

HISTORY, RELIGION, POWER, AND AUTHORITY:
THE RELEVANCE OF MACHIAVELLI'S EDUCATIONAL
APPROACH FOR CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL THOUGHT

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ABSTRACT

HISTORY, RELIGION, POWER, AND AUTHORITY: THE RELEVANCE OF MACHIAVELLI'S EDUCATIONAL APPROACH FOR CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL THOUGHT

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Machiavelli's uniqueness and originality renders his educational direction as pertinent for times and conditions that are similar to and prevalent in ours. On the grand scale, his thought process disrupts the classical sense of philosophy, metaphysics, and religion. This disruption of the classical Western consciousness is an aim in the contemporary realm of political thought, which, starting with the extensive criticism of modernity found in the works of Nietzsche, has been developed in the realm of political thought throughout the twentieth and onto the twenty-first century. Therefore, Machiavelli – who lived 500 years ago – is nevertheless the source for productive knowledge, analysis, and prognosis for the contemporary political crisis, a crisis due to the downfall of modernity. The presupposition of latter-day modernity, as being considered the best of all possible worlds, is no longer believable. Modernity, what was once considered as being utterly unique and superior in human history, is responded to today by critiques on class domination, Western imperialism, the dissolution of community and tradition, the rise of alienation, and the impersonality of bureaucratic power. Machiavelli supplants the dominant modern consciousness through being a source for a new artistic revolution, a revolution of consciousness through a humane call for strength in facing reality,

in order to re-constitute a divergent set of epistemological and ontological discoveries, which are better aligned to the condition of the present-day than those formulated by the dominant Western modern consciousness.

Keywords: uniqueness, disruption, modernity, contemporary, revolution.

ÖZ

TARİH, DİN, GÜÇ VE OTORİTE: MACHIAVELLI'NIN EĞİTİMSEL YAKLAŞIMININ GÜNÜMÜZ POLİTİK DÜŞÜNCESİ AÇISINDAN ÖNEMİ

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Machiavelli'nin benzersizliği ve orijinalliği, onun eğitimsel yönünü, bizimkine benzeyen ve bizimkinden önce gelen zamanlar ve durumlar için hala geçerli kılmaktadır. Büyük bir ölçekte bakıldığında, Machiavelli'nin düşünce süreci klasik anlamdaki felsefe, metafizik ve dini altüst eder. Klasik Batı bilincinin altüst edildiği bu durum, günümüz politik düşünce alanının içinde bir amaçtır ki bu, modernitenin Nietzsche'nin eserlerinde görülen yoğun bir eleştirisiyle başlayan ve yirminci yüzyıl boyunca ve 21. yüzyılda da politik düşünce alanında geliştirilen bir durumdur. Bu bağlamda, 500 yıl önce yaşamış olan Machiavelli yine de, modernitenin çöküşünden kaynaklanan günümüz politik krizlerinde üretken bilginin, analizin ve teşhisin kaynağıdır. Modernitenin varsayımı olan olabilecek en iyi dünya fikri artık inanılır değildir. Bir zamanlar insanlık tarihindeki benzersiz ve en üst durum olarak değerlendirilen modernizm, eleştirilenler tarafından günümüzde sınıf hakimiyeti, Batı emperyalizmi, toplum ve geleneğin çözülmesi, yabancılaşmanın yükselişi ve bürokratik gücün kişisizliği ile tanımlanmaktadır. Machiavelli hakim modern bilinci, yeni bir sanatsal devrimin, farklı epistemolojik ve ontolojik bulguları yeniden inşa edebilmek için, gerçeğe yüzleşmek için gereken güce insani bir çağrı yoluyla bir devrimin, kaynağı olarak değiştirir. Bu epistemolojik ve ontolojik bulgular günümüz durumuna, hakim modern Batı bilinci tarafından formüle edilenlerden daha uygundur.

Anahtar Sözcükler: benzersizlik, altüst etmek, modern, günümüz, devrim.

To my mother and father

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“It was the meeting place of two worlds; day and night came thither from two opposite poles...The odd thing about it was that these worlds should border on each other so closely.”

“Two Worlds,” *Demian*, Hermann Hesse, 1958

“Ages are to be assessed according to their *positive forces* – and by this assessment the age of the Renaissance...appears as the last *great age*, and we, we moderns...of scientificity – acquisitive, economical, machine-minded – appear as a *weak age*.”

“Expeditions of an Untimely Man,” *The Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche, 1888.

1.1 Preface: Educational Direction

The merit of any study is on its educative ability for the day in which one lives. In the process of understanding the conditions of politics in the present world, one resorts to recognized great thinkers. On doing so, through the study, the reader ponders to consider the general condition of life in the present-day with comparison to other times and other thoughts in history. From this onset, one can better judge the prognosis of the current condition: whether it is in progress or decline, whether it has a strong form of civilization or a weak one. The overall goal in political science, or any science, is to identify the beneficial features and relinquish the harmful. From this analysis, hopefully, one can identify the educational means to re-vitalize the productive, and cast out the worthless. For the most part, Machiavelli continuously entices his readers to carry out this task.

The educational direction in this work has arisen simply through the careful readings of Machiavelli's works. That experience itself, set up the implication that he is significant not only for his time, but for future times. One quickly obtains the impression that, after his time, his teachings are more essential for this day. In the search of this inference, the study began through the main themes of history, religion, power, and authority; the choice for those subjects of study was made for the simple reason that they are obviously important for Machiavelli.

Through a study of these four main themes a certain awareness was revealed that was augmented as the study moved from one topic to the next. This work will

reveal that growing incentive, and use it as an educational approach to display the repercussions this study has on understanding the conditions of the present-day. It will reveal not only an awareness, but a means for stimulating growth on the essential features of the civilized world that are admitted in a decline during our time. The augmented development in the study of his works, with his contentious approach, makes Machiavelli's educational method fruitful for a better understanding of our age, and previous ages. It forces the reader to ponder the difficult evaluation of human nature. This can readily be seen in his focus on the four main themes.

His relevance for today on these matters is generated, firstly, from the appearance that experiences during the Renaissance time period are somewhat similar to ours. The Renaissance, the time period that Machiavelli lived through, comprised of the fall of Medieval Ages, with the beginning of a new age, modernity. The "man of the Renaissance" lived "between two worlds" (Renaissance Humanism: <http://www>). This fall of one world and rise of a new one makes Machiavelli important for our present-day, since the modern world is falling towards another "new yet unknown age" (Arendt 1959: 6), the argued "end of modernity," which equals the notion of the "end of history": "An experience of the 'end of history' seems to be widespread in the twentieth-century culture" (Vattimo 1990: 4-5).

The modern notion of the "end of history" can have various interpretations. In the theories of the latter modern period, it was conceived as an indicator of the superiority of Western civilization, the "crowning political achievement of the West" (Kaplan 2000: 98). But in our contemporary period, with the experiences of the twentieth century, it appears to display the opposite assessment. This process will also be revealed in this work, as will the lessons taken from it. The knowledge of the rise and fall of Medieval Ages in Machiavelli seemingly corresponds to the present-day, with the ensuing knowledge of the rise and fall of modernity.

Today, we live in "a time of transition" (Nietzsche 1974: 302). It is a threshold between the modern world, and this new, unknown world. The basis for analysis comes about from the recognition that living "between two worlds" is living in a "time of crisis," where it is difficult to comprehend the condition, and to

meaningfully act within it. The time of crisis involves a situation of turmoil and upheaval, both politically and spiritually. In living through two centuries of tyrannical despotism, leading up to the Renaissance, the “triumph” of Christianity fell into crisis. Former Christian rule turned into “the omnipotence of the state” (Burckhardt n.d.: 9), with “the deliberate adaptation of means to ends,” joined to “almost absolute power” (Burckhardt n.d.: 8), which produced “despotism” in the four great powers in Italy, “Naples, Milan, the Papacy, and Venice” (Burckhardt n.d.: 26). With the experience of the catastrophic events of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the apparent “triumph of modernity,” happened simultaneously with “its greatest crises” (Cahoone 1996: 133).

Machiavelli’s educational goal to his “time of crisis,” is through something uncommon in modern times, the use of historical exemplary lessons, mostly from ancient Rome, in seeking “to bring about the rebirth of the ancient Roman Republic” (Strauss 1973: 272). The first reaction of the many to such a statement, and of Machiavelli’s importance for the present-day, is one of disbelief. How can someone who wrote around 500 years ago be prevalent for the activities of today? At not knowing all of the things that occurred after his time, the development of modern science and technology in forming the “Technological Age,” and the championing of democracy: how could Machiavelli be relevant for today? Modern science and technology is perceived as being unique in human history of civilization. How can Machiavelli be influential at such a time that is dominated by this new, unaccounted time of civilization?

