

Kraków, 25.11.2021

Luigi Bruno  
Wydział Filologiczny  
Instytut Filologii Romańskiej  
Kierunek studiów Filologia Włoska  
Specjalność Literaturoznawstwo

### *Summary*

#### **Reception of the *Prince* by Niccolò Machiavelli in Poland in view of the critical studies and paratexts.**

The dissertation discusses the reception of the *Prince* by Niccolò Machiavelli in Poland in the light of critical studies and paratexts. It intends to show the historical and political context that influenced reception, interpretation and implementation of the Florentine secretary's idea. The study covers the key concepts contained in the work and the reasons of why these concepts return to be favored in a different context and in a different "quality of time".

Since the goal is to convey the Machiavellian thought in the most accurate way, the attention is focused on its analysis, starting from its roots and ending with modern times both in Italy, to which the first part of this dissertation is dedicated and in Poland, in the second part, which is the focal point of the paper.

The aim is not only to present and compare the translation solutions adopted by the authors of the *Prince* translations done in the years 1868-2016 but also to draw attention to the obstacles encountered by translators.

The work involved the hermeneutic and comparative method, which consisted in an in-depth semantic, philological and epistemological analysis. The fundamental concepts for understanding Machiavelli's thoughts were analyzed by starting with the original text in Italian and ending with how they had been received in Polish texts. As far as the subject literature is concerned, the dissertation contains a number of references to works on the reception of the Florentine writer in Poland by Henryk Barycz (*Myśl i legenda Machiavellego w Polsce w wieku XVI-XVII* [in English: *Machiavelli's thought and legend in Poland in the 16-17<sup>th</sup> centuries*]), by Jan Malarczyk (*Machiavelli w Polsce* [in English: *Machiavelli in Poland*]) and by Agnieszka Pietryka (*Polska recepcja Księcia Machiavellego – rozpoznanie wstępne* [in English: *Reception of the Prince by Machiavelli in Poland – preliminary research*]). Nineteenth and twentieth-century critical studies were cited to indicate the most important Machiavellian researchers in Poland. The compiled Polish translations were the ones created in the years 1868-2016 by Antoni Sozański, Wincenty Rzymowski, Czesław Nanke, Anna Klimkiewicz and Zdzisław Płoski. The foreword to the translations has also been analyzed.

Scientific authorities, including Hans Robert Jauss, Wolfgang Iser, Paul de Man, Georg Gadamer, Roman Ingarden and Umberto Eco, were used to show the relationship between the text and the reader.

The work has been divided into two parts. The first of them, entitled *Contesto storico-sociale e letterario in cui nasce il pensiero del Segretario* [in English: *The historical, social and literary context which brings the Secretary's thought to life*] covers two chapters: *Machiavelli tra Umanesimo e Rinascimento* [in English: *Machiavelli between the Humanism and the Renaissance*] and *Il Principe e le categorie del pensiero machiavelliano* [in English: *The Prince and the Categories of Machiavellian Thought*]. The other part *Il Principe in Polonia*

[in English: *The Prince in Poland*] consists of two chapters as well: *Spaccato storico polacco del segretario fiorentino tracciato da studi critici e paratesti* [in English: *Florentine secretary – Polish historical outline based on critical editions and paratexts*] and *La fortuna del trattato nelle traduzioni polacche alla luce dei paratesti* [in English: *The Treaty in Polish translations in the light of paratexts*].

After the terms of paratext, epitext and peritext have been explained, the question of the text reception and its meaning in the context of reading has been presented: the ritual of reading gives the text content immortality, which, when passed on to many generations, influences the “quality of their times” to some extent.

The humanistic concept of the “quality of times” is further explained by presenting the important features of the times in which the Florentine Secretary lived, as well as by describing their influence on shaping his views, enriched by the reading of ancient works. By combining the “knowledge”, gained from ancient masters, with his own experience, Machiavelli was able to apply the “teaching of governing the common good” in the contemporary reality.

Once the first part of the dissertation, referred to as the “Italian” one, gets looked into, the second one, referred to as the “Polish” one, is discussed. The latter focuses on the reception of Machiavelli’s thought in Poland starting from the (1560) publication of the *Prince* first translation in Latin and ending with the first Polish translation of the treatise, dating back to 1868 by Antoni Sozański. From 1868 to 2016 the Machiavelli’s treaty would be translated, with several re-releases, four more times: in 1917 by Wincent Rzymowski; in 1921 by Czesław Nanke, in 2005 by Anna Klimkiewicz and in 2015/2016 by Zdzisław Płoski.

Analysis of these translations makes it possible to conclude that they reflect the “quality of time’ when the translators lived and created. Many signs of this can be found in paratexts such as a preface, an afterword and footnotes, both from translators and other authors of commentaries on the *Prince*. Two of such examples include the commentary of Konstanty Grzybowski on the Wincent Rzymowski’s translation and the commentary by Krzysztof Teodor Toeplitz on the translation by Czesław Nanke (which was corrected by Jan Malarczyk).

The key terms and concepts, present in the original Machiavelli Treaty, are further on compared with their Polish translations, including paratexts in Polish as well. The emphasis is placed on the choice of terms used by different authors.

The analysis shows that the reception of the literary work is largely based on the addition of new meanings which result from a particular context or time rather than on rediscovering them. This shows that the literary work has become an immeasurable reading event where something is “brought” into the text rather than “extrapolated” from it by a reader. This conclusion is reached by retracing the stages of Machiavelli’s thought from its “sunrise” in the 15th century Italy, through the one in the 16<sup>th</sup> Poland up to its “sunset” in the contemporary times. The work underlines the need to look at the Treaty-contained key concepts as well as its universal nature, starting from their inception in Italy to their reception in other countries, such as Poland, under different circumstances. This underlines the importance of the situational context and the “quality of times” in which teaching of the Florentine philosophy is applicable.

Just like the modern concept of politics stems from the modern way of life, making ancient terminology irrelevant to describe concepts, same its contemporary understanding needs new and modern terminology. For example, the concepts of key importance for the Italian humanistic thought, such as “virtue” or “fortune”, to which Machiavelli gives meaning corresponding to his political vision of a ruler, represent a different value today, value, which far from the Greek ‘arete’, Roman ‘virtus’ and Florentine ‘virtù’.

What resulted from the reading and reception of these Italian-Polish texts, referring to the thoughts of the Florentine Secretary, is the following dissertation, which ends with a summary of the differences and similarities in the Polish translations preface. It is noted that,

despite the similarities, each preface is different, not only in their technical side and layout, but also in the approach to the writer himself. It is concluded that, as mentioned earlier, the time in which the authors of the translations live are of fundamental importance. The terminology has to be adapted to the changing realities as the one used in the past becomes obsolete in the face of new phenomena.