Chapter 9

Machiavelli Ubiquitous

This chapter is an inventory of the many other uses that Machiavelli has served here, there, and everywhere. We have done our best to organize the material, but much of it is so idiosyncratic that it defies taxonomy. What follows is divided into these parts: a survey of the media, news and social, film and television, and music; the adventures of Machiavelli in works of fiction and some non-fiction; the games that appropriate the name Machiavelli; mercantile investment in Machiavelli; a brief report on the iconography of Machiavelli; and then a review of Goggle Ngram estimates of the use of Machiavelli’s name in books. Machiavelli is indeed ubiquitous and as a result this chapter is partly a miscellany that gathers together evidence of his presence across many domains. The variety of objects, books, and the very red briefcase in the cover photograph all bear the name Machiavelli.

Media, Mass and Social

The news media often refer to Machiavellian and Machiavellianism. We take as an example the Huffington Post. This is a sample of what is to be found on its website.

’Nicola Sturgeon denies she has “Machiavellian” wish for Brexit in order to engineer Scottish Independence.’ 24 January 2016.

While Sturgeon used the term ‘Machiavellian,’ the editors of the Post chose to put it in the headline.

’Kourtney and Khloe take on Machiavelli while taking the Hamptons,’ 30 December 2014.

The title refers to the Kardashians of reality television fame, briefly.

’Obama’s Machiavellian Moment,’ 5 September 2013

Musings on conflict in the Middle East during the Syrian crisis with gratuitous references to Machiavelli.

’Machiavelli and the Rough Realities of Power Politics,’ 7 April 2012.

More musings of a general kind.
A few quotations from *The Prince* and *The Discourses* strung together by a regular contributor.

‘7 Cause Marketing Lessons from Machiavelli,’ 23 June 2011. A tie in to the contributor’s tome *Cause Marketing for Dummies* (2011), which makes no mention of Machiavelli in its text.

There are many others, but these suffice to show how flimsy the pretext can be to use Machiavelli’s name.

We also tried the *New York Times*. We searched on 9 June 2017 and got 1,752 hits from the archives. The first mention was in 1869. Among the mentions in the year 2017 were articles about alienated youth in the Parisian *banlieues*, the corporate machinations of Volkswagen, President Vladimir Putin of Russia as the Slavic Machiavelli, the business clans of South Korea, and electoral scandals in Brazil. Other items that referred to Machiavelli were book, film, and theatre reviews, some of which we will return to later in this chapter. We did a count of the uses of the terms in the online archives as in Table 5 below.

Leaving aside the details of each reference, the obvious conclusion is that a free use of his name and the adjective and noun derived from it in the pages of this august publication.

In the Netherlands there is an annual Machiavelli Prize awarded to a person or organization that has excelled in public communication. Those recognized by this award have included fire services, blood donation societies, and other good causes. The panel that makes the award consists of journalists, public relations advisors, retired politicians, and celebrities. The causes are indeed good ones but nowhere can be found any explanation of why it is called in the Dutch Machiavelliprijs.¹ No further enlightenment came when we consulted the Dutch edition of Wikipedia.

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¹ We consulted the website in May 2017, http://www.stichtingmachiavelli.nl/nl/.