Another constant question arises as to why he allowed himself, a claimed “extreme humanist” (Melograni 2006: bc), to be interpreted as someone completely derogatory of humanist principles. Princes, politicians, scientists, and even academics concocted Machiavelli as someone “Evil, a “Temptor,” a “discoverer of ambition and revenge,” an “originator of perjury,” a “synonym of the Devil,” with the use of “cunning duplicity,” and the “exercise of bad faith.” The associated “Machiavellianism” created a “Mach I scale” used by an up-to date psychology experiment to measure the psychological deficiency of authoritarian personalities in their “ruthlessness, cold-bloodedness, and vengefulness.” As Macaulay states: “We doubt whether any name in literary history be so generally odious as that of a man

whose character and writings we now propose to consider” (Macaulay 1827: 259). The first possible answer is that he is not understood; he is frequently misinterpreted and misrepresented in the insinuations of his character.

There are various interpretations that do not entirely coincide with the focal point of this work. Isaiah Berlin, a renowned current thinker, starts his “The Originality of Machiavelli” chapter with numerous summaries created over the last five centuries. According to him, they form a “cloud of subsidiary views and glosses” (Berlin 1979: 25). Some are agreeable; most are disagreeable, to the extent that, there is, “a startling degree of divergence about the central view, the basic political attitude of Machiavelli” (Berlin 1979: 25). There is an obvious misunderstanding in what is “said and implied” in his works, which have caused “profound and lasting uneasiness” (Berlin 1979: 26). There are “differences of tone between the two treatises [*The Prince* and *The Discourses*], as well as chronological puzzles” (Berlin 1979: 26), that are difficult to consciously order. From these intermixing conditions, together with the implication that Machiavelli is relevant for today, a new interpretation is required with a high level of criticism on previous comprehensions to perceive the real effects of his uniqueness and originality.

To summarize the insights Isaiah Berlin (1979), Machiavelli is original by providing a disruption in the classical forms of “philosophy, metaphysics, and religion” (Berlin 1979: 36-39). Another degree of similarity, amongst Machiavelli’s time and ours, arises, since, in our contemporary period, a re-assessment of those fundamental features are required. This task of disruption is similar to that of the present-day, to re-configure these essential educational principles to live and act meaningfully in this world. Through his uniqueness and originality, Machiavelli desired to re-formulate consciousness to a different framework within his readers, with a divergent view of philosophy, metaphysics, and religion. This was a primary directive in Machiavelli’s works; and it formulates a goal to which this work will be directed. It will examine the divergence from the classical elements of philosophy, metaphysics, and religion, which persists under his educational approach of exemplary lessons. The similarities on these essential features to the contemporary realm of study, makes Machiavelli relevant for the present-day.

In a divergent mindset, concentration on the four main themes, history, religion, power, and authority, can provide a firm basis for a new interpretation, to embark today upon his “path not yet trodden by anyone,” in order to “hunt for seas and lands unknown” (Machiavelli 1965: 190). Machiavelli uses “newness” on his most concentrated themes of history, religion, power, and authority, to disrupt the standardized philosophical and metaphysical approach of the Western tradition. As such, it is the consciousness of being beyond modernity that is closer to Machiavelli’s pedagogical realm. In this manner, his lessons are “wholly new,” outside of the flawed misinterpretations and outside of the modern sensibility of “newness.” All four of these distinctive topics are interrelated, and, in the end, form a new alternate foundational basis for comprehending and acting upon the conditions of today. The originality of Machiavelli has provided a unique and “new” educational approach in each of the four designated themes that aid the understanding of the world of not only his day, but the present-day, and provide an alignment of the future. The new interpretation will rely primarily on Machiavelli’s primary works with those of other renown interpreters, such as Leo Strauss, Quentin Skinner, J.G.A. Pocock, Hannah Arendt, as well as the most recent authors, Joseph Femia, Ross King, and Paul A. Rahe.

A proper interpretation rises above personal desires for an honest depiction of the works of Machiavelli. From the beginnings of a close study on him, Machiavelli strongly entices his readers to do so. It can be stated that such a consciousness has been withheld throughout the entirety of this work. In the process, it becomes necessary to outline the general features generated in the study of Machiavelli under the stated principles of history, religion, power, and authority.

1.2 The Structure of the Work

We know that the topic of history was very significant for Machiavelli, since the first “Preface” in his the most insightful book, *The Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius* (1519), is entitled “The Value of History” (Machiavelli 1965: 190). It traces the path from ancient times, to the beginning of modernity. With the comparative history of time periods, this work will do the same; a historical comparison of Machiavelli’s work in relation to the Western tradition that followed

him, up to the present-day. His renowned historical exemplary lessons involve the use of an intricate “historical cycle” (Wiser, 1982: 140), stemming from the ancient cosmological consciousness, “the cosmological world-view of the ancient pagans” (Wiser, 1982: 141). The order of the cosmological world, its religious and political participation, was “intra-mundane,” in this world. The cosmological world view of ancient paganism, which generated the view of an “historical cycle,” placed a “cosmic sacrality” (Eliade 1959: 12) on the world and the nature of life on earth. The general recurrence of historical conditions does not negate the importance of recognizing temporal differences. In historical analysis, the general and particular are not necessarily contentious. On this prerogative, Machiavelli’s historical cyclical view can be considered truly “new.” These issues will be displayed in the first chapter “The Workings of History.” The first section includes detailed research mostly from within Machiavelli’s *The Discourses*, while referring to essential secondary texts, and small influences in *The Prince*.

The next section will be a comparative review with another prominent and unique historian, to which Machiavelli is comparable, that is, Polybius; a one-time Greek, who was captured at home, taken to Rome, yet fell in love with the “Eternal City.” Machiavelli’s distinction in this comparison is not ignored. It will be followed by a study of his literary style of “historiography,” the manner by which he educates through his historical exemplary method. At the end of the chapter, the opposition and consequences of the historicism of the latter-day modern period with that of Machiavelli will be displayed.

Religion is a topic that at one time was forgotten by the dominance of the modern secular consciousness. As a current-day religious scholar, Karen Armstrong, relates, that the apparent ‘success’ of secularism given through modern ideologies, where “religion would never again become a force in international affairs,” eventually would be altered. Through Christian and Muslim ‘fundamentalists’, she claims, “religion has become a force that every government has been forced to take seriously” (Armstrong 2000: viii). The “fundamentalists ...as they are called,” are “convinced that they are fighting for the survival of their faith in a world that is inherently hostile to religion” (Armstrong 2000: vii). It involves a “war against secular modernity” (Armstrong 2000: vii). For Machiavelli,

religion was a strong force in the disastrous condition of Italy. It was easily abused in order to comply to the forces of power. In his judgment the state of performance of Christianity, both in world view and fiercer use of power, had condescended to inhumane cruelty. Machiavelli insights with the current-day return to the violent use of religion, makes such a topic of pertinent importance for today.

The “preface” of “Religion,” will introduce the originality of his ancient conceptualization in comparison to Christianity, which is an extended view of the Western tradition. The main thinkers in the Christian tradition will be briefly summarized, as the path of thought is trailed through Christianity up to Machiavelli’s sense of religion. It will then start with an overview handed to us by pertinent contemporary thinkers. The following section reveals the effects on the “contrariness” of his sense of religion which is tied to politics. It will be followed by his “attack” on Christianity. Moses, a Biblical figure important for Machiavelli, will be next displayed through the articles of contemporary authors. The section involves, in part, a re-interpretation of parts of the Bible by showing Moses’ worth through ancient religious values. More influential knowledge is given from a new conception of ancient religion – neo-paganism – with a brief description of the other three leading figures used directly in *The Prince*: Theseus, Cyrus, and, of course, Romulus. They are displayed as both political and religious leaders under a newly-valorized form of religion. It is followed by a study of one political leader during Machiavelli’s time that abuses the Christianity to manipulate the people to acquire power in politics. His tactics and failures provide good lessons for the present-day.

Under the ancient cosmological view, cyclical history, pagan religion, and politics are closely tied. The very word religion, *re-ligare*, has its Latin roots derived from the Roman Republic, and literally means “to be tied back” (Arendt 1954: 121), or “to be tied again,” evidently to the cosmological cycle. No matter the keen recognition made by Machiavelli of the beginning of modernity, he nevertheless returned - or tied himself back - to the “Roman religion” to analyze, learn, and incite propositions for human action in his own time. The inferred claim would be that the lessons from ancient paganism can have an educational effect on the present-day.

