

I shall conclude this Chapter with some reflections upon the conduct of Hiero the Syracusan whom Machiavel proposes as a pattern to such as would raise themselves to Empire by the assistance of new friends and fresh troops. Hiero discarded his old friends and veterans, who had been most serviceable to him in the execution of his designs: he contracted new alliances, and raised another army. I assert, however, in contradiction to Machiavel and all other Ingrates, that Hiero was guilty of very bad policy in this; and that it would have been much more prudent in him to have confided in troops whose valour he had experienced, and in friends whose fidelity he had sufficiently proved, than in others who were in a manner strangers to him, and of whose attachment he could not be secure [1]. The signification which Machiavel gives to some words ought likewise to be carefully attended to. Otherwise we might be led into an error by his asserting, that *Virtue without opportunity can never effectually distinguish itself*: by which he means that Villains and fool-hardy men cannot exert their talents without the concurrence of favourable circumstances and occasions: without this clue it would be impossible to understand his meaning. The Italians call Music, Painting, Geometry &c. *Virtue*; and such as cultivate those arts *Virtuosi*: but *Virtue*, according to Machiavel, consists entirely in Perfidy and ambition. For my own part, it is my opinion upon the whole, that the only lawful opportunity that a private man can have of advancing himself to a throne, is when he is either called to it by a people that have a right to elect their own Prince; or when he has been the Deliverer of his Country. John Sobieski in Poland; Gustavus Vasa in Sweden; the Antoninus's of Rome are examples of both sorts. Let Cæsar Borgia then be the pattern of the Machiavellists; Marcus Aurelius [m] shall be mine.

le monde, il se presentera mille obstacles pour les empecher, & qu'un Prophete a la tête d'une armee fera plus de Proselytes que s'il ne combattoit qu'avec des arguments. Il est vray, que la Religion Chretienne, ne se soutenant que par les disputes, fut faible & opprimée, & qu'elle ne s'étendit en Europe qu'après avoir repandu beaucoup de sang: il n'en est pas moins vray, que l'on a pu donner cours a des opinions, & a des nouveautés avec peu de peine. Que de Religions, que de Sectes, ont été introduites avec une facilité infinie! Il n'y a rien du plus propre que le fanatisme pour accrediter des nouveautés, & il me semble que Machiavel a parlé d'un ton trop décisif sur cette matiere."

[1] The following passage is here struck out in the second Edition, "Je laisse au Lecteur a pousser ce raisonnement plus loin; tous ceux qui abhorrent l'ingratitude, & qui sont assez heureux pour connoître l'amitié ne resteront point a sec sur cette matiere."

[m] Marcus Aurelius Antonius Verus, surnamed the *Philosopher*. He was reckoned the best of all the Roman Emperors.