

“ Uno piccolo dono ”. A software tool for comparing the first edition of Machiavelli’s The Prince to its 16th century French translations

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Uno piccolo dono
HyperMachiavel. A software tool for comparing the first edition of Machiavelli's *The Prince* to its sixteenth century French translations

HyperMachiavel (hereafter HM) is a software package designed to assist research into aligned corpora encoded in XML-TEI. Confronted with the lack of a unified digital environment for the comparison of texts, it became necessary to conceive a software tool offering alignment functions and semi-manual indexation (including lexical indexation). These functions would enable a detailed and discriminating linguistic analysis of the traditional equivalences using various representational graphs and multilingual searches. At present, the development of the software package is undertaken under a Cecill-B licence in order to guarantee continuity and possible collaborations. Readers may wish to consult http://hyperprince.ens-lyon.fr which corresponds to the HTML-format export of the XML-TEI encoded corpus used in HM.[1] This paper will develop the first reflections concerning the use of the HM tool and its possible developments by dealing with the translations of *stato* and presenting the first hypotheses on the practises of the sixteenth century translators. But, first of all, I shall attempt to explain the reasons, hypotheses and translation practises which led me to conceive of the usefulness of such a tool.

Travelling Texts

The first point concerns the importance of translations in the western world. The history of translations seems to be an important part of the history of western thinking, literature, philosophy and political thinking, insofar as texts travel and have an effect in the countries and cultures into which they are introduced by means of translations. Recent

[1] Zancarini and Gedzelman 2011, pp. 247–64; Gedzelman and Zancarini 2012, pp. 198–201.

research into translation (Antione Berman, Henri Meschonnic[2]) has stressed the role played by translations in the construction of the language and literature of the translating countries. Berman has underlined the role of 'great translations' in this process and the founding role of Nicole Oresme and Jacques Amyot in France. At the very moment when Meschonnic was asserting that 'Europe is born from translation and in translation', he also warned against what he called the 'erasing translations' which tend to make people forget the process of the modification of the target language by means of the introduction of elements from other cultures.[3] Placing the concept of 'rhythm' at the centre of his reflection, he defended a form of the act of translation that privileged the translation of a text by another text that does in the translating country what the original text does in its country of origin. He also argued against translation choices that favoured the sign and its distinction between *signifiant* and *signifié*, which brings in its wake either the translation of the meaning or literalism.

The French translations of *The Prince* are an integral part of this necessary history of translation. They have been numerous: four in the sixteenth century (Jacques de Vintimille, unpublished until the twentieth century, Guillaume Cappel, 1553, Gaspard d'Auvergne, 1553 and Jacques Gohory, 1571), three in the seventeenth century (Amelot de la Houssaye, le sieur de Briencour and Testard), one in the eighteenth century (Guiraudet) and three in the nineteenth century (J.-V. Périès, L. H. Halévy and C. Ferrari).[4] Some of these translations play an important long-term role in the diffusion of Machiavelli's ideas: the translation by Gaspard d'Auvergne was present throughout the second half of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century. Jacques Gohory's translation disappeared for several centuries only to re-appear, in a more or less modified form, in the Pléiade edition of the

[2] Meschonnic 1999, and 2007; Berman 1984, 1995, and 2012.
[3] Meschonnic 1999, p. 32: 'L'Europe ne s'est fondée que sur des traductions. Et elle ne s'est constituée que de l'effacement de cette origine toute de traduction'. (Europe has been founded solely upon translations. And it has been constituted only through the erasing of this origin [made] entirely of translations.)
[4] There have been more than twenty translations in the twentieth century and the list gets continually longer! Without attempting to be exhaustive, the twentieth century translators include: Brion, T'Serstevens, Colonna d'Istria, Bec, Lévy, Luciani, Marie Gaille, Ménissier, Larivaille, Fournel and Zancarini, and Jacqueline Risset.

second half of the twentieth century. Amelot de la Houssaye's translation, which was published in 1683, 1684, 1686 ('Revüe, corrigée, et augmentée par le Traducteur') and 1694, served as the starting point for the *Anti-Machiavel* of Frederick II of Prussia and Voltaire and was, as a consequence, re-published eighteen times, between 1740 and 1793. To put these versions in parallel and to analyse the way in which each of the translators translates or 'naturalises' Machiavelli's text is to study an activity and to account for the way in which Machiavelli entered the French heritage.[5]

Coherence of the act of translation

Within our area of research into political texts Jean-Louis Fournel and myself have undertaken translations and have reflected upon this practise. We have established 'partial rules' from this reflection which we consider to be in harmony with Meschonnic's invitation to translate the text while taking good care of 'what it does'. In the *Dialogo del reggimento di Firenze*, a text by Francesco Guicciardini, there is an exchange between Bernardo del Nero, an experienced man, who, as he confesses, 'is not well-read', and Piero Guicciardini. In answer to a question asked by Piero Guicciardini, who is surprised at the 'knowledge of the affairs of the Romans and the Greeks' which he has demonstrated, Bernardo del Nero says that he has had 'the pleasure to read all the books translated into the vulgar language' but nuances the importance of his reading by adding that he does not believe 'that these translated books have as much sap as the Latin works' ['né credo *che questi libri tradotti abbino quello sugo che hanno e' latini*'[6]] If there were one general rule which we would like to follow, it would be expressed thus: let our French translations have 'as much sap' as the original texts.