The topics shift more directly to politics in the following two chapters, “Power,” and “Authority.” In the present-day the term power is almost synonymous with politics. In the department of political sociology, it is “a key concept,” where “power is defined as the capacity to achieve one’s objectives, even when those objectives are in conflict with the interests of another actor” (Faulks 1999: 1). In a simpler yet eligible definition, power “can be seen as the ability to make others do what one would like them to do” (Girdner 1999: 11). The numerous intricacies of the concept of power is described in Hannah Arendt’s *The Human Condition*. Power “is boundless” (Arendt 1958: 201). “Under the conditions of human life, the only alternative to power,” she claims, “is force,” which is exerted by “the means of violence” (Arendt 1958: 202). This “historical experience and traditional theory, this combination,” of power and violence, “is known as tyranny” (Arendt 1958: 202). It is also essential in the current-day argument of the divergent manners of acquiring and using imperial forms of power that is being incorporated in world wide political performance. The chaotic condition in Italy during Machiavelli’s time made him raise his attention to similar concerns of power, which is dominant in the present-day.

The preface of the chapter “Power,” begins with a temporal comparison of the Renaissance with the contemporary. It introduces a criticism in the beliefs generated by the latter-day modern period. Such a criticism of modernity is the “common knowledge” of the contemporary realm of political thought. It brings to light the notion that Machiavelli can be more pertinent to the contemporary period than the modern. On general principles, he infers a criticism of modernity. In the next section, an oppositional comparison is made to the “impersonal” component in the understanding of the modern-state. It is followed by a detailed analysis of *The Prince* in relation to the aforementioned ideas. The major themes in *The Prince* will be revealed under this new light, in comparison to modern interpretations, where, it will be suggested, are mostly misinterpretations.

Through the analysis on power, the distinction within that concept, which Machiavelli uses throughout, has been worded as “power of necessity,” and the “lust for power.” They correspond to Machiavelli’s depiction. Machiavelli clearly makes the opposing contrast, of the “good” or “bad,” within the term “power”

(Machiavelli 1965: 1160). As Wisner relates, being a “realist” he “acknowledged the primacy of political power,” but, in *The Prince*, “he did not allow the reality of mere power,” to recognize itself outside of “its appropriate and inappropriate use” (Wisner 1982: 138). Explicitly, in Chapter 34, Book I, of *The Discourses*, he cites the opposition, of “power that comes in lawful ways,” and the “power obtained in unlawful ways” (Machiavelli 1965: 267). In Chapter III of *The Prince*, “Mixed Principates,” through an entire paragraph on “increasing power,” he identifies the problems of “too much force,” and “too much authority” (Machiavelli 1965: 15). With the “use of force,” “cities...come to an end; that end, is either destruction or servitude” (Machiavelli 1965: 1440). With this interrelation of power and authority, if power increases, failure likely arises: “when power and territory increase, enmity and envy likely increase” (Machiavelli 1965: 1261). Power can be used deceitfully, or generously: “truly those powers deserve to be hated which men usurp, not those which men gain through liberality, courtesy, and generosity” (Machiavelli 1965: 1397). These distinctions within the concept power, which is interrelated with authority, is significant in the proper study on these concepts in Machiavelli. The distinct characteristics on power, the “lust for power” and the “necessity of power,” are other features that make him unique and important.

The preface of “Authority” will display its “interrelations” with power. For Machiavelli, the best example of a great authority is in the mixed constitution of the Roman Republic, which existed before the rise of Roman imperialism. The next section investigates Machiavelli’s lessons through the fall of the Roman Republic to the corrective use for the Renaissance, and for future times, the current-day condition. It will be followed by contrasting views of liberty and hierarchy as essential for a healthy authority. The section on revolution severely questions the worth of so-called “modern revolutions,” which is elicited by a study of Machiavelli’s understanding of revolution, and through the works of a significant contemporary thinker, Hannah Arendt. Lastly in the chapter, authority, an essential element that is almost lost in present-day politics, actually can subvert the foundational principles of the Western tradition, which have currently been questioned in the field of study generated by contemporary political thought.

The origin of authority comes from the term generated during the Roman Republic –*auctoritas*. Machiavelli is in line with the great writers, as an author - *auctore* - of the past, where authority - *auctoritas* - was one of its main features. Rome, the “Eternal City,” and related ancient great leaders, were re-born – a Renaissance in Machiavelli’s work and his native city, Florence. A fruitful authority involves the public acceptance and the willingness of obedience for the rulers, whose leadership is acquired by their dignified performance for public concern. This can otherwise be stated, as the ancient form of republicanism, which is significantly different than the modern.

Today, the use of the term authority suggests a hidden force of power, which diminishes true authority. A new contemporary approach in the study of authority arises. At the present-day, the legitimization of authority comes into question. A new era of politics is beginning with the manipulative use of legitimacy. We see its use in “legal authority” and legitimate authority” in political administration. Often, the legal rule may not be legitimate: “A government may have legal authority to rule, but not have legitimate authority” (Girdner 1999: 18). Such a statement can be the tool for a good judgement of the relations between politics and the civil society. ‘Authority’ can easily turn into authoritarianism, as has been seen in retrospect of the Soviet regime and the Nazi regime of National Socialism. In the present-day, the dominance of power almost erases true authority. The resemblance of Machiavelli’s condition of the downfall of authority with the present-day will be displayed through the works of Max Weber, with his known three types of authority, the traditional, charismatic, and bureaucratic, and with the world-wide contentions between religious authority and political authority. Machiavelli can be a source to educate on the contentions between power and authority. Machiavelli’s treatment of the contentious struggles is, in essential ways, can be directed towards our present-day condition.

Authority can be formed as a venue to challenge the overpowering of politics today, and becomes an essential lesson in present-day politics. Authority does not involve “oppression, threat, punishment, force, or violence.” Authority – *auctoritas* – is a foundational cornerstone by which an ancient form of republicanism is formed that is continually augmented in the performances of duties

for civic loyalty, and confirmation of a civil religion dedicated towards public care. It contains with it, the lessons taken from history, as a means to return to the strong principles of the past to be adapted to present conditions.

Machiavelli could sense the changes from the classical conception of politics to the beginning of the modern, from which he perceived, more clearly than anyone at his time, the future nature of politics. Machiavelli places himself in a delicate position, where he must properly justify what could otherwise be renounced; and the sense of the required “newness” is not to completely dislodge the foundational principles upon which to establish political order. To do such a task, requires a different approach from the standardized classical tradition of both power and authority.

In the last main chapter, the “evaluation” of Machiavelli for contemporary political thought will be revealed through the relations of established lessons from the previous four chapters with the conditions of the present-day through the use of history, the struggles within religion and secularism, the dominance of power, and the forgetting of legitimate authority. The focus of the lessons acquired of Machiavelli’s works will be applied to the noted conditions of the present-day. The present-day conditions will be revealed by contemporary thinkers of the twentieth century. It will display the effects of Machiavelli’s understanding of the four main themes – history, religion, power, and authority – has on the present-day. The consequences of this study will be expanded upon in the conclusion.

1.3 Re-Positioning Machiavelli: A Lead-in to the Main Argument

After these introductory descriptions of the contexts of this work, we have seen an exchange of examples and insights from distant time periods. In doing so, it infers that such an exchange is productive educationally. It displays Machiavelli’s educational method of exemplary lessons, which includes the use of lessons from the past onto the present. It incorporates a teaching practice through divergent times in history that are nonetheless usable. Therefore, the distinctive recognition of time periods becomes important in this study. Machiavelli used lessons primary from the ancients, from the Roman Republic, in order to address the requirements of knowledge, analysis, and meaningful action in his day which was growingly

becoming meaningless. He uses primarily the ancients to educate his “moderns.” As such, this attempt at a new interpretation must reply to the continual question as to whether Machiavelli was ancient or modern.

Leo Strauss, in his famous *Thoughts on Machiavelli*, generally implies that Machiavelli is modern, albeit with a seemingly profound insight of his ancient influence. J.G.A. Pocock states that Machiavelli is mostly ancient. For Ross King, he is a “strikingly modern thinker” (King 2007: 237). Complexities are certainly involved in passing such a judgement of antiquity or modernity. Pocock displays this in the importance of understanding Machiavelli’s unique form of ‘newness’ and what the “moderns” use:

When he talks of the need for ‘new modes and orders’, he means that such modes and orders must be securely founded on the practice of antiquity and will be in the normal pre-modern sense that they will be renewed, ‘the world’s great age begins anew, the golden years return’ (Pocock 1978: 104).

