

**DE RE MILITARI  
IN MACHIAVELLI'S *PRINCE* AND MORE'S *UTOPIA*.**

The present study intends to show the similarity of thought in Machiavelli's *Prince* and More's *Utopia* as it regards the subjects of armies, war and the security of the state. At first glance the two works may seem to be at opposite poles, since one advocates crude realism and the so called « progressive ideas »<sup>1</sup> of European politics, stemming from a non-Christian and non-religious viewpoint, and the other is the product of Christian Humanism and idealism which More shared with people such as Erasmus, Colet and Vives. Yet they do indeed have much in common.

Thomas More wrote *Utopia* (1515-16) approximately two years after Machiavelli wrote *Il Principe* (1513).<sup>2</sup> He did not know of Machiavelli, but like the Italian, he was concerned with the state of affairs in Europe, with the role of monarchies, of the Church, of mercenaries and with war. Machiavelli deals with crude political realism and More with an imaginary land whose main tenets of laws and principles are based on reason and morality. A close analysis reveals that *Utopia*'s political status and theory are based on « power politics, » as Gerhard Ritter demonstrates.<sup>3</sup> We know that More genuinely hated war, violence and bloodshed. He was very skeptical about the politics of European states whose systems functioned on the basis of immorality, greed and pride. Could he, therefore, approve the conduct of the Utopians as regards war and related matters? No, but the Utopians are not Christian. They resemble the virtuous pagans of antiquity. In fact, *Utopia* is based on reason, not Christian humanism or faith. If the key to the interpretation of *Utopia* is irony and Lucianic sarcasm, then we can understand how this imaginary land is not the answer to Europe's state of affairs. It could be, however, the lesser evil, for at least in *Utopia* there is peace, since Christianity has had no impact on the princes and kings of Europe. It is, therefore, inevitable that the Utopians, in order to achieve their political independence, stability and security had to take recourse in a political philosophy very akin to Machiavelli's.

An analysis of the two texts will demonstrate the above and show, moreover, how Machiavelli and More shared the same opinions concerning mercenary forces, auxiliary and mixed forces, and citizens' militias. Although many studies mention the two authors in conjunction, <sup>4</sup> I have not found any detailed examination of their books on the subject of war and armies.

In chapter XII of Machiavelli's *Prince* it is stated that the most important foundations of a state are good laws and good armies, and that good laws cannot exist without good armies :

The principal foundations of all states, the new as well as the old and the mixed, are good laws and good armies. And because there cannot be good laws where armies are not good, and where there are good armies, there must be good laws, I shall omit talking of laws and shall speak of armies. I say, then, that the armies with which a prince defends his state are either his own, or they are mercenary or auxiliary or mixed. <sup>5</sup>

Although the notion of *good laws, good armies* « has caused some difficulty to his commentators, » <sup>6</sup> Machiavelli believes that good laws will create loyal citizens ready and united to defend their state and even die for it. The subjects are fighting for their glory not for someone's ambition. <sup>7</sup> While Machiavelli is advocating good armies it must be noted that he is doing so for the defense of the state, not for the conquest of others. Indeed this is a central concept in his later work *The Art of War (L'arte della guerra, 1521)*. <sup>8</sup>

Machiavelli is not a war-monger, but an advocate of the defense of the state and ultimately the unification of Italy, though this is not his main purpose in the *Prince*, <sup>9</sup> by expelling the « barbaro dominio » through strong arms and unity. Having stated that he will not deal with laws, but with arms, Machiavelli proceeds to attack mercenary and auxiliary forces, defining them to be « inutile e pericolose ». Mercenary forces are faithless, vile, cowardly :

The mercenary and the auxiliary are useless and dangerous ; if a prince continues to base his government on mercenary armies, he will never be stable or safe ; they are disunited, ambitious, without discipline, disloyal ; valiant among friends, among enemies cowardly ; they have no fear of God, no loyalty to men (p. 47).