[5] Meschonnic 1999, p. 11: 'C'est sur les grands textes anciens que s'accumulent les traductions. C'est là qu'on peut confronter un invariant et ses variations. Leur pourquoi, leur comment. Le seul terrain d'expérimentation du langage : où peuvent indéfiniment recommencer des expériences. Là, traduire est une poétique expériementale' (Translations accumulate upon the great ancient texts. That is where one can confront an invariant with its variations: their why and their how. The only terrain for language experimentation: where experiments can be indefinitely recommenced. There, the act of translation is experimental poetics.)

[6] Guicciardini 1994, p. 188.

In what way do our aspirations as translators appear to be related to those of Meschonnic? The desire to provide in French a text which has 'as much sap' as a sixteenth century Italian text closely resembles the idea that a translator must know what the original text does in its language and attempt to produce a French text which has the same effects, which retains the same semantic fields, which alludes to other texts and which breathes with the same breath. Obviously – and this is perhaps where our closeness to Meschonnic ends since he is more radical than us on this point – we think that this is basically an aim which we are far from sure of achieving. But, in our opinion, this aim has at least the not inconsiderable merit of defining a direction to be followed and a goal to be reached. It also reminds us that our acts as translators are not fundamentally situated in a translation theory debate about whether proper translation practise chooses to favour either the 'source language' or the 'target language'.[7]

Moreover when one examines what has been written about translation – from Cicero, Horace, Saint Jerome, Bruni, Luther and Dolet to Schleiermacher and Benjamin or the numerous and major contemporary contributions[8] – one realises that nothing can be taken for granted in the oppositions which provide structure to the debate so long as one does not embark upon the actual act of translating, that is, the way people really translate. How translations are done cannot be explained by the choice between the alternatives in pairs such as *ad sensum/ad verbum*, accuracy/inaccuracy, beauty/awkwardness, but, rather, by the analysis of the translations themselves. From our point of view, a passage by Saint Jerome[9]

[7] Meschonnic 1999, p. 23, considers that 'cette répartition n'est autre que la division du signe, selon sa notion classique, l'alliance d'un signifiant, phonique ou graphique, la forme, et d'un signifié, le sens' (this distribution is none other than the division of the sign, according to its classic notion, the alliance of a phonic or graphic *signifiant*, the form, and a *signifié*, the meaning).

[8] Without returning to the previously mentioned work of Berman and Meschonnic, for France we have in mind the works of Mounin 1955, and 1963; Cary 1986; Ladmiral 1979, and the collective work undertaken since 1984, on the initiative of the ATLF and the ATLAS, during the Assises annuelles de la traduction littéraire en Arles (the Acts are regularly published by the Editions Actes Sud/Atlas). On the history of translation, see the forthcoming publication by the Verdier publishing house of the works directed by Jean-Yves Masson and Yves Chevrel, *Histoire des traductions en langue française*, of which the volume devoted to the nineteenth century appeared in 2012. On the specific issue of the translation of philosophical works, see: Moutaux and Bloch (eds.) 2000.

[9] Hieronymus 1980, p. 13.

seems to reveal the relative nature of these great oppositions.[10] Saint Jerome argues in favour of *ad sensum* translation: 'I declare that in my translations from Greek into Latin … I do not intend to render word for word but to reproduce the meaning' [*non verbum de verbo reddere sed sensum exprimere de sensu*]. But then, in the same clause, he adds that when it is a sacred text, 'even the order of the words is part of the mystery' [*et verborum ordo mysterium est*]. This clearly lets it be understood that there is at least one text for which 'the very order of words', their recurrences, their echoes and the networks which they weave amongst themselves can be decisive.

A great translator of contemporary Italian poetry, Bernard Simeone, would insist on the need to detach the translation from the 'fantasy of transparency, of accuracy, of passage, even of pure transmission'. He explained that a translation 'is not a pure passage, but always a [piece of] work on one's own language, a chance given to the latter to call into question its certitudes and its limits through the irruption into its space of foreign works and [pieces of] writing. In that, it does not content itself with reflecting an origin, it enlarges the field of expression of the target language'.[11] For Simeone, 'translation only refers to the radicality of writing'.[12] We share this point of view that we consider to have a major consequence: beyond instances of *petitio principii* and 'general rules', a translation establishes itself by means of its coherence. We define this coherence by means of both a series of 'partial rules' and a series of prohibitions that one sets oneself and from which one does not deviate.[13] We have adopted this conception of the activity of translation, particularly in our own translation of *The Prince*.

[10] May we be excused for having previously quoted him in Fournel and Zancarini 2002; see also: Zancarini 2002.
[11] Simeone 1998.
[12] Simeone 2002; this text was presented at a colloquium on transmission organised by the 'Espace analytique' association and has been published several times in French and in Italian in tribute to Bernard Simeone since his death. The Association des Amis de Bernard Simeone will soon publish a collection of pieces written by Bernard Simeone.
[13] We have previously explained our 'partial rules' in Fournel and Zancarini 2002. On the 'prohibitions', see the 'four forms of teratology in translation' (deletion, addition, displacement, non-agreement and anti-agreement) mentioned by Meschonnic 1999, pp. 27, 45, 164).

