberately constructed a unique figure who is good, virtuous and non-political. Such a realization takes on great significance given that the prelates mentioned in Machiavelli's other works are seen largely as corrupt, vicious, gluttonous, or contemptuous.<sup>3</sup> Machiavelli may have deliberately constructed a virtuous cleric in order to reveal

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<sup>3</sup>For corrupt, cruel, or political prelates see Machiavelli's *The Mandragola*, *The Prince*, chs. 7, 11, 13, 16, 18, 25, *The Discourses*, I, 12, 27; II, 22, 24; III, 9, 11, 44.



something beyond his usual teachings and observations regarding priests and their profession. Instead, his purpose may be to reveal something about the beliefs of this good man, namely, the value of the words and acts of Jesus Christ.

As Machiavelli suggests, Messer Antonio is a priest whose goodness and sincerity would prompt him to go beyond the mere motions of his job and instead, teach his young son the works of Christ as only a true believer could (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 536). Castruccio would necessarily learn the standard Christian morality embodied in the words and actions of Jesus Christ, such as the need for honesty, loyalty, charity, virtue, kindness, compassion, respect for human life, etc. In short, Messer Antonio's influence would go far beyond a mere hearing of "holy offices and masses" (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 536). Instead, it would directly shape Castruccio's soul to goodness. For Machiavelli, such an influence would produce a type of character contrary to what is needed or desired for an extraordinary man; a man who must at times, "...learn....not to be good." (*The Prince*, 1985, ch. 15). Thus, it is precisely Messer Antonio's goodness that would prove dangerous in the political order Machiavelli desires to create.

Thus, one cannot view Castruccio's rejection of Messer Antonio as the mere rejection of an ill-suited job or profession. Instead, it must be seen as the rejection of a doctrine, a virtuous way of life, precisely because Messer Antonio is a creation who embodies Christ's goodness. To reject him is to reject Christ and thus, goodness in general. By implying that the ways and beliefs of a simple, honest cleric are not appropriate for the education of a potential new founder, Machiavelli has implied that Christ's "Truth" is less useful than a soldier's "Truth" for the education of certain men, thus making it less true. While this distinction may be of political use, it has no support in scripture, for Christ

never suggests that his teachings are only applicable for certain men and not others. Necessarily, one comes to the somber conclusion that the purpose behind the deliberate creation of a virtuous priest and his subsequent rejection, can be nothing other than a willful demonstration of the uselessness of Christ's teachings in the creation of a great man. Such a message can only be the product of a non-believer.

The impact of this rejection is heightened further by the respectful father/son relationships that would subsequently evolve between Castruccio and Francesco Guinigi, his second adoptive father and Pagolo Guinigi, Messer Francesco's 13 year old son who is left in his care. As the new son of a soldier, Castruccio develops all of the grand qualities necessary to become a new founder. Paying the greatest tribute to this father, Castruccio admits that he owes all of his success to Messer Francesco, as he was "...brought up by him and loved by him much more than if [he] had been born of his own blood" and "...became valiant and capable" under his tutelage (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 553). In return for such devoted service, Messer Francesco calls for Castruccio at the time of his death and asks that "...he bring up his son with the same devotion as Castruccio himself had been brought up..." (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 537). Like a good son who reveres his father, this wish was immediately granted, as Castruccio reveals to Pagolo on his own deathbed:

And because, when he [Messer Francesco Guinigi] was about to die, he entrusted you and all his property to my loyalty, I have brought you up with the same love and increased the property with the same loyalty by which I was bound and now am. And so that you should have not merely what was left you by your father but also what Fortune and my ability have gained, never have I been willing to take a wife, in

order that love of children should not so hinder me that I could not in every way show the family of your father such gratitude and I believed myself bound to show (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 553).

As this passage suggests, Machiavelli remains steadfast to his original view that earthly fathers must be exalted by their sons. With sentiments of love and gratitude toward Messer Francesco, Castruccio rears his father's son with unmatched loyalty. Forsaking a wife and children of his own, Castruccio showers Pagolo with undivided attention and care in order that he raise the boy with the same dedication and attention shown earlier to him by Messer Francesco.