Machiavelli enlarges the scope of his argument by stating that the ruin of Italy was caused by nothing other than its reliance on mercenary troops. His historical *exempla* are indisputable. He states, at one point, that what Venice had gained in 800 years it lost in one day by using mer-

cenaries at Vailate or Agnadello, where it suffered a heavy defeat in 1509. In a succinct phrase he dissects the uselessness of mercenary armies :

From these soldiers, then, come only slow, late and slender winnings, but sudden and astonishing losses (p. 50).

He blames the Church for favoring these armies so that she could meddle in temporal affairs, and since the Church had no soldiers, she had to hire foreign troops. The result of all this was the plundering and the raping of Italy :

The result of their efficiency is that Italy has been overrun by Charles, plundered by Louis, violated by Ferdinand, and insulted by the Swiss (p. 50).

In chapter XIII Machiavelli systematically denies the usefulness of auxiliary forces, stating that they are good only for themselves, but dangerous and damaging to the state that uses them : « losing, you are the prisoner » (p. 51). With ironic sarcasm he adds that he who does not wish to win ought to use these troops for they are more dangerous than mercenary forces. Since they are united and under one command, they can oppress you easily : « In short, from mercenaries the greater danger is laziness, from auxiliaries efficiency » (p. 52). Therefore, according to the Florentine, a wise ruler must use his own army, for it is better to lose with one's own army than to win with someone else's, since this is not a real victory. His conclusion is a gem of concision and frugality of language : « In short, the armour of another man either falls off your back or weighs you down or binds you » (p. 53). Machiavelli deals with a mixed army, « li eserciti misti », by citing the example of Louis XI of France who abandoned the system set up by his father Charles VII, that is the so called « campagne di ordinanza », in which royal officers substituted and replaced the permanent *condottieri*. Louis, instead, called in the Swiss, so that the army of France was partly his own and partly Swiss, thus mixed. He reposes the mixed armies superior to mercenary and auxiliary forces, but far inferior to a truly national army. In his concluding paragraph, Machiavelli mentions *fortuna, virtù* and *fede*, three of the most loaded words in the *Prince*, but very precise and appropriate to the subject in question :

I conclude, then, that without her own armies no principedom is secure ; on the contrary, she is entirely dependent on Fortune, not having strength that in adversity loyally defends her (p. 54).

The distinction is noteworthy : with mercenary, auxiliary and mixed troops, the ruler places himself at the mercy of fortune, with his own army he relies on valour and loyalty. <sup>10</sup>

In chapter XIV Machiavelli advises the ruler to be, above all, prepared for war ; he must be strong so as to defend himself in the event of outside aggression and when Fortune changes. He must keep his army well trained and strong, more in time of peace than in time of war. Physical and mental training are the most important aspects of military preparedness, for arms is the ruler's only profession and occupation. <sup>11</sup> This preparedness allows the ruler to overcome adversities and the mutation of fortune :

Such methods as these are always practiced by a wise prince, and never in time of peace is he lazy, but of such times he diligently makes capital on which he can draw in period of distress, so that when Fortune changes he is ready to withstand her (p. 57).

Machiavelli's precept of « good laws, good armies » and vice versa, is confirmed and put into practice in the island state of Utopia. The Utopians are extremely well prepared to defend themselves even though they hate war and consider it subhuman :

War, as an activity fit only for beasts and yet practiced by no king of beasts so constantly as by man, they regard with utter loathing. Against the usage of almost all nations they count nothing so inglorious as glory sought in war. Nevertheless men and women alike assiduously exercise themselves in military training on fixed days lest they should be unfit for war when need requires. <sup>12</sup>

The fact remains that the Utopians are so well organized, so strong, so well governed that they have nothing and no one to fear. On the contrary, they are feared so that the enemy would greatly hesitate before attacking them. Their philosophy is to capture the leaders of the enemies by bidding for them and then purchasing them because :

They are as sorry for the throng and mass of the enemy as for their own citizens. They know that the common folk do not go to war of their own accord but are driven to it by the madness of kings (p. 205, 29-32).