It is definitely the practise of translation that interests us when we put the original text and the French translations in parallel using *HyperPrince*.

An Approach to the Texts: Political Philology[14]

We combine the strictly historical reading with studies on the language, its construction, its shades of meaning and its evolutions, studies that enable us to check in detail the common practises of writing and the verisimilitude of our historical reconstructions. From our perspective, the language used by our authors is a central issue as is the way in which they use it. The terms used are indeed to be interpreted according to the political circumstances (what Machiavelli calls 'the quality of the times') and according to the stakes determined by the political actors; which signifies that their meanings may be different to what they were earlier or what they will become later. The way in which these terms are used, with a certain syntax, with modes of particular argumentation, with tonalities, borrowings, quotations and allusions, also has its importance. Terminological use cannot be dissociated from the political or historical analyses that provide writing with meaning. The *discourse* must be considered since this is where a dialectic of the 'names' and the 'things' is perpetually at work. This double approach to the precise meaning to be given to the lexicon and the modes of writing, this approach to the texts that intends to take into consideration 'the quality of the times' is what we call 'political philology'. Its starting point is the love of language – in truth, the love of both languages involved in the work of translation and interpretation. Its deployment revives the philological tradition in its radical and utopian aspects. The hope to reproduce the text as its author had 'really' conceived it, to restore it to its full force and its entire meaning, is one that is never realised, as we well know. But the function of this hope is to introduce a tension towards an unattainable state of perfection, the very existence of which is open to

[14] We refer to Zancarini 2007. This paragraph summarises some of the hypotheses that are developed there.

doubt. Realised in a work, this tension towards the elucidation of the maximum possible meaning of the texts under consideration is at the heart of the work of every philologist. But for whosoever defines her/himself as a 'political philologist', it is also important to never forget that the meaning and the strength of texts actually derive from their insertion into a given historical moment. It is also important to bear in mind the function of these texts, which, when they were written, aimed at understanding and provoking understanding, for action and for provoking action. We might as well say that the political philologist is inextricably linked to historical analysis and that the pairing of these two methodologies is the necessary prerequisite to the insertion of the works of Machiavelli, Guicciardini or Savonarola into the history of ideas or political philosophy. Savonarola, Machiavelli and Guicciardini wrote during the period of the wars in Italy, after the arrival of the troops of Charles VIII, King of France, in 1494. If the upheavals which we think we see at work in the relationship to the City or to war do not appear in the very substance of the language used by these authors, if the language was not marked by this, then our hypotheses for historical reconstruction would obviously have to be revised. Conversely, these historical hypotheses are needed, at the outset, to define the questions that will be applied to the language and the way these authors wrote.

If these hypotheses and reflections are well founded, then their validity must be tested. In a certain way our research into the language of politics of Guicciardini[15] and Machiavelli[16] support these initial tests. However, before advancing further, in order to better understand the act of translation in action, it seemed useful to have at our disposal a tool to provide, for a text, a vision of how the translators tried to render 'what it did', a vision of the effects of the act of translation in the target culture and, in return, its effects on the knowledge (and

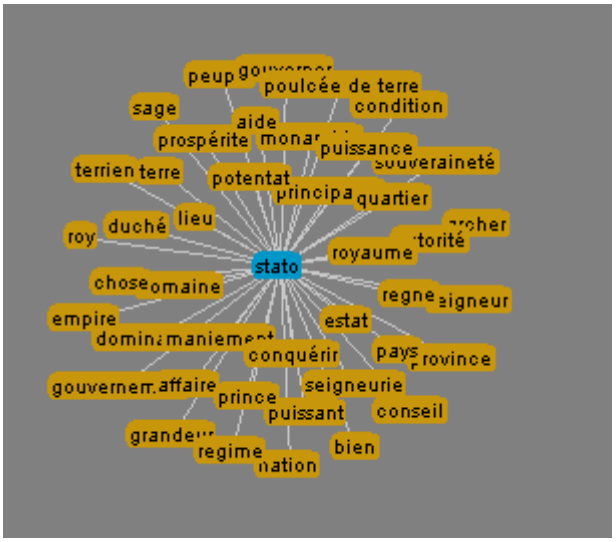
[15] Fournel and Zancarini 2009.
[16] See, in particular, the sections which we have written on certain Machiavelli keywords *(armi, artiglieria, cavalleria, fanteria, fortezze, guerra/pace, nemico, parte, amore/odio, pietà/crudeltà, ruina, tirannide)* for the *Enciclopedia machiavelliana*, Rome, Treccani, forthcoming.

questioning) of the original text. The choice of *The Prince* for this trial seemed self-evident for the following reasons: the importance of the text, which has been present in the entire world for the last five centuries; the accumulation of translations noted by Meschonnic; its brevity which made the experiment more reasonable (it is, in its author's words, an 'opuscule'); and our own 'intimacy' with the text and its effects. These reasons led to the decision to construct this software tool with the fundamental assistance of Séverine Gedzelman, an information technology engineer at the Triangle research laboratory, and to use it, first of all, to compare the *editio princeps* of the *Principe* (Rome, Blado, 1532) with the sixteenth century French translations, to which Amelot de la Houssaye's translation would be rapidly added.

