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Machiavelli in the British Isles

Two Early Modern Translations of *The Prince*

Alessandra Petrina, Università di Padova, Italy

'Petrina's study of Machiavelli's early reception and translation in Renaissance England and Scotland represents a major advance in our understanding of the role played by Italian culture in the British Isles.'

– William J. Connell, Seton Hall University, USA

Machiavelli in the British Isles reassesses the impact of Machiavelli's *The Prince* in sixteenth-century England and Scotland through the analysis of early English translations produced before 1640, surviving in manuscript form. This study concentrates on two of the four extant sixteenth-century versions: William Fowler's Scottish translation and the Queen's College (Oxford) English translation, which has been hitherto overlooked by scholars.

Alessandra Petrina begins with an overview of the circulation and readership of Machiavelli in early modern Britain before focusing on the eight surviving manuscripts. She reconstructs each manuscript's history and the afterlife of the translations before moving to a detailed examination of two of the translations.

Petrina's investigation of William Fowler's translation takes into account his biography, in order to understand the Machiavellian influence on early modern political thought. Her study of the Queen's College translation analyses the manuscript's provenance as well as technical details including writing and paper quality. Importantly, this book includes annotated editions of both translations, which compare

the texts with the original Italian versions as well as French and Latin versions.

With this volume Petrina has compiled an important reference source, offering easy access to little-known translations and shedding light on a community of readers and scholars who were fascinated by Machiavelli, despite political or religious opinion.

Contents: Preface; Machiavelli's *Principe* and its early appearance in the British Isles; English manuscript translations; The burghess humanist: a life of William Fowler; The Fowler translation: the state of the manuscripts; The Queen's College translation: the state of the manuscript; A critical reading and commentary on the translations; Appendices: the annotated texts; Bibliography; Index.

Includes 2 b&w illustrations

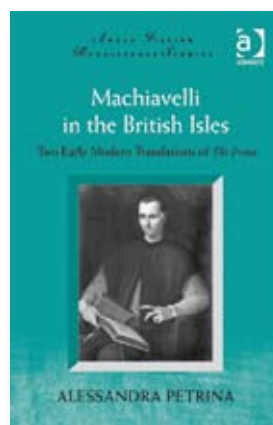
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