The states of « mad kings » do not have good laws, nor good arms, for if they did their leaders could not be bought nor would they have any reason to engage in war against the Utopians. As Raphael Hythlodæus states :

In the first place almost all monarchs prefer to occupy themselves in the pursuits of war -- with which I neither have nor desire any acquaintance --

rather than in the honorable activities of peace, and they care much more how, by hook or by crook, they may win fresh kingdoms than how they may administer well what they have got (p. 57, 25-30).

The last sentence above is the key to the stability, prosperity, security and superiority of the Utopians.

That military preparedness is a vital part of the Utopians' system can well be seen in conjunction with Machiavelli's principles. In both cases the aim is not conquest, but defense and solidarity (even the Utopians claim the right to occupy unused lands and for humanitarian reasons which is the seed of colonialism). Whereas More, as a Christian Humanist, rejects and detests war, in Utopia he is presenting a pagan society, thus the role of war and military preparedness is justified. As Ritter says :

Utopia, secure in the knowledge of its own moral superiority, also knew how to act in times of war. It would be wrong to think of More as an absolute pacifist like Erasmus. <sup>13</sup>

And I believe that it is the principle of « good laws -- good armies » that allows More to name so many instances in which war is justifiable with the Utopians :

Yet they do not lightly go to war. They do so only to protect their own territory or to drive an invading enemy out of their friends' lands or in pity for a people oppressed by tyranny, to deliver them by force of arms from the yoke and slavery of a tyrant, a course prompted by human sympathy (p. 201, 4-9). <sup>14</sup>

More, therefore, attempts to paint war as « an act of political humanity ». <sup>15</sup> It is along those lines that the idea expressed by Machiavelli in chapter XV, that of self-preservation, applies to *Utopia*. Although *Utopia* is what Machiavelli would call « a dreamed up republic » -- while he wants to discuss « la verità effettuale della cosa » <sup>16</sup> -- More makes the Utopians behave in a very realistic manner by stating that :

Their one and only object in war is to secure that which, had it been obtained beforehand, would have prevented the declaration of war. If that is out of the question, they require such severe punishment of those on whom they lay the blame that for the future they may be afraid to attempt anything of the same sort. These are their chief interests in the enterprise, which they set about promptly to secure, yet taking more care to avoid danger than to win praise or fame (p. 203, 28-35).

The Utopians believe that « the fellowship created by nature takes the place of a treaty » (p. 199, 32-33). They live according to the prescrip-

tion of nature, which is their definition of virtue. Even though they do not make treaties they are well trained for war. This fact indicates their recognition that not all people live according to the precepts of nature, and not all are therefore « virtuous ». This is nothing but Realpolitik. Having the power, they do not need treaties. The final goal of the Utopians being their common good, they consider it a folly to cause bloodshed in order to obtain a victory. They prefer to utilize another method : to defeat the enemy with the power of the intellect.

If they overcome and crush the enemy by stratagem and cunning, they feel great pride and celebrate a public triumph over the victory and put up a trophy as for a strenuous exploit. They boast themselves as having acted with valor and heroism whenever their victory is such as no animal except man could have won, that is, by strength of intellect ; for, by strength of body, say they, bears, lions, boars, wolves, dogs, and other wild beasts are wont to fight. Most of them are superior to us in brawn and fierceness, but they are all inferior in cleverness and calculation (p. 203, 18-27).