Stato *and its translations: Polysemy, 'Interference', and 'Tension in Meaning'*

The level 1 graph of the HM software tool provides the entire set of translations used for a word (here: *stato*) by the whole group of translators. It also generates a table for the number of occurrences of the words used to translate the term under investigation, providing a clear vision of the most frequent translations and those that are exceptionally rare. Apart from the translations of the word envisaged, a level 2 graph provides the other Italian words which have been translated by the French words used to translate *stato*. The graphs will be presented successively, first the level 1 graph of *stato*, then the level 2 graph, before returning to the principal French translations of *stato* (*état*, *seigneurie*, *pays*).

Graph: *stato* level 1

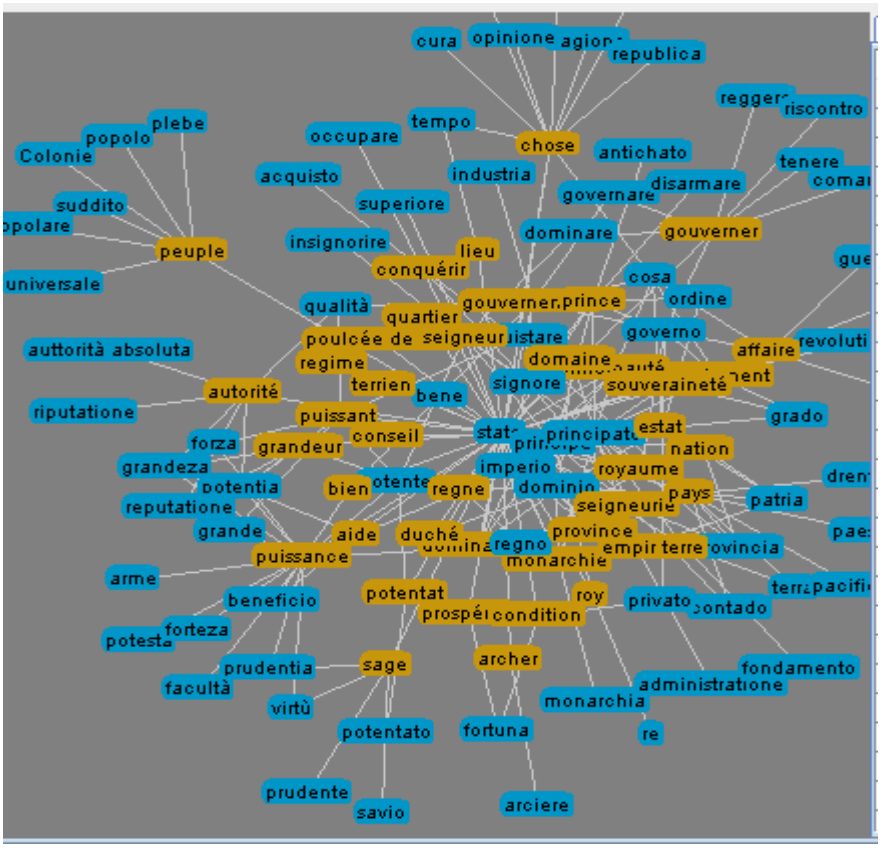


A broad polysemy of the term can be noted, with more than forty French terms. There are, however, three main translations of *stato*: *état, seigneurie, pays*.

An example of this polysemy can be clearly seen in the translations of paragraph XX 25:

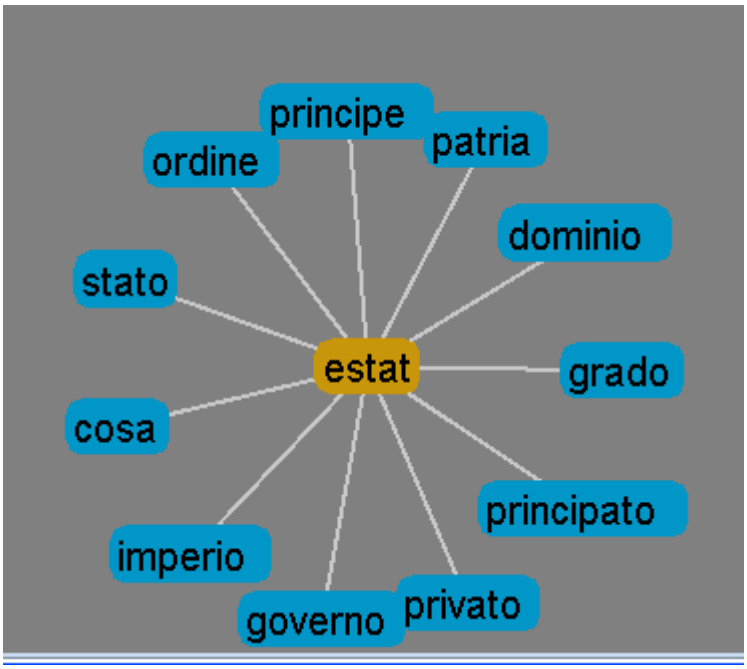
Antonio Blado 1532	Jacques de Vintimille 1546	Gaspard d'Auvergne 1553	Guillaume Cappel 1553	Jacques Gohory 1571
Io lodo questo modo, perche gli è usitato *antichamente*: nondimanco, Misser' Niccolò Vitelli, ne *tempi nostri*, s' è visto disfare due forteze in Città di Castello per *tener*' quello *stato*; Guido Ubaldo Duca d' Urbino, ritornato nel' suo *stato* donde da Cesar' Borgia era stato cacciato, *rovinò* da *fondamenti* tutte le forteze di quella *provincia* et giudicò senza quelle havere a riperdere più difficilmente quello *stato*; i Bentivogli ritornati in Bologna, usorno simil' termine.	La façon m'en semble bonne et louable pource qu'elle est de toute *ancienneté* en usaige. Touteffois nous avons veu en *nostre temps* faire le contraire à Nicolas Vitelly prince bien estimé, qui pour mieulx *tenir* la *seigneurie* de la cité de Chastel, feit raser deux forteresses qui y estoient. Pareillement Guidebaut duc d'Urbin, après qu'il fut remys en *estat*, dont il avoit este chassé par César Borgia, *feit abbatre* jusques aux *fondemens* toutes les forteresses de son *pays*, estimant pouvoir mieulx garder son *estat* sans chasteaux qu'aultrement. Les Bentivoles, après s'estre remis en la seigneurie de Boulogne, en feirent tout autant de leurs chasteaux.	Ie ne puis bonnement blasmer ceste maniere, parce qu'elle a esté d'*ancienneté* pratiquée. Toutefois le Seigneur Nicollas Vitelli s'est veu de *nostre temps* avoir demoly deux forteresses en la ville de Castello, seullement pour *asseurer* l'*estat*. Le duc Guidebaut d'Urbin estant retourné en son *duché*, dont Cesar Borgia l'avoit auparavant chassé, *rasa* iusques aux *fondemens* toutes les places fortes d'iceluy *païs* : estimant sans icelles devoir plus difficillement reperdre son *dommaine*. Les Bentivolles feirent le semblable, apres qu'ilz furent rentrez dans Bouloingne.	la maniere en est a priser, d'autant que *anciennement* elle estoit en usage. Neantmoins de *nostre temps* messire Nicolas Vitelle a rase deux forts en la ville de Castel pour *tenir* le *païs* : Guidebaud duc d'Urbin estant remis en ses *estatz*, desquelz il avoit este chasse par Cæsar Borge, il *abastit a fleur de terre* toutes les forteresses du *païs*, estimant que s'il n'y en avoit point il ne l'en perderoit pas de rechef si aiseement : les Bentivoilles retournez en Boulongne en firent de mesme.	la maniere en est à priser, d'autant qu'*anciennement* elle estoit en usage. Neantmoins de *notre temps* messire Nicole Vitelle a rasé deux forts en la ville de Castel pour *tenir* le *païs*. Guidebaud Duc d'Urbin estant remis en ses *estats*, desquels il avoit esté chassé par Cesar Borge, il *abbatist rez pieds rez terre* toutes les forteresses du *païs*, estimant que s'il n'y en avoit point, il ne l'en perderoit pas de rechef si aisement : les Bentivoilles retournez à Boulongne en firent de mesme.

