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Rupture/Feedback as Discursive-Effects: *A Re-Interpretive Assessment of Machiavelli in Althusser and Foucault*

Over the ages scholarship on the topic of Machiavelli seems to have gotten caught up in the insurmountably uncertain questions pertaining to Machiavelli's intentionality and objectives behind his works. In this paper I aim to tackle a septate set of questions: How did Machiavelli's text manage to have such a profound impact on the discourses of the ages that followed? And, what was the precise nature of the discursive-effects of the writing, reception, and further dissemination of his works? In approaching both these problems, I will rely on distinct re-interpretive readings of Machiavelli offered by two giants of twentieth century French philosophy, namely, Louis Althusser and Michel Foucault. Specifically, first, I will utilize Althusser's reading in *Machiavelli and Us* to clear out a discursive space within which Machiavelli's political-theoretical *dispositif* is able to operate in a way that intersects the dual-fields of political theory and political practice. Then, I will leverage this demarcated fragile strategic space in order to venture into a hermeneutic analysis of specific instances during the 1977-8 *Security, Territory, Population* lectures where Foucault, a former pupil of Althusser, brings up Machiavelli within a rapidly changing historical context. Between the space opened by these widely disparate readings presented by these two philosophers, I will attempt to consider in three distinct discursive conjunctural contexts of sixteenth century Italy, nineteenth century Germany, and twentieth century France, where Machiavelli's text (re)appears in distinctly disparate incarnations. Ultimately, by engaging in this discursive exercise –of instrumentalizing an Althusserian reading of Machiavelli, in order to attempt a Machiavellian reinterpretation of Foucault– I hope to shed further light on the precise functioning of Machiavelli's text in a historical/discursive context, as well as the uncertain nature of its continuing effects in terms of the politics of discourse.