et Thanatos. Ce livre est une invitation à lire ou à relire d'Aubigné; à cause de sa pénétration et de sa richesse, aucun lecteur sérieux du poète ne pourra s'en passer.

SIMONE MASER, *Université d'Ottawa*

J. H. Elliott. *The Count Duke of Olivares: The Statesman in an Age of Decline*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986. Pp. xxviii, 733.

In 1621 the Count-Duke of Olivares emerged as the dominant figure in the Spanish court and government upon the accession of Philip IV (1621–1665) to the throne. As the royal favourite (*valido*) of the young king, Olivares acquired power intent upon introducing fiscal, administrative and political reform into a creaking imperial structure beset by a multitude of problems at home and abroad. The optimism generated in the early years of his rule had long since vanished by 1643 when Olivares was driven from power as the monarchy staggered under the burden of military defeat at the hands of the French and the Dutch, revolts within the monarchy in Catalonia and Portugal, and the crushing weight of taxation.

J. H. Elliott has written an exhaustive account of how this intelligent and extraordinarily hard-working figure came undone, his great foreign and domestic projects brought to ruin. The author pays due attention to the economic and political obstacles in the way of anyone exercising effective power over the Spanish monarchy during the seventeenth century. And he addresses with admirable clarity the complex diplomatic history of the times with particular attention being devoted to the monarchy's relations with the Dutch, the French and the Austrian Hapsburgs. Yet when all is said and done, this is the story of a personal failure of enormous and heroic proportions. It is a story of elaborate foreign policy schemes designed to preserve the hegemony of both Spanish and Austrian Hapsburgs before threats from the Dutch, the French and the Protestant princes of central Europe. It is also a tale of fundamental miscalculations, such as the refusal to come to terms with the Dutch in the late 1620s, and the decision to commit Spain militarily in the struggle over the Mantuan succession, thereby bringing about a French intervention that would bring disaster in its wake. At home, Olivares, beset by a perpetual financial crisis produced by Spanish military commitments abroad, misread the deeply held resentments of Portugal and Catalonia at Castilian domination.

Elliott argues that in the end Olivares' inability "to take clean, sharp decisions, without accompanying them with qualifying formulas and subsidiary purposes" (p. 587) frustrated his elaborately conceived plans and strategies. Olivares appears, indeed, as a tragic figure who worked ceaselessly at his desk on the king's business, who saw Spain called to fulfill its glorious imperial destiny in Europe on behalf of itself and catholicism, and who bore the disasters that rained down upon the realm beginning in the mid-1630s with stoic resignation. This is a story well and objectively told. At its end, the reader instinctively feels sympathy for the man who

struggled mightily to do for the Spanish monarchy what he believed was in its best interests but who, instead, led it to near ruin.

WILLIAM J. CALLAHAN, *University of Toronto*

Machiavelli. *The Prince*. Edited by Quentin Skinner and translated by Russell Price. Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. Pp. xxxv, 152. Two Appendices; Two Indices.

Quentin Skinner, Russell Price, and Cambridge University Press have all outdone themselves in developing this elegant translation and scholarly edition of Machiavelli's great classic. After commenting on their achievement I will use the new translation to make a point about some central themes in *The Prince*.

Quentin Skinner's fine introduction sets Machiavelli in his intellectual context, noting his rejection of the mirror of princes literature and his break with Cicero's and Seneca's utopian moralizing about power. Skinner also prepared the helpful bibliographical notes and a chronicle of Machiavelli's life. Price did the translation, annotations to the text, biographical notes on everyone mentioned in the text, and two appendices: one a selection of Machiavelli's letters, the other, superb explanations of the major Italian terms. All these aids, combined with the lucid, accurate translation make this a splendid edition (and the paperback a bargain).

Price's translation for example renders 'principato' as 'principality', not 'dominion' or 'despotism' (sic!), as in Rodd's 1955 effort (Chicago 1965). To show its quality the table below compares the original titles of Chapters VI and VII (in Latin) with the Price and Caponigri versions.

Machiavelli	Price	Rodd
VI De <i>principatibus novis</i> qui armis propiis et <i>virtute</i> acquiruntur	VI <i>New principalities</i> acquired by one's own arms and ability.	VI <i>The Rule of a Dominion</i> Conquered by Battle.
VII De <i>principatibus novis</i> qui alienis armis et <i>fortuna</i> acquiruntur.	VII <i>New principalities</i> acquired through the power of others and their <i>favour</i> .	VII <i>Rulers by the Grace</i> of Others.

In addition Price translates the title of the climactic Chapter XXVI, "Exhortatio ad capessendam Italiam in libertatemque a barbaris vindicandum", thus: "Exhortation to liberate Italy from the barbarian yoke". In contrast Caponigri termed it an 'Envoi', putting it after an appendix with the letter to Lorenzo de Medici. These chapters bracket the central themes of *The Prince*: *fortuna*, *virtu*, the foundation of