Graph: *stato* level 2

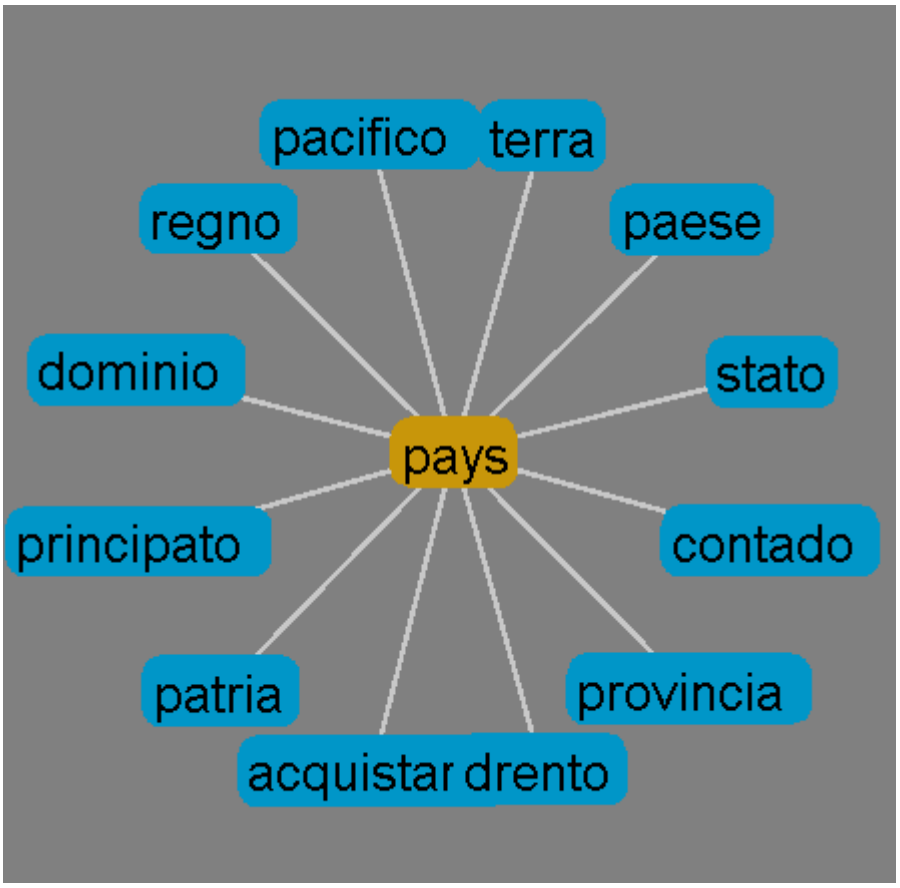


The movement from Italian to French and back to Italian reveals a link in meaning between the majority of these words belonging to the vocabulary of political institutions. To avoid the biases which might have been provoked by the rarely-used French words used rarely, even exceptionally, to translate *stato*, this presentation will focus on the three words which are the most frequently employed by the translators to render *stato* (*état, seigneurie*, *pays*) and investigate which other Italian words they serve to translate.

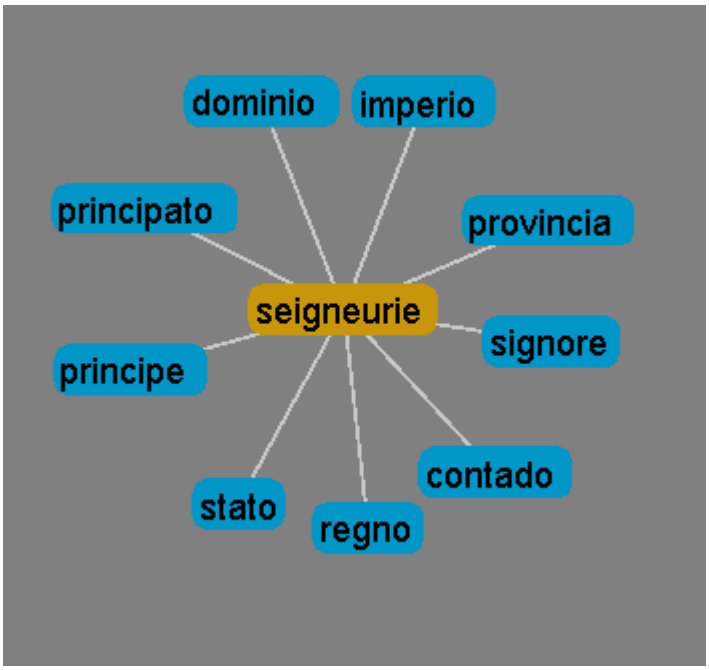
Graph: *état* level 1
Etat serves to translate *stato* as well as *imperio, dominio, principato, governo* and *principe*



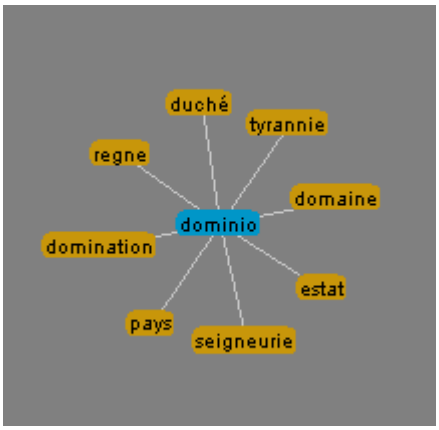
Graph: *pays* level 1. *Pays* is above all used to translate *stato* and *provincia* but also *paese*, *dominio*, *regno* and *patria*

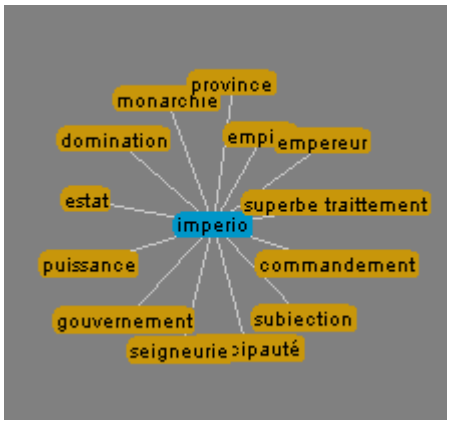


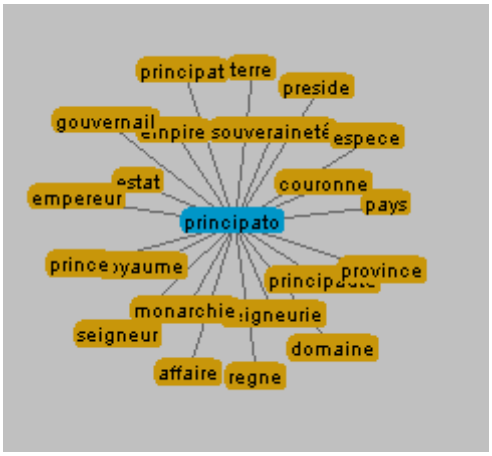
Graph: *seigneurie* level 1. *Seigneurie* translates *stato* but also *principato*, *dominio*, *imperio* and *regno*.



This verification can be continued by returning to the Italian as a starting point and examining the French translations of three of the words (*dominio*, *imperio*, *principato*) which have been translated by the three French words most often used to translate *stato*.