Pocock is critical of the modern process. But then he asserts, that with “this contemporary Machiavelli,” his “immediacy to us[,] history can only obfuscate” (Pocock 1985: 571). But Pocock equates the “contemporary” with the “modern.” There is no distinction between the two. Most contemporary thought, especially after the influence of Nietzsche, who has been the primary influence of Heidegger, Arendt, Foucault, Derrida, George Grant in the twentieth century, denounces modern values. A key factor of this work rests on the distinction between modernity and the contemporary, which is tied to the attempt of a re-birth in ancient consciousness. This investigation will be carried out throughout the analysis. The lessons taken from his ancient teachings will be incorporated into not only his “modern” time, but ours as well.

We have indicated that the relevance of Machiavelli begins with the resemblance of being in the declining world of Medieval Christianity that is similar to our world, the decline in modernity towards its “end.” On the debate as to being ancient or modern, as we will see throughout this work, it is adequate to suggest that he is dependent on the ancient realm for his educational direction on his present-day. But this does not negate his importance on the modern time period, or

more so, our present-day, the end of modernity. Modernity can be inferred as a grounds for criticism with the same intensity he had for Christianity. Although there are features of opposing values between modernity and Christianity, it can be argued that the unity of the Western tradition was maintained through the philosophical, metaphysical, and religious framework in both Christianity and modernity. On these factors, there is general similarity, albeit with temporal oppositions of value. From opposing poles, they come together in similar general principles philosophically, metaphysically, and religiously. This work will reveal these interrelations. It becomes essential to reveal the manner by which Machiavelli achieves the recognition made by Isaiah Berlin that he disrupts the classical sense of philosophy, metaphysics, and religion, which, in general, still persists in modernity. If his manner is acceptable and productive, then he is more relevant for today than previous time periods. Machiavelli is engaged in criticism of modern values even before they became prominent. For contemporary thinkers, it is argued that to tackle our modern condition, a return to the past is needed, one outside of the Western tradition to resolve the flaws in that tradition. These arguments, with such a contemporary approach, will form the central focus of this work.

1.4 Precursor: Towards the Concluding Remarks

His educational path of a comparative return to the past to understand the present is nonetheless analogous with the return to a “foundational antiquity” called for in our contemporary realm of political thought, at a similar “time of crisis.” Gianni Vattimo, a contemporary scholar in political thought and compatriot of Machiavelli, in his book entitled *The End of Modernity* (1990), states: “the theoretical and practical revolutions of Western history are presented and legitimated for the most part as ‘recoveries’, rebirths, or returns” (Vattimo 1990: 2). This “new” need of recovery stems from the realization that we, too, are living “between two worlds,” where the previous “modern” world view is collapsing, and a new unknown world is beginning.

To understand the situation at the beginning of the twenty-first century, we must come to know what it really means to be “modern,” through its historical comparison to the past, and to consider, perhaps, what will arise in the future. The

basis of this analysis stems from the controversial view that Machiavelli proposed readers are not only those during his time, but the readers of the future. A part of the educative approach generated in this dissertation, is a repetition of Machiavelli's: the study of history - the times of the past - for a better understanding of our present condition.

This lesson on newness is essential for the present-day position which is contrary to the 'newness' contrived in the modern belief of "progress in history" with a misapprehension of the "end of history": "if we see the post-modern not only as something new in relation to the modern, but also as a dissolution of the category of the new – in other words, as an experience of 'the end of history'" (Vattimo 1990: 4). In reality, the modern "vision of history as progress," with "the idea of history as a unitary process," is "rapidly dissolving" (Vattimo 1990: 6). Machiavelli had the awareness that the knowledge of history required a proper selection of "new" remedies for the "new" condition. Historical knowledge requires prudence, and calls for judgement in both remembering and forgetting events in history, for a productive alignment to the present. This is shared by Nietzsche who knew of "The Advantages and Disadvantages of History for Life." This is a foundational premise for the future readers of today: the careful unbiased study of history, to help align our judgements from lessons of historical events, for the decisions of today. This is the premise for interpreting and evaluating Machiavelli's educational approach.

Machiavelli's sense of "newness" is comparable to the newness advocated by Vattimo at the end of modernity: "new is identified with value through the mediation of the recovery and appropriation of the foundation-origin" (Vattimo 1990: 2). For Machiavelli, "the concept of foundation is central, if not paramount" (Arendt 1954: 136). The inferences from his works are influential in a re-formulation for a "new" understanding of philosophy, metaphysics, and religion, and their reliance on current-day politics. They are also original in the necessitated re-formulation of the foundations of the Western tradition and political philosophy.

Machiavelli's originality, which has caused many misunderstandings, is actually the fruitful element of his works that is useful for education today. Machiavelli's originality can provide a means to treat the "disintegrated character of this time" (Nietzsche 1967: 14), as "nihilism stands at the door" (Nietzsche 1967:

7). The period of his life, the Renaissance, is comparable to ours, a transitional time of crisis, where he produced a creative critical pedagogy to a condition like ours, on the brink of nihilism; and therefore, Machiavelli, in tackling his condition, is more relevant for political thought today, than what has previously been claimed. If there can be an alternative foundation for understanding the condition in “times of transition,” it can rest to some degree on Machiavelli for a creative response to a similar time of crisis, with a critical yet productive educational approach. With this recognition, Machiavelli’s educational approach can be administered to our time as well, a time more closely aligned to the new yet unknown world, which envisages “the taking leave of modernity” (Vattimo 1990: 3). There are compatibilities between Machiavelli’s educational approach and that of the contemporary realm of political thought. Contemporary thinkers argue for our temporary condition as the “end of modernity,” just as Machiavelli taught of the end of the Christian theological world. Both realms of political thought seek to perceive and relate to a new yet unknown future world.

The main argument in this dissertation, that Machiavelli is more relevant for contemporary political thought than the thoughts of modern times, comes from this recognition of his originality and contention against the Western tradition. This acknowledgement renders the argument that his lessons criticize the on-coming changes identified as modern politics. Machiavelli “took on an entirely new character” (Strauss 1973: 269), creating a “rejection of certain elements within the tradition of Western political thought” (Wiser 1982: 135), making an “extreme step,” where “political philosophy broke with the classical tradition” (Strauss 1973: 269). Although there are many arguments that claim him to be worthless for the human concern of the present-day, the approach in this work attempts to display the opposite: that, in confronting the reality of facing a declining world, requires a renewal of human principles that are long forgotten, in his time, and ours; of placing virtue, nobility, honour, and excellence back into the political framework. This work will attempt to show that Machiavelli is still with us, especially in the realm of contemporary political thought, which also seeks to regain the positive elements that have been lost in the present-day.

With Machiavelli, one can infer the importance of strength as a merit for sound judgment in the acceptance of the strife of daily life in the tension of “being” and “becoming.” This tension is prominent throughout his works, and forms the basis of the renewal of the classical philosophical, metaphysical, and religious approach. Under these conditions, the pursuit of nobility, honour, glory, excellence, is to be done with no everlasting stable or moral foundation. A foundation is to be done within the cyclical ebbs and floods of time and nature, yet with not disbanding the attempt for a foundational cornerstone that allows an adjustment to divergent conditions. From these foresights, the conclusion of this work will describe the contribution emanating from the study on Machiavelli, and how he makes ideas relevant for the contemporary condition.

Under these conditions, his educational goal is beyond analysis, stemming towards a prognosis for a newly conceived venue of political “action” divergent from the modern conjecture, with a re-formulation of history, a new form of religiousness, all married with the possibility of a contemporary form of authority, with the proper use of power. In the productive contemporary framework, “newness” is newly conceived from lessons of the past, a cognizance that seems ironic, but only so in modern consciousness, of which certain elements should be bypassed. These goals are all perceived through an honest display of Machiavelli’s education, which calls for a, now, new assessment of the nature of things. A new consciousness is called for, which is a “new” return to the ancient. This “turning to the ancients” was partially accomplished in the healthy Italian civil society during the Renaissance; therefore, it can occur again. Presently, *we need a new Renaissance.*

CHAPTER II

THE WORKINGS OF HISTORY IN MACHIAVELLI

Romulus his grandsire's throne shall gain,
The people the Romans call, the city of Rome.
To them no bounds of empire I assign,
Nor terms of years to their immortal line.
Even haughty Juno, who, with endless broils,
Earth, seas, and heavens, and Jove himself turmoils;
At length atoned, her friendly power shall join,
To cherish and advance the Trojan line.
The subject world shall Rome's dominion own,
And, prostrate, shall adore the nations of the gown.
An age is ripening in revolving fate
When Troy shall overturn the Grecian state,
And sweet revenge her conquering sons shall call,
To crush the people that conspired her fall.
Virgil, *Aeneid*

Not to know what occurred
before one was born,
is always to remain a child.
Cicero

Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past.
If all time is eternally present
All time is unredeemable.
"Burnt Norton" *Four Quartets*, T.S. Eliot

2.1 Preface: Time Periods in History

Since the identity of historical time periods is essential for understanding the main goal of this work of displaying the relevance of Machiavelli on the current-day, a general and brief description of the named time periods is required: the ancient, the source of the Western classical tradition, early and Medieval Christianity, the Renaissance, the numerous elements of the modern age, and the end of modernity.