This whole passage is remarkable in its similarity of words and images to that most famous of chapters in the *Prince* (XVIII) where Machiavelli employs the word « astuzia » and utilizes animal symbolism. More speaks of « arte doloque victos, » of « ingenii viribus, » « ingenio » and « ratione », as superior to the brute force of animals, recognizing that mere force is against their ethical view. They do employ cunning, which is a dimension of the intellect whether ethical or unethical. This, however, does not exclude the fact that their army can fight with the strength of such animals as bears, lions, boars, wolves and dogs.<sup>17</sup> Having this potential in reserve, they can afford the utilization of the mind to achieve their end. They, who shun and despise money, use it to buy others so that the leaders of their enemies can be captured or overthrown.<sup>18</sup> The fox is not mentioned in More's account but it is mirrored in the word « cunning » :

It is not easy to say whether they are more cunning in laying ambushes or more cautious in avoiding them (p. 213, 17-18).

The translation of « arte doloque » is therefore extremely important, for it justifies and explains the kind of ruses employed by the Utopians : placards, money for an assassin or for those who buy the enemy alive, bribes to obtain the leaders or kings, because they know quite well that « so easily do bribes incite men to commit every kind of crime » (p. 205, 15). The Utopians consider this wise and humane :

This habit of bidding for and purchasing an enemy, which is elsewhere condemned as the cruel deed of a degenerate nature, they think reflects great credit, first on their wisdom because they thus bring to a conclusion great wars without any battle at all, and secondly on their humanity and mercy because by the death of a few guilty people they purchase the lives of many harmless persons who would have fallen in battle, both on their own side and that of the enemy (p. 205, 22-29).

The Utopians moreover « sow the seeds of dissension » (p. 205, 33) within the enemy and « they supply money liberally » (p. 205, 39). Since their ultimate goal is « peace », « justice » and their own good, these actions are justified. More has the sanction and the authority of St. Thomas who allows a certain amount of deception in such circumstances.<sup>19</sup> Given the circumstances, then, the Utopians would use both force and the intellect to achieve their aim, even though they prefer the second alternative. This is not very different from the Machiavelli prescription :

You need to know, then, that there are two ways of fighting : one according to the laws, the other with force. The first is suited to man, the second to the animals ; but because the first is often not sufficient, a prince must resort to the second. Therefore he needs to know well how to put to use the traits of animal and of man ... The prince must be a fox, therefore, to recognize the traps and a lion to frighten the wolves. Those who rely on the lion alone are not perceptive (pp. 64-65).

Is there a distinction in terms of the final goal of the Utopians and *The Prince* ? Isn't Machiavelli's final goal the common good of the state, of Florence and Italy, as exemplified in the concluding chapter of *The Prince* ? If Florence and Italy had achieved the power, security and serenity of Utopia, no doubt Machiavelli would recommend the same principles as More. As Ritter states :

In order to avoid rivalry and real struggle More gave his Utopians a flying start by granting them undoubted economic superiority over all their neighbors. But he appeared blissfully unaware -- and one cannot doubt his sincerity -- of the fact that he had placed them in such a position of overwhelming strength, had endowed them with a political power which must have been a threat in the eyes of their neighbors ; it was really asking for trouble and abuse of power.<sup>20</sup>

In conclusion, while on the surface the reader may consider the Utopians' customs and beliefs ethically pure and idealistic as regards military affairs and political power, and therefore on the opposite pole of Machiavelli's *Prince*, in reality the foundation of the thought, the principles of human nature and conduct, of the body politic, are quite similar.

Let us now proceed to the four types of armies found both in *The Prince* and in *Utopia*: mercenary, auxiliary, mixed and one's own militia. To fight in their wars, the Utopians hire the Zapoletans, who are ruthless, bloodthirsty, rapacious, but « fearsome, rough and wild. » They will fight for the Utopians anytime since they are paid at the highest rate. The Utopians regard them with the same contempt as Machiavelli regards mercenaries. They would like to see them wiped out :

The Utopians do not care in the least how many Zapoletans they lose, thinking that they would be the greatest benefactors to the human race if they could relieve the world of all the dregs of this abominable and impious people (p. 209, 11-15).