Dominio is mainly translated by *seigneurie*, *domination*, *règne*, *pays* and *domaine*. *Imperio* is rendered in the vast majority of cases by *empire* or *empereur* but also by *seigneurie*, *puissance*, *gouvernement* and *état*. *Principato* is generally translated by *principauté* or *prince*, but also by *monarchie*, *seigneurie*, *état*, *empereur*, *empire*, *souveraineté*, *seigneur* and *royaume*.

It is thus possible to state a thesis about the language of *The Prince* and the effects of translations of the vocabulary of politics. Machiavelli expresses and seeks to explain the workings of 'new things' which are complex. Their 'semantic territories' crisscross and overlap. There is interference at the origin in the analysis of the workings of politics. This interference is reinforced by the effects of translation (a series of terms tending to become equivalent and to globally designate the place and the forms of power: *état*, *empire*, *puissance*, *seigneurie*, *principaulté*, *gouvernement*, *domination*…). Obviously this does not prevent there also being principal meanings which can be traced in the frequency of recurring translations.

The use of the HM software tool has thus enabled the stating and verification of the hypothesis of a constant tension in meaning and of the polysemy of the terms employed. This polysemy arises out of the way in which Machiavelli, using the same terms with meanings that are sometimes different, carves out the new objects or the forms of political action in order to understand them and to have his readers understand their workings. This hypothesis of the tension in meaning leads to reading *The Prince* while accepting from the outset that there co-exist different meanings of the terms, which, therefore, must not be considered *stricto sensu* as concepts, failing which it would be necessary to talk of incoherences or contradictions or decide to forcibly reconstruct a coherence to the detriment of tensions. The tension in meaning is an intrinsic element of the very description of the new objects which Machiavelli set out to describe, with the means of language at his disposal, with the desire of understanding how they work.

Reflections on the Act of Translation

The HM tool enables us to understand the different approaches of the translators and clearly see their lexical and syntactic choices. Several examples of this use of the HM software follow. These will envisage some significant aspects of how Vintimille, Cappel, Gohory and Gaspard d'Auvergne translated *The Prince*.

The characteristic which strikes the reader of the translation by Jacques de Vintimille is the very systematic presence of additions which are elucidations or even commentaries of the text which he translates.[17] Nevertheless, and this is not initially apparent, Vintimille often respects more scrupulously than the others the polysemy of the words used by Machiavelli.

[17] A few examples are sufficient to demonstrate this (the additions are in italics). III 42: accreu la puissance d'un grand seigneur, *qui estoit l'Eglise***,** mis en icelle un estrangier très puissant, *qui estoit le roy d'Hespaigne*; III 43: Lesquelles cinq faultes pouvoient durant sa vie ne luy redonder à dommaige, *pour la grande puissance et réputation qu'il avoit,* s'il n'y eust adjouxté la sixiesme qui fut quand il se rua sur les Vénitiens pour les priver de leur estat; IV 1: Ce néantmoins lesdictz successeurs maintindrent *paisiblement la monarchie de toute l'Asie qui auparavant avoit esté dominée par les Perses et dernièrement par Darius*; VI 6: *Voilà donc la première facilité qu'il y a à maintenir telz estatz. C'est que chacun redoubte la vertu ou la fortune de ce nouveau prince.*

Thus, he generally translates *stato* as *estat* (*estat* is used by him 89 times against 49–8 for Cappel-Gohory and 36 for Gaspard d'Auvergne) and this choice of essentially retaining the same translation shows a form of understanding of the fact that the polysemy of the term can make sense for designating a complex reality such as the Machiavellian *stato*.

The authors of the two 1553 translations, Cappel and Gaspard d'Auvergne, translate in very different ways from each other. Gaspard d'Auvergne, like Vintimille, tends to make additions and commentaries unlike Cappel who stays much closer to the text. Contrary to Vintimille, both tend not to respect the polysemy and the tension in meaning present in Machiavelli's text. They translate the same words with numerous different French words with Gaspard d'Auvergne doing this much more often than Cappel. Gohory's 1571 translation was published at the same time as his translation of the *Discourses on Livy*. It is practically – give or take a word here and there – the same as Cappel's (and a parallel reading constantly proves this). Its characteristics are therefore exactly the same as those of the Cappel translation: no additions, explanations or commentaries but a relative respect for the polysemy (greater than in the d'Auvergne translation but much less than in the Vintimille). Implicitly, by implying that Cappel did not know a word of Italian, Gohory leaves one to understand that he did not 'copy' the translation of Cappel but, as it were, he recovered his own possession. Similarly, he republished in his name the *Discourses* (which he had published without the name of the translator in 1544 for book I and 1548 for books II and III) at the same time as Hierosme de Marnef and Guillaume Cavellat published a joint edition of the *Discourses* and *The Prince* (the latter in the Gaspard d'Auvergne translation and the former in the un-named translation which was in fact by Gohory).[18] It is quite difficult to decide between the two hypotheses

[18] 'Pareillement sur le livre du Prince retombant n'agueres entre mes mains nonobstant deux traductions d'icelluy ia publiées par deux personnes diverses : dont l'un a esté mon familier et domestique, qui n'avoit jamais mis un pied à cent lieues de l'Italie, de l'autre ie n'en suis pas plus certain, lequel on m'a rapporté avoir voulu n'agueres usurper le labeur de ma traduction ancienne des discours dont est question, soubs ombre que ie n'y avoys inseré mon nom, comme en un aprentissage qu'il se vouloit bien attribuer pour chef d'œuvre' (Gohory 1571).

since, although there is undoubtedly plagiarism, one cannot be certain who the plagiarist is. However, it is certain that Gohory defines a line of translation which is definitely that of 'Cappel-Gohory' and is opposed to that of Gaspard d'Auvergne:

'Or a il [*i.e.* Gaspard d'Auvergne] tenu une voye contraire à la mienne de iuger tousiours son style meilleur, d'autant que il s'eslongneroit plus de son auteur, lequel avoit premier anticipé les motz propres et naturelz, et les termes d'estat' (However he followed a route contrary to mine in always judging his style better, all the more so as he strayed further from his author, who had first anticipated the proper and natural words, and the terms of state).