The ancient identity has been construed as prior to the source of the Western classical tradition. It involves the "pre-Socratic" time period, with influences

outside of Athens and Greece. Antiquity obviously includes the Roman Republic, which started with the virtuous activities of Romulus, the beginner of Rome, who lived circa 771BC- 717BC. One venue of “ancient history” identifies its beginning with the beginning of Rome, just as “classical antiquity” is the beginning of Greek history at roughly the same time period (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic: 1).

In the history of political thought, the Western classical tradition begins with Plato, who wrote, to a large extent, the dialogues of Socrates. In the introduction to the book *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (1961), the producer of the introduction and editor, Huntington Cairns, states: “THESE DIALOGUES...have been praised as the substance of Western thought” (Cairns 1961: xiii). They are “the chief lines of the Western world view,” and that “a return to the insights of these dialogues is a return to our roots” (Cairns 1961: xiii). This is similar to the comments made by James Wiser in the opening paragraph of Part I, “The Classical Tradition,” that the “Hellenistic civilization of the fifth and fourth century BC has had such an immense attraction for Western society” (Wiser 1982: 3). With a list of well-known Greek figures, from Aeschylus to Heraclitus, it formulated “the basis for the most important pillars of modern Western civilization” (Wiser 1982: 3).

The next phase in the Western tradition of thought was the rise of Christianity seen in the works of St. Augustine (354- 430 AD), whereby history formed a new apocalyptic¹ direction for a Redemption from the sinful earthly world, to an eternal life with God in heaven. The apocalypse was either the relinquishment of man’s life on earth, or the complete destruction of the planet. Later on in St. Augustine’s life, he was not so extreme and found meaning in Christian faith to enhance the need for peace on a universal level. Nevertheless, he raised the tension between political relevancy and Christian principles, or, in other words, “between the temporal and spiritual powers” (Wiser, 1982: 103). This tension became “one of the major issues throughout the Middle Ages” (Wiser, 1982: 103), which only disappeared through the privatization of religion with the

¹ The “Apocalypse,” coming from “the Book of Revelation” of the Bible, refers to the notion of the “end of the world”. The end of the world is the “end of history,” a Christian consciousness that gets secularized in modern political thought towards the end of superiority.

Protestant Reformation. The attempt to find a harmony between these two realms of power was a major concern for St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 AD), who lived through the late period of Medieval Christianity in the thirteenth century AD. It also made for the “confusion” of Marsilius of Padua, who existed after St. Thomas and before Machiavelli. Though “between 1000 and 1300 many of the essential features of the modern nation state system began to appear,” it did not appear in Italy (Wiser 1982: 131).

It was from the lack of feudal arrangements in Italy that did not allow a strong monarchy to rise in power over a national-oriented stage, as it did in France, England, and Spain: “in France, Spain, and England was so organized that at the close of its existence it was naturally transformed into a united monarchy” (Burckhardt n.d.: 4). The Italian peninsula “was divided among five political forces: The Papal States (which were, in fact, a collection of semiautonomous fiefdoms acknowledging some sort of theological tie to the Pope); Florence; Milan; Venice; and the Kingdom of Naples” (Wiser 1982: 133). None of the five political forces could impose a strong design upon others to form a unification of Italy. There existence,

was founded simply on their power to maintain it. In them for the first time we detect the modern political spirit of Europe, surrounded freely by its own instincts, often displaying the worst features of an unbridled egoism, outraging every right, and killing every germ of a healthier culture (Burckhardt n.d.: 4).

From this weakness, the Italian city-states hired mercenary troops, which brought foreign powers to rove through and take over parts of Italy. The Renaissance in Italy had to face a large amount of instability in political rule. Nevertheless, it formed a distinctive time period, from the fall of Medieval Christianity, to the rise of a new world called modernity. Machiavelli’s works are clearly identified with “the birth of modernity” (Wiser 1982: 129)

As Cahoons states, “It is impossible to recount the dramatic changes that stimulate European modernity” (Cahoone 1996: 27). He includes nonetheless, “the voyage discovery of the fifteenth century, the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth, and the scientific revolution of the seventeenth, to name a few” (Cahoone

1996: 27). As Wiser (1982) states, “the *devotia moderna* and the *vita moderna*” led to the rise of Luther in the Protestant Reformation, and can easily be conceived as the beginning of the separation of Church and state (Wiser 1982: 150). These elements were related to the “Protestant” values of “individualism, voluntarism, and nationalism” (Wiser 1982: 151). The rise of Protestantism in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries occurred at the same general life-time of Hobbes. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, “a new world view” arose, which would eventually “create a new *world*,” where the “rhythm of life” was “dictated by machines rather than by nature” (Cahoone, 1996: 27). It was “the beginning of an accelerated process of change whereby modes of living that had altered little over a thousand years would eventually be turned upside down” (Cahoone 1996: 27). The new world created by the “Age of Reason,” or the “Age of Enlightenment,” started the legacy that the human could construct “human society, materially and politically” (Cahoone 1996: 27). It was the legacy of “the simple, profound, unquestioned conviction of Reason, Freedom, and Progress” (Cahoone 1996: 27-28). But this legacy had criticism from the start. These abrupt changes in life meant an abrupt loss, of “community, tradition, religion, familiar political authority, customs, and manners” (Cahoone 1996: 27-28). All was, at least “transformed,” or “utterly displaced” (Cahoone 1996: 28).

The later modern period is identified in the workings of Hegel and Marx. Even though they had an extensive criticism of modernity and of any remnant of Christian dogma, they did not relieve Progress from their critical framework. As such, they did not relieve themselves of their own versions of German idealism, a modern ideological standpoint that is now argued as having little to do with the real, after the destructive events of the twentieth century.

In the rejection of the Hegelian education to the “Absolute” in a contorted version of the “Divine Revelation,” Nietzsche began a complete criticism of modernity. Modernity brought about the condition where, “Nihilism stands at the door” (Nietzsche 1968: 7); a “nihilism” that “is rooted” in the “Christian-morale” (Nietzsche 1968: 7). With its “nihilistic consequences” in “contemporary natural science,” the “ways of thinking in politics and economics,” and with “the position

of art in the modern world absolutely lacking in originality,” the modern world has brought about its own end (Nietzsche 1968: 8).

The “end of modernity” is identified equally with the contemporary realm of political thought, whereby Nietzsche is its primary source. It therefore extends to Heidegger, Arendt, Derrida, and Foucault, and all other influential twentieth century thinkers. The comparable reference of the works of Machiavelli and the Renaissance with these mentioned time periods is essential in the main argument in this work. The Renaissance, as a distinctive time period that faced the downfall of one world-view with the rise of another largely unknown world, is similar in generality to our time, to our world.

The Italian Renaissance formed a heralded time period, whereby Nietzsche called it “the last *great* age” (Nietzsche 1990: 102). Jacob Burckhardt, the most noteworthy historian of the Italian Renaissance, identifies its beginning with the fourteenth century. This would include the workings of the later life of Dante (1265-1321), the full lives of Petrarch (1304-1374), and Boccaccio (1313-1375). The Northern Renaissance was formed after the spread of humanism from the Italian Renaissance in the late fifteenth century (Gilbert 1997: 1).² It was closely linked to the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century. As Gilbert, a recent historian states, “the Northern Renaissance,” also claims an attachment to “the scientific revolution,” that started at the middle of the 16th century but moved into the Enlightenment period of the eighteenth century (Gilbert 1997: 1). The “Age of Enlightenment” consisted of “the spirit of optimism” in the new age of modern science, generated from the scientific revolution, which gave promise for control over nature through its mechanical rationalism and empiricism (Wiser 1982: 229). As one can see, there were significant differences between the early and late Renaissance.