But while Machiavelli wishes to ban the usage of mercenaries altogether, the Utopians use them. The significant difference is that the Utopians have nothing to fear from mercenaries. In fact, they never allow foreign troops on their land :

If any king takes up arms against them and prepares to invade their territory, they at once meet him in great strength beyond their borders. They never lightly make war in their own country nor is any emergency so pressing as to compel them to admit foreign auxiliaries into their island (p. 217, 1-5).

Their political and economic superiority allows them to make use of mercenaries without any danger to their state. Moreover, the commander in chief of the whole army is always a Utopian.

For Machiavelli the situation is totally different. In chapter XII of *The Prince*, he begins his historical examples by stating that Charles VIII, King of France, was able to conquer Italy (1494) « with chalk, » and that is when « le arme mercenarie ... mostrorono quelle che le erano. » In the whole chapter there is not one positive example of a mercenary army or *condottiere*. Even though F. Chabot states that Machiavelli confuses « mercenarism » and « condottierism » and accuses him of being superficial in dismissing mercenaries within the historical context of the times, it is an historical fact that mercenaries and *condottieri* caused only destruction, disunity and weakness to the Italian peninsula.<sup>21</sup> The Italian cities and states were dependent on mercenary armies. The Utopians were not. That is the basic difference.

Another interesting aspect is that the Utopians employ, besides the Zapoletans, a mixed army, an auxiliary one, and one made up of their own citizens :

Next to them they employ the forces of the people for whom they are fight-

ing and then auxiliary squadrons of all their other friends. Last of all they add a contingent of their own citizens out of which they appoint some man of tried valor to command the whole army (p. 209, 16-19).

All these are in effect the four types of armies discussed by Machiavelli. And as the Florentine concludes that without « arme proprie, nessuno principato è sicuro » (ch. XIII), and that the ruler must be militarily ready and have his troops well trained in the event of outside aggression (ch. XIV), the Englishman concludes his discussion on the composition of the Utopian army by discussing the valor, the expert military training that the Utopians themselves possess :

As I have said, they take every care not to be obliged to fight in person as long as they can finish the war by the assistance of hired substitutes. When personal service is inevitable, they are as courageous in fighting as they are ingenious in avoiding it as long as they might (p. 211, 11-15).

The power and efficiency of the Utopians is greatly enhanced by the presence of their women and children :

When they have gone out, they are placed alongside their husbands on the battle front. Each man is surrounded by his own children and relations by marriage and blood so that those may be closest and lend one another mutual assistance whom nature most impels to help one another (p. 211, 1-6).<sup>22</sup>

The defense of the family is, then, the defense of the state,<sup>23</sup> or as Machiavelli would say in *The Discourses* :

Because in these armies where there is no affection for him in whose behalf they fight, so that they do not become their partisan, there never can be enough military vigor to resist an enemy who has little of that vigor (p. 286).

Both authors, therefore, advocate basically a self-reliance, a strength and independence that can only be obtained by having an army of citizens who will fight for their good and the good of the commonwealth with a spirit of love, sacrifice and valour. Regardless of the fact that Machiavelli is writing about principalities and More about an ideal state, and the difference in political nature and circumstances of their respective countries, there is an agreement in the two writers on how a state should defend and protect itself and on what forces to rely primarily, namely a people's army. As a result of this, Utopia is the most perfect example of « good laws, good armies ; » but in order to arrive at the ideal state of *Utopia* the realities of power and the means to achieve it are very « Machiavellian, » notwithstanding the Christian Humanism of its author.

