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PublicLecture

“Machiavelli the Wimp: Mocking One’s Emotions and Self-Presentation in the Renaissance”

Professor Guido Ruggiero
University of Miami

A poem, written by Machiavelli, when he was 56 with the help of his young mistress, the noted Florentine singer Barbara Salutati, suggests that we might rethink the mythic Machiavellian Machiavelli. The poem was designed to be sung between the acts of his famous comedy, *The Mandrake Root*, that celebrated love and adultery, and seems to literally sing of a different Machiavelli:

Love, the person who doesn't try
Your great power, hopes in vain....
Nor will such a person know what it means
in the same instant
To live and die....
And they'll never know how....
Fear and hope freeze and burn our hearts,
Or understand how both men and gods
Tremble before the arrows with which
you're armed.

Machiavelli trembling before love's arrows? Machiavelli overwhelmed by emotion? Who was this Machiavelli? This lecture proposes a decidedly different Machiavelli from the mythic dominating male. Looking anew at the whole range of his literary production, a distinctive more passive and more emotional Machiavelli emerges, if not as a wimp, at least with a self-mocking laugh.

Guido Ruggiero, Chair of History at the University of Miami, is a notable historian in the fields of gender, sex, crime, magic, science and everyday culture, in Renaissance and early modern Italy. His innovative approaches include microhistory, narrative history, the melding of literature, literary criticism, and archival history. Amongst his publications are *The Boundaries of Eros: Sex Crime and Sexuality in Renaissance Venice*; *Binding Passions: Tales of Magic, Marriage and Power from the End of the Renaissance*; and *Machiavelli in Love: Sex, Self and Society in the Italian Renaissance*.



Monday, 19 November 2012
6.30pm – 7.30pm

Theatre A
Elisabeth Murdoch Building
The University of Melbourne
PARKVILLE VIC 3010

Admission is free.
Bookings are required.
Seating is limited.

To register visit:
<http://alumni.online.unimelb.edu.au/guidoruggiero>

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