The distinction of the Italian Renaissance, as an historical epoch, has caused a continual debate upon the on-going identity of the Renaissance that also occurred in Northern Europe, including the Protestant Reformation. The activities that were focused upon in the “Northern Renaissance,” such as individualism, the idea of

² Often, as we will see, the dates at the start and end of a time period or age are not entirely consistent. The following dates of time periods are commonly accepted by most scholars.

freedom, the divergent political and religious affairs, and even the “scientific revolution,” can find a source in Renaissance Italy. However, even with these very basic continuities and resemblances, the Italian distinctiveness in Renaissance still remains. The reforms in the Reformation made their own distinction that did not match the “political and historical insight,” the “efflorescence of creative power” in the “literary artistic genius,” nor the “philosophical activity” of the Italian Renaissance (Gilbert: 1997: 1). It is argued that the “scientific revolution,” which continued into “the beginning of the eighteenth century,” includes “developments that depart drastically from the ‘spirit of the Renaissance’,” dictated by Jacob Burckhardt in his work, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, which “remains the most significant book ever written on the subject,” and relied upon in this work, for a historical understanding of the Italian Renaissance (Gilbert 1997: 1). This chapter will reveal that Machiavelli displays an utter distinction in his educative use of history that has no resemblance to the other forms of the Renaissance. It is original and unique: one that is diametrically opposed to the modern belief in history associated with “the scientific revolution,” or progress in history.

We have seen throughout this depiction of time periods, the continual presence and absence of previous and new world views, accentuated at points where the reputed old world is crumbling, and a new future world is only beginning its appearance. This is similar to Machiavelli’s world, and our world. For its understanding of being at a “time of transition,” between two worlds, one must identify the presence and absence of both worlds.

2.2 Exemplary Lessons in Machiavelli’s Use of History

Knowledge of history is required in assessing the nature of your own time, in comparison to the historical of other times, other worlds, and other people. Machiavelli’s use of history is a new re-telling of the former works of history. Newness arises from the knowledge of events that previous historians could not obviously know. Yet, the knowledge and the use of previous historians and political thinkers can aid to better the understanding of nature of conditions today, and in

future times. This displays the reciprocal worth of history for education, and it forms the basis of Machiavelli's approach.

In repeating Machiavelli's educational process, let us look at his own understanding of history and its use. Let us begin by looking carefully at the title itself in his largest work, *The Discourses On The First Decade of Titus Livius*, since there is much scholarly debate on the history covered by Machiavelli and its relation to Titus Livius.³ Machiavelli has had the distinctive period of history, the rise and fall of civilizations, that forms a quintessential element in this work, with the complete downfall of the Roman Republic, the Roman Empire, and the rise and persistence of Christianity for a millennium and a half that Titus Livius did not. Therefore, it should be no surprise that Machiavelli covers matters in history that Titus Livius could not. This does not make Machiavelli someone who "explicitly questions the authority of Livy."⁴ Let us move on by just stating that Titus Livius provided the basis for Machiavelli's criticism of Christianity through the splendour of Roman republican history, her politics, and her religion. With respect, Machiavelli reinforces the works of Titus Livius. If only 35 out of 142 of Livius' works have survived through "the malice of the ages," Machiavelli's work enhances

³ The title in Italian is *I Discorsi sopra la Prima Deca di Tito Livio*. Since the relation of Machiavelli to Livius is of academic importance, the meaning and use of "sopra" becomes important. "Sopra" can be used in a various ways. It is as if Machiavelli was playing on its multitude of uses. It can mean being "beyond," "above," or "on top," and also "based upon," that has a lower recognition, and this is a tact that he used in the "Dedication" of *The Prince*, the play of the higher and the lower hierarchical distinctions. The word "on" in English does not suggest as much as being "above" Titus Livius, as the Italian word "sopra" does. Yet "sopra" can also mean "about" or "based upon." Machiavelli's work can be both "based upon" and "beyond," or "on top." Since his works are at a later point of history, he naturally should be "above" or "beyond" Titus Livius. But this does not subjugate Livius as is commonly argued. Machiavelli's work is naturally beyond that of Titus Livius. But this does not imply betterment, but only adjustment to understanding the present form of the events of history since Livius' time (Sasso 2000: 51).

⁴ Leo Strauss, "Machiavelli's Intentions: *The Discourses*," in *Thoughts on Machiavelli*, (1958) page 141. The intricate research and profound insights of Leo Strauss are, at times, beneficial. But he often exaggerates certain aspects. One is the distinction of Machiavelli as being close to opposing Titus Livius. Some of the references given in his endnotes do not provide clear evidence of his argument. Simply because Machiavelli adds some historical insight outside of the works of Titus Livius available to us today, does not mean that he "explicitly questions the authority of Livy," nor is he adamant about "pointing out the defective character of Livy's *History*" (Strauss 1958: 142). There is only one clear example where Machiavelli explicitly 'corrects' Livius, but only by adding some information of historical experiences that was not possible for Livius. Often, Machiavelli clearly cites Livius as being influential in the understanding of his current condition (Strauss 1958: 141-142).

their worth. Let us have a clearer look at Machiavelli's primary sources on the nature of history and its merit on his educational approach.

2.2.1. "Values in the 'Gift' of History"

Machiavelli begins *The Discourses* by sending a gift. The gift is the "Dedication" itself of *The Discourses* to compatriot republican friends. Machiavelli begins with a seemingly formal "Dedication," but it contains a hidden criticism of his current formalities in the political affairs of his world. Much could and should be interpreted from these proceedings. We will see continuous lessons where the knowledge of history is required to evaluate the past, the present, and provide means to educate on the future.

In the "gift" allotted to his compatriot friends Zanobi Buondelmonti and Cosimo Rucellai,⁵ to whom this work is addressed, he states, "I have set out all I know and all I have learned in the course of my long experience and steady reading in the affairs of the world" (Machiavelli 1965: 188). The frequent use of words "just," "judgments," "judging," the forming of "good laws," indicates the concern for justice in the "Dedication," and implying a lack of it in his present-day. Even though Machiavelli admits, in a humble manner, the "poverty of my talents," the "fallacy of my judgements" and the "many places I deceive myself," he later assures his friends, that with his "intention," rather "than the quality of the thing that is sent," he knows he has "made no error," in choosing that intention and quality (Machiavelli 1965: 188). Within this 'humble' nature, he quickly gives awareness of his current political and frequent historical mistakes of those, "who always address their works to some prince and, blinded by ambition and avarice,

⁵ Zanobi Buondelmonti participated in the anti-Medicean republican conspiracy of 1522. Cosimo Rucellai was the initiator of the republican Orti group, with which Machiavelli had association after undergoing a permanent change in his life after being ostracized from Florence, with a new orientation to be a man of letters. As Quentin Skinner reveals: "he started to take a prominent part in the meetings held by a group of humanists and *literati* who forgathered regularly at Cosimo Rucellai's gardens on the outskirts of Florence for learned conversations and entertainment" (Skinner 1981: 49).

praise him for worthy traits, when they ought to blame him for every quality that can be censured” (Machiavelli 1965: 188).⁶

The “theoretical” judgements on history, politics, and justice are taken from the past, but are connected to his current practice: the knowledge of “ambition and avarice,” in history, of “praise” or “blame” in matters of judicial politics, are connected to his current necessity: the practice of writing to those who are not princes, ones who are unable to “load” him “with offices, honours, and riches” (Machiavelli 1965: 189). Machiavelli implicitly states that these are items that he deserves. Machiavelli is displaying the inverted condition of politics in Italy that is similar to his chaotic personal condition, ostracized from the city he loved by the overtaking of the republic, to which he was a Secondary Chancellor of foreign and military affairs, banished by the return to power of the de Medici princship. *The Discourses* mostly relies on lessons on the attempt at a republican constitution, not a princship, therefore an alternative to the commonly-known ways and means of Italian unity stated in the last chapter of *The Prince*. The existing princes have power, but no authority, and the justice of good laws is upon authority, not power; and for success, both are needed and must be accommodated: “If men wish to judge justly,” those who have liberty must be esteemed (Machiavelli 1965: 189). In other words, that he and his republican companions are “those who know how to rule a kingdom,” not the actual rulers, who are “those who, without knowing how, have the power to do it” (Machiavelli 1965: 189). They are the ones who deserve to be princes, not the current princes. The ones who are princes, do not deserve it. His appeal to liberty is under republican virtues, where the people can, through their

⁶ In the Italian version of *The Discourses*, *Discorsi Sopra la Prima Deca di Tito Livio*, by Sasso, this last sentence ends with “*vituperevole*,” which means “contemptible” or “shameful.” Gilbert translates it awkwardly as “to be censured.” “When they ought to blame him for every contemptible quality,” would have been better. Gilbert frequently translates “shame” or “contempt” into “censure.” Gilbert’s translation of the title of Chapter X is “The Founders of a Tyranny are as Deserving of Censure As Those of a Republic or Kingdom are Deserving of Fame.” But the Italian version, “*Quanto sono laudabile I fondatori d’una repubblica o di uno regno, tanto quelli di una tirannide sono vituperabili*,” would have been better entitled as, “The Founders of a Republic or Kingdom are Praised with So Much Fame, as Much As Those of a Tyranny are Ashamed.” It seems as though “censure” was a popular discursive form during Gilbert’s time and place. But, as you will see in latter citations, some of Gilbert’s translations are suspicious. The tendency to modernize Machiavelli is evident in the flaws in translation onto interpretation. At times, it can be productive, but at other times erroneous. And, just as importantly, “censure” is an ugly word that disrupts the rhythm of Machiavelli’s written speech (Sasso 2000: 88).

virtuous recognition, participate in governance on whatever hierarchic level. This form of republicanism would be a just authority; yet those “who merely have the power to be so” would be unjust (Machiavelli 1965: 189).