## NOTES

1. Cfr. R.W. Chambers, « The Rational Heathens, » in *Twentieth Century Interpretations of 'Utopia'*, ed. William Nelson (Englewood N.J. : Prentice Hall, 1968), pp. 17-32.
2. Vittorio Gabrieli, « L'elemento italiano nella vita e nelle opere di Thomas More », *La Cultura*, 17, 3-4 (1979), pp. 235-70. Gabrieli states that Machiavelli's *Prince* was most probably available in England in manuscript form while More was still alive (p. 260). He adds that Francesco Vettori knew of *Utopia* and mentions it in his *Sommario della Historia d'Italia*. The first Florentine edition of *Utopia* by Giunta is dated 1519 (p. 261). If this is so, it seems possible that Machiavelli himself knew of *Utopia* and that his statement in Chapter 15 refers also to *Utopia* : « E molti si sono imaginati republiche e principati che non si sono mai visti né conosciuti essere in vero » (Ch. XV, p. 40, Raimondi ed.). The popularity of *Utopia* in Italy is confirmed by the fact that the first Italian translation is in 1548 by Ortensio Landi, three years before it was translated into English. Cfr. Thomas Wheeler, « Thomas More in Italy 1535-1700, » *Moreana*, 27, pp. 15-23.
3. Gerhard Ritter, « *Utopia* and Power Politics » in *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Utopia*, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-52.
4. See J.H. Hexter, *The Vision of Politics on the Eve of the Reformation : More, Machiavelli and Seyssel* (New York : Basic Books, 1973) ; T.S. Dorsch, « A Detestable State » in *Twentieth Century Interpretations of 'Utopia'*, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-89 ; Leslie Paul, « Machiavelli and More », *Moreana*, 15 (1967), pp. 141-144 ; Northrop Frye, « Variety of Literary Utopias, » *Dedalus*, 94 (1965), p. 336 ; Alice B. Morgan, « Philosophic Reality and Human Construction in the *Utopia*, » *Moreana*, 39 (1973), pp. 15-23.
5. N. Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 47. Throughout the essay quotations from *The Prince* and *Discourses* are from *Machiavelli, The Chief Works and Others*, Volume 1, trans. Allan Gilbert (Durham, N.C. : Duke University Press, 1965). References to them will be give in parenthesis in the text. For the Italian edition see N. Machiavelli, *Opere*, ed. Ezio Raimondi (Milano : Mursia, 1969).
6. See Alan H. Gilbert, *Machiavelli's 'Prince' and Its Forerunners* (Durham N.C. : Duke University Press, 1938), pp. 62-67.
7. See also *Discorsi*, I, iv.
8. See in *Dell'arte della guerra* : « Ma se si considerassono gli antichi ordini, non si troverebbero cose più unite, più conformi e che di necessità, tanto l'una amasse l'altra, quanto queste ; perchè tutte l'arti che si ordinano in una civiltà per cagione del bene comune degli uomini, tutti gli ordini fatti in quella per vivere con timore delle leggi e d'Iddio, sarebbero vani, se non fussono preparate le difese loro ... » N. Machiavelli, *Tutte le Opere*, eds. G. Mazzoni and M. Casella (Firenze : Barbera, 1929) p. 265.