*The Life of Castruccio Castracani of Lucca* ends with a final fabricated scene, whereby Machiavelli reveals some final lessons regarding statecraft. This instruction comes in the form of fatherly advice, with Castruccio warning the young Pagolo about the dangers present in the empire he has just amassed. While these touching deathbed thoughts are in keeping with Machiavelli's overall exaltation of fathers and the sanctity of father/son relationships, it does little to bolster any positive perception regarding Machiavelli's piety, especially with regards to the precarious status of spiritual fathers. Here, we see again, Castruccio acting as the ever attentive father giving his son advice which will help to keep him secure, as well as the respectful son, paying final homage to the father who helped to create his political grandeur, Messer Francesco. However, Castruccio makes no mention of his first adoptive father, the good priest Messer Antonio. In fact, there is to be no mention of Messer Antonio throughout the rest the work. For Castruccio, the love and care offered by this priest was not worth acknowledging either in life or death. His silence speaks loudly as to Machiavelli's understanding of paternal value. The generational defer-

ence and respect exhibited in the relationships of Messer Francesco, Castruccio, and Pagolo, seem to apply only to fathers and sons of this world. Spiritual fathers like Messer Antonio remain outside this privilege and sanctified relationship.

In keeping with the rest of his life, Castruccio's final thoughts would be exclusively of this world, suggesting to Pagolo that men alone are responsible for their fortunes, as he warns, "You must not, therefore, trust in anything except your own cleverness and the memory of my ability..." (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 554). With these words, Machiavelli seems to reject further, the influence of Christianity in a new founder's life for here, his rejection extends beyond the good priest, carrying over into a rejection of God. If a truly great man must only rely on himself and the memory of other great men in order to be successful, then Machiavelli's world is exclusively temporal, directed and driven by the power of men. Even in death, Castruccio offers nothing and attributes nothing to God, for God has had no role in this new founder's life.

God is dealt a final, irreverent blow with Machiavelli's fictional aphorisms included at the end of the biography which he attributes to Castruccio. In an exchange where Castruccio is asked directly whether or not he ever considered becoming a friar, in exchange for salvation, he responds negatively, for "...it seemed to him strange that Brother Lazarus should be going to Heaven and Ugucione della Faggiuola to Hell" (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 558). The Lazarus story which is told in Luke 16:19-31 depicts the poor beggar Lazarus lying at the gate of a rich man, in the hopes of being offered any food or comfort. Unfortunately, the sore ridden beggar, whose wounds were licked by dogs, receives no such care or attention from the rich man. After his death, Lazarus is welcomed into the arms of Abraham, thus receiving heavenly salvation, while the rich man suffers a tor-

menting fate in Hell. To Castruccio, the story seems contrary to his notion of what is good and evil, valuable and useless. He seems puzzled as to why God rewards a man like Lazarus, who accomplished nothing of human worth and depends upon others to sustain his existence, while punishing a man like Ugucione della Faggiuola, who skillfully amasses great territory to his Pisan empire (*Castruccio*, 1965b, 538). For Castruccio, rewarding the useless and punishing the accomplished is an inversion of true salvation. Of course, such a view can only be attributed to a man who views human worth exclusively by external acts. Never does he seem to calculate the moral cost paid by Ugucione for the treacherous acts committed in the creation of his empire. Instead, he judges the Pisan leader exclusively on his actions and acquisitions. Similarly, Castruccio never seems to examine the internal goodness of Lazarus, who achieves no earthly grandeur but whose soul remains uncompromised.

Castruccio's irreverent dismissal of this offer for salvation demonstrates his complete worldliness, his rejection of any type of internal, moral life, as well as an overall disregard for the value of Christianity. If Christianity was to reward those of earthly accomplishments, then maybe he would begin to regard it well, but even here, Christianity's worth is being evaluated by human measure. Thus, to a man who deems all greatness to be found on earth, the offer of salvation which comes at the cost of abandoning all earthly grandeur, seems absurd.

Much like Messer Antonio, whose presence made no valuable contribution to the grand plans of Castruccio, neither has the notion of salvation nor the teachings of Christ. This realization becomes most significant when one recalls that these actions and sentiments of Castruccio's are the fictional creation of Machiavelli. By rejecting the ideal, earthly spiritual father, the true manifestation of God's word and way of life on earth,

Machiavelli rejects the Heavenly Father, as well. This realization bodes poorly for any who hold fast to the belief that Machiavelli is pious. In the end, Castruccio's rejection of the good priest, with all of its implications regarding the value of Christianity and the role of God in a new founder's life, must be seen as Machiavelli's own.

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