The requirements for the new and just prince, with true authority, are demanding. If his republican friends are pleased with his ‘humble’ views, and if the future readers foresee his satirical irony, he promises, as he says in the end of his “Dedication,” to “go through the rest of the *History*, as in the beginning I promised you” (Machiavelli 1965: 189). History is obviously primordial. In other words, there are a lot more significant matters in the future – “the rest of *History*.” Machiavelli knew this and secretly inspired his readers to “fill in his blanks,” thereby learning from pertinent historical occurrences applying them on his own temporal condition.

From this opening “Dedication,” a lesson can be derived. At times of conflict, princedom is needed in dismal circumstances and dependent on actions of power. *But such princedom should only be temporary*: the demands for noble quality, virtue, excellence, and prudence should not escape the consciousness of the temporary prince. The true heroic leader must be directed towards the common good at the beginning of a new alteration in political authority. We also have a response to the necessity of military action, or ways to avoid it, in order to sustain authority and to relinquish unjust forms of power.

In the following *Preface* of Book I, entitled “The Value of History,” dealing with “the envious nature of men,” he embarks on something new; that is, “to hunt for seas and lands unknown” (Machiavelli 1965: 190). He knows that it is difficult, and that he may be easily blamed instead of praised, “since men are more prone to blame than to praise the doings of others” (Machiavelli 1965: 190). In doing what he believes “will bring benefit common to everybody,” he must “enter upon a path not yet trodden by anyone” (Machiavelli 1965: 190).

The ending of the paragraph displays his future-orientation with this “path not yet trodden” through the exemplary use of history. Even though he admitted of his “poor talents,” his “slight experience of present affairs,” and his “feeble knowledge” of ancients, the future direction of this work is also repeated: “they [the ancients] will show the way to someone who, with more vigour, more prudence and

judgement, can carry out this intention of mine” (Machiavelli 1965: 190). His own condition seems repeatedly ironic. Here is someone who says that he has inabilities, but is willing to tread on an unknown path. Perhaps his inabilities constitute another lesson that can be interpreted as an acceptance of the nature of human fortune, with the recognition of the powers-that-be in the gods above the human in determining the nature of life. He seems to know that he is heading in a “dangerous” way, using a divergent method. And he also seems to know that his task, as well, could be commemorative.

He continues by identifying the lack of attention of his current historians on the *imitation* of the ancient, and their avoidance by his own present-day “modern” multitude. All of the worthy ancient activities “are sooner admired than imitated” (Machiavelli 1965: 190). For others, the respect for the imitation of activities by antiquity – an essential element for Machiavelli – has been lost: “they are so much avoided by everyone in every least thing that no sign of that ancient worth remains among us” (Machiavelli 1965: 190). He can only “marvel and grieve over it” (Machiavelli 1965: 191). This is an example of the modern ignorance he is criticizing, and it can be repeated for the present-day.

He then explains the erroneous misuse of history by Christianity by being “weak and ignorant,” in its opposition to antiquity. From this “harm done” by “the weakness that the present religion has brought to the world,” there are “great numbers” who interpret history “without thinking at all of imitating” the ancients (Machiavelli 1965: 190). Such a poor understanding of the world, by not thinking of *imitation*, has colossal effects, as Machiavelli re-iterates the key factor in that famous statement of the lack of ancient understanding of the cyclical nature of history, a statement for which he is renown that *the “imitation” of antiquity* is seen by the modern as impossible: “rather they are so much avoided by everyone in every last thing that no sign of that ancient worth remains among us” (Machiavelli 1965: 190).

Even latter-day moderns have forgotten and left out of their study the key factor of the *imitation* of the ancients. He knows the “modern” belief, where the ancient belief in the sacred recurrence of natural conceptions, can no longer be believed. Yet, even though he recognizes this loss, he fights back by obviously not

rejecting a belief in the naturalistic conception of history, as the modern does, but quite the opposite. Such a rejection, in accord with a close reading of Machiavelli's "Preface," is a downfall in human understanding of the essential elements for a heightened understanding and vitality of life, and growth in civilization. Such a downfall was a product of his current-day activities in Christian forms of power.

His love and concern for the ancient is re-iterated. He simultaneously marvels at their potential, but grieves at their loss. For all "the maladies" of his age, the people do not realize the "recourse to the judgements or to the remedies that have been pronounced or prescribed by the ancients" (Machiavelli 1965: 191). His current civil laws, and to a certain extent, even the ones of this day, "are nothing but the teaching of the ancient jurists" that affect "our present jurists to judge" (Machiavelli 1965: 191).

The importance of the ancient to his current-day has implications for the same procedure in our day. It involves a divergent understanding of the worth in the relations of the new and old than as it is in the common conceptualization. Not only does he reveal the debt to the ancients, his mode of parlance displays that the 'new-old' tapestry has been productive, and it can continue to be so. The purpose of such a statement is not to follow concretely the rules stipulated by ancient jurists. The new must be an adjustment to the old in order to adapt to the present temporal conditions. "He makes that remark," as Strauss mentions in his *Thoughts on Machiavelli*, "in order to show that in limited or subordinate matters, modern men do imitate the ancients" (Strauss 1958: 86). As Strauss further re-iterates, one can see that Machiavelli rises above even today's modern man, which is due to a current-day acknowledgement of the flaws of the modern framework:

Modern men do not believe that ancient virtue can be initiated because they believe that man now belongs to a different order of things than formerly or that his status has changed or that he has miraculously transformed (Strauss 1958: 86).

For Machiavelli, this modern belief in modern transformation to an entirely different order is a false and harmful illusion. Furthermore, "Machiavelli does not deny that modern men differ from ancient men. But this difference, he holds, is due entirely to a difference in education and in knowledge of 'the world'" (Strauss

1958: 86). Moreover, it leads to the demand, “that modern man must imitate the ancients in the greatest matters” (Strauss 1958: 87). Even though, as it would seem for Machiavelli, that the ancients do have the productive recourse, “not a single prince or republic now resorts to the examples of the ancients” (Machiavelli 1965: 191).⁷ It should be no wonder that part of the intent of *The Discourses* and the indirect intent of *The Prince*, is “to prove the superiority of the ancients to the modern” (Strauss 1958: 91). Yet, they continually have been relinquished.

For Machiavelli, this eradication of the ancients comes from the weakness in Christian religion and its education: “The prevailing unbelief concerning the possibility of imitating ancient virtue is partly due to the influence of Christianity” (Strauss 1958: 86). Through “the weakness into which the present religion has brought into the world,” and its “conceited laziness,” it does not engender “a true understanding of books on history” (Machiavelli 1965: 191). The Biblical demands for humility and charity chastises the worldly glory of the ancients.

Yet, with this acknowledgement, Machiavelli still continues. Further on, comes his famous saying, that for his own ‘modern men’, “judging that imitation is not merely difficult but impossible, as if the sky, the sun, the elements, men were changed in motion, arrangement, and *power* from what they were in antiquity” (Machiavelli 1965: 191). One can assess here that Machiavelli condemns his current - and even our current - modern belief, that there is a fundamental change in the nature of man, or the belief in man’s ability to change his nature.

With the ancients, the ‘changes’ made in man were made mostly by imitation from within the preconditioned human nature. Among general sameness are temporal differences, and adjustment to them requires an imitation of the ancients in similar conditions. The general sameness in the ancient eternal realm of history is like the cyclical change of seasons. No one questions the general order of spring, summer, fall, and winter, yet everyone knows that there are numerous temporal differences in record on the particular occurrences within the same season. This metaphor of the changing seasons can be applied to most events of human

⁷ Here he is speaking directly about the nature of political leaders. This displays a division between the government and the civil society, particularly in Italy: the Italian Renaissance was truly a rebirth of ancient values and beliefs on a more modern world.

history, as far as the ancients and Machiavelli are concerned. But even Machiavelli's "modern man" forgets about the powers of nature: he forgets of "the sky, the sun" and imitating the ancients. This disadvantageous forgetting has become prominent as time goes on.

He is addressing this work not only to his compatriots, but to various modes of political actors and students in political history through his multi-fold direction. His intent is to entice, through hidden criticism, the common political leaders and administrators, and to educate the students of the *studiae humanitatis* distinct during the Italian Renaissance, to do intensive historical research and interpretation, pointing towards significant action.

The imitation of the ancient for the use of exemplary historical lessons to correct errors in interpretation is done in his own work, as he writes *The Discourses* to fulfill the works of Titus Livius, who lived during the last period of the Roman Republic:

Wishing, then to get men away from this error, I have decided that on all the books of Titus Livius which the malice of the ages has not taken away from us, it is necessary that I write what, according to my knowledge of ancient and modern affairs, I judge necessary for the better understanding of them, in order that those who read these explanations of mine may more easily get from them that profit⁸ [benefit] for which they should seek acquaintance with books [stories] (Machiavelli 1965: 191).

One can see that "the malice" of his ages produced by this "error" have taken away a reliance on history to a large extent, a negating movement that will increase in modernity. His understanding requires the reading of more than one book, or more than one story, as it does in the fruitful study for everyone on such matters. Machiavelli directs this work, *The Discourses*, towards those beyond the idle curious nostalgic, or the ideological intoxicated utterance with an isolated and

⁸ There is a certain suspicion generated by the use of the words "profit" and "books" in this sentence. The Italian copy uses "*utilita*" (Sasso 2000: 56), which Gilbert translates as "profit," and "*storie*" (Sasso 2000: 56) that is translated as "books." *Utilita* is more closely translated as "benefit" or "usefulness," and "*storie*" as "histories" or "stories." During Machiavelli's time, "*istoria*" was used for history. The word "profit" is used primarily with the rise of modern liberalism. Another modern sentiment regards "stories" as not as academically merited as books. This modern factor has also changed in our contemporary times for praise in storytelling. And besides, it would read better with the other words I suggested instead of the ones selected.

incomplete fragments of historical insight, or the Christians who refer only to one book.

A good sense of history is obviously required for the understanding of his own stories and histories. Again, Machiavelli displays that his historical lessons are for students of the future: “I hope to carry it in such a way that only a short journey will be left for some other who will bring it to its destined place” (Machiavelli 1965: 192). Yet, where is this “destined place,” and when will it come about? It is not an easy question to answer. The knowledgeable ideas to arrive at the “destined place” can be developed from lessons on correct, or praised, actions, and lessons from erroneous actions, that are to be blamed. Firstly from this knowledge comes the realization of the need for judicial decisions on the value of educational worth in historical events.

2.2.2. Praise or Blame, Strength or Weakness: Components in ‘New’ Values of Worth in History

Machiavelli takes on “new” and realistic measures of value against the common modern values. The worth in knowledge from examples comes alongside the natural hierarchical stance of human nature, where some are strong, others are weak; where some can learn lessons of praise or blame, yet others cannot. The acceptance of this reality of nature is required for his learning process, the lesson of properly attributing praise or blame in the performance of the scholars, the rulers, and the people.

In *the Discourses* I, 10, “The Founders of a Tyranny are As Deserving of Censure [Shame] As Those of A Republic or Kingdom Are Deserving of Fame,” Machiavelli criticizes the historians for praising those who are made famous as tyrants, that should be “infamous and detestable,” such as Caesar, who “have been destroyers of religions, squanderers of kingdoms and republics, enemies of virtue, of letters, of any other art that brings gain or honour to the human race” (Machiavelli 1965: 220). We are too easily “deceived by the glory of Caesar” (Machiavelli 1965: 221). After expressing “the great infamy, shame, blame, peril, and disquiet” of the tyrant, is a call to publicize oneself, to move out of the private, by the knowledge and teaching of history, since, from comparable history, if the

characters are similar to the “Scipios rather than the Caesars,” it would be beneficial for all (Machiavelli 1965: 221). The good leaders had “authority” rather than the tyrannical ones who solely used power, with no enlightening civil authority. The deception of glory for Caesar, which Machiavelli criticized under his sense of valorization, still continues today.

The following paragraph involves the criticism of historians who falsely praise Caesar when he should have been blamed. This venue of criticism is clearly opposed to the celebration of Caesar in our present-day. For those who carefully “read history” with “the memory of the ancients,” that is, with a “leading component,”⁹ they should “not be deceived by the glory of Caesar” (Machiavelli 1965: 221). There is also a lesson on weak historians and weak people. The mistaken historians and people are easily bribed: “for those who praise him are bribed by his fortune and awed by the long duration of the Empire, which, being ruled under his name, did not allow writers to speak freely of him” (Machiavelli 1965: 221). The mistake indirectly includes the praise of the Roman Empire. But with “free historians,” Caesar is like Cataline, whom Cicero persecuted, “for Caesar is so much more blameworthy in proportion as one is more to blame who has done evil than one who has intended to do it” (Machiavelli 1965: 221). Some historians and most people can be so false and weak that they avoid the blame of someone due solely to the tyrannical leader’s power: “Let a reader observe too with great praises they laud Brutus, as though, unable to blame Caesar because of his power, they laud his enemy” (Machiavelli 1965: 221).

The lessons from this chapter are essential. It displays that Machiavelli is nowhere near “the Devil,” “the teacher of evil,” the “diabolical soulless” character. Even at contemporary times, empire and emperors are more valued than a republic and their constitution, just as it was in Machiavelli’s times.¹⁰ Such lessons have not

⁹ With reasonable means, one can criticize the translation of one sentence in Gilbert’s text from this chapter: “if they read histories and get profit from the records of ancient things.” The cited statements in the previous section of this sentence are not exact replicas. The disturbing use of “get profit” is translated as it has been done before and after from the Italian word “*capitale*” (Sasso 2000: 89). But obviously, “*capitale*” has nothing to do with the “profit” of making money, but the other acceptable meaning which is used in the quote “leading component.”

¹⁰ We also see this in the “Preface” of Book II, where the people are “subservient to the fortune of conquerors.” (Machiavelli 1965: 321) This is an example that argues, that the breakdown of Rome

been learned. The modern man for Machiavelli is enticed by power, and even an imperial one opposed to the republic. When Caesar crossed a river that was a limited boundary for the Roman military power, a point where it had to disband itself, Caesar went beyond that boundary to begin a civil war with Pompey. This led to Cicero's famous statement that signified the beginning, of the end, of the great Roman Republic: "the Rubicon has been crossed." Machiavelli gave some praise to the emperors after Caesar, but only those who followed some of the precedence established by the republic. In pursuing through the chapter, he turns to the ancient Roman Republic, by stating it was "their qualities, the good will of the people, the love of the Senate" (Machiavelli 1965: 221), and by living "in a republic," as "according to the good laws," that the people who wish to live in similarity to the Roman Republic deserve praise (Machiavelli 1965: 222). Machiavelli obviously believes that ancient valuable lessons can be applied to his modern condition.

Another historical lesson is given a few chapters later, displaying the relations of the new and the old within the temporal changes in cyclical history of the new remodelling of the government of a city. The people should see "the necessity of retaining the shadow of at least the old method" (Machiavelli 1965: 252). A related example was given from the first historical period of the rise of the Roman Republic. The elimination of a king for the ensuing mixed constitution was done in a thoughtful and dignified manner, respective of religion and tradition.¹¹ From this essential respect for foundational principles and the retaining a shadow of the old, it is relegated as necessary for the productive effects of the new forms, or the new "modes and orders":

And this ought to be observed by all those who wish to wipe out an old form of government in a city and bring in a new and free form of government. Because, since new things upset the minds of men, you ought to strive to

began with the destructive "lust for power" of the people and the Tribunes of the People during Cicero's and Caesar's time. The three forms of government of the Roman Republic broke down into the *optimates* and the *populares* factions, where Caesar privately benefited from the ignorant *populares* by captivating their personal interests and lust for power in his conquests in order to capture Dictatorial rule over the breakdown of Republican order.

¹¹ The elimination of