9. Ernst Cassirer, *The Myth of the State* (New Haven : Yale Univ. Press, 1961), p. 142.
10. See A.H. Gilbert : « Indeed the monarch who does not direct his own army is wholly under the control of fortune ; he has no *virtù*. » *Op. cit.*, p. 68.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 72 : « Machiavelli's assertion at the beginning of chapter fourteen that the ruler should make arms his profession is such that he appears to be combating those who had assigned other professions to the ruler. »
12. Throughout the essay the quotations are from the Yale Edition of the Complete Works of Thomas More, Volume 4, *Utopia*, New Haven, 1965, ed. by Edward Surtz, S.J. and J.H. Hexter (199-201, 1-4). Our quotations refer to it by page and line in parenthesis.
13. G. Ritter, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
14. *Utopia*, p. 201, 4-9. More adds : « They oblige their friends with help, not always indeed to defend them merely but sometimes also to requite and avenge injuries previously done to them ... » (lines 10-20).
15. G. Ritter, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
16. *Il Principe*, XV, p. 40 : « Ma sendo l'intento mio scrivere cosa utile a chi la intende, mi è parso più conveniente andare dietro alla verità effettuale della cosa, che alla imaginazione di essa. »
17. Machiavelli uses the symbolism of the lion, the fox and the wolves : « Bisogna adunque essere golpe a conoscere e lacci, e lione a sbigottire i lupi. » *Il Principe*, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
18. This reminds one of Frate Timoteo in Machiavelli's *Mandragola* who is easily persuaded by the power of money.
19. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (New York : McGraw Hill, 1972, Blackfriars), vol. 35, 2a 2ae, 40, 1-3.
20. G. Ritter, *op. cit.*, p. 44.
21. One need only read pages of history that deal with mercenaries, Condottieri and Compagnie di Ventura to become aware of the evil, the destruction, the savagery and pain inflicted by them. The same Giovanni Acuto (John Hawkwood) mentioned by Machiavelli in Ch. XII, who had taken over the famous « Compagnia Bianca », later called « Compagnia Santa » because it was being retained by the Pope, in attacking Faenza (1376) killed more than 300 people, mostly children, and pushed out of the city more than eleven thousand citizens « con ritenere solamente quelle donne che piacquero a lui e ai suoi, » See Paolo Rossi, *Storia d'Italia* (Roma : Edizione Moderne Canesi, 1960), vol. I, p. 482-3. A worse fate awaited Cesena « ... non vi fu crudeltà che non commettessero i

vincitori. » The cry against the mercenaries was heard all over Italy. People such as Petrarch, Coluccio Salutati, Giovanni Villani and others, were united in deprecating the abuses of these armies, whether foreigners or Italians. Rossi states : « Non vi è dubbio che alcuni di costoro siano stati coraggiosi capitani e talvolta abili uomini politici, ma la loro azione fu profondamente demoralizzatrice e contribuì a mantenere ed accrescere quella decadenza politica di cui era l'effetto. » Rossi, *op. cit.*, p. 484.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 211, 1-6. This might be considered a bit impractical or naive, in terms of military art, but ideal for its effect on the soldiers.

23. J.H. Hexter, *The Vision of Politics*, *op. cit.*, p. 41 : « The family provides a powerful cohesive force for the whole commonwealth both as a coercive institution and as a training place for citizens. »

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DAL DE TRISTITIA CHRISTI (CW 14, p. 395 sgg.).

(Le n° 74, pp. 94-95, cite un extrait du latin de More et une triple traduction. Voici le même passage dans la version italienne de notre Vice-Présidente).

Certo, tutti costoro, che hanno abbinato il bacio di saluto al tradimento, ci richiamano immediatamente il traditore Giuda. Ma se quelli lo rispecchiano nel futuro, il biblico Joab lo prefigura nel passato : lui che (*Re*, E, 20) « nel momento stesso in cui salutava Amasa dicendogli 'Salve, fratello mio' », e « gli carezzava il mento con la destra » come stesse per baciario, inaspettatamente trasse fuori la spada che teneva nascosta, e gli trafisse il fianco da parte a parte, uccidendolo d'un sol colpo. Con lo stesso inganno aveva già ucciso Abdnar ; ma più tardi, verrà ucciso lui stesso, scontando giustamente la sua perfidia.

Joab è dunque la esatta raffigurazione e prefigurazione di Giuda : sia nel suo ruolo, sia nel suo scellerato tradimento, sia nella punizione divina e nella morte sciagurata. [...] Joab uccise in Amasa un amico, ma Giuda in Gesù uccise un amico più grande – che per di più era il suo Signore. [...] E, come Joab aveva ucciso Amasa facendogli incontro amichevolmente come se stesse per baciario, così Giuda va incontro a Cristo familiarmente, lo saluta con reverenza, lo bacia affettuosamente [...], volgendo in tradimento un simbolo sacro all'amore.