The commentary on the style of the translation by Gaspard d'Auvergne is perfectly appropriate and it should be sufficient to provide an example which will enable the reader to compare the styles of the translators[19] (P 4, 15):

Principe, IV 15
Ne ti basta spegnere il sangue del Principe, perche vi rimangono quelli Signori che si fanno capi delle nuove alterationi, et non li potendo contentare ne spegnere, perdi quello stato qualunche volta venga l'occasione.

Jacques de Vintimille	Gaspard d'Auvergne	Guillaume Cappel	Jacques Gohory
et ne suffict pas avoir exterminé la lignée du prince, pour ce qu'il y reste plusieurs autres seigneurs qui se font chefz de nouvelles rebellions, dont il advient que tu perds l'estat sitost qu'ilz treuvent l'occasion de revolter : et ce pour cause que tu ne les peulx ny contenter, ny destruyre.	Et ne sera pas assez **en cest endroit** d'abolir la race, et le sang du Roy; parautant que les autres Seigneurs demeurent **tousiours**, qui se feront **a un besoing** chefz de nouveaux changemens. Et ne les pouvant du tout contenter, ne destruire, **il faut necessairement que tu en laisches la prise, et soie dechassé aux** premieres occasions, **qui s'offriront contre toy.**	Outre ce qu'il ne suffit pas d'estaindre le sang royal, pource qu'il demeurera tousiours des Seigneurs, qui se feront chefz de nouvelles mutations, lesquelz d'autant qu'on ne peut contenter ni ruiner la premiere occasion qui se presentera, tous les estats gaignez seront perduz.	Outre ce qu'il ne suffit pas d'estaindre le sang Royal, pource qu'il demeurera tousiours des Seigneurs qui se feront chefz de nouvelles mutations : lesquels d'autant qu'on ne peut contenter, ne ruiner, à la premiere occasion qui s'offrira, tous les estats acquis seront perduz.

Some Differences and their Consequences: The Example of the Principe XXI, 24

Blado (then Giunta) reads 'Ma la prudentia consiste in saper' conoscer' le qualitati de gli inconvenienti et *prendere il modo tristo per buono*'. Yet the translations of the last clauses

[19] In the translation by Gaspard d'Auvergne boldface is used to indicate the additions.

of the sentence are different and give the impression that Vintimille had a different source text to the three others. Vintimille translates coherently relative to the text of Blado and Giunta, 'prendre le mauvais party pour bon' (to take the bad decision for good), the three others seem to have a text which says that one must take the 'moins mauvais pour bon' (the least bad for good) (D'Auvergne: 'prendre le moins mauvais pour le bon'; Cappel: 'choisir le moins mauvais pour le meilleur'; Gohory: 'choisir le moindre pour le meilleur'). However, the text which says 'prendre le moins mauvais pour bon' is the text of the manuscripts used in the various successive critical editions, from Lisio in 1899 to Inglese in 2013: ('pigliare el men tristo per buono'). A verification of the post-1532 editions shows that from 1535 (s.l.), the editions include the variant 'prendere il mancho tristo per buono' and that they exist simultaneously with editions which continue to reproduce the Blado-Giunta text. Is this an *ad sensum* correction or did the editors who chose the 'manco tristo' variant have access to manuscripts? This cannot be known with certainty, but it does seem necessary to relativise (even if it is globally correct) the idea according to which the Blado edition is the starting point for all the Italian editions until the end of the eighteenth century (when the manuscripts started to be used to establish the text, the first critical text being the 1899 Lisio edition). Nevertheless, while the vast majority of these editions depend on the tradition of the *editio princeps*, they introduce minor differences, which are then repeated and can have interpretative consequences.[20] In order to obtain an exact idea of the texts of *The Prince* which readers could have held in their hands, it could be useful to undertake systematic research into these ancient editions including both comparison and history.

I entitled this contribution: *uno piccolo dono.* The HM software tool and its web version *HyperPrince* are indeed dedicated to the community of researchers who are interested in Machiavelli as well as the theoretical and practical issues of translation. The web version is

[20] Concerning *The Prince* XVI 22, Jérémie Barthas has already demonstrated this in the *temuto* vs *tenuto* variant. I have also noted this in *The Prince* XXI 5, in the *miserabile* vs *mirabile* variant.

already available online; the HM software tool can be shared with those who would like to use it. In particular, it is possible to envisage the comparison of translations in other languages. I hope that the initial results that I have just presented will serve to convince researchers that this is a useful ‘little gift’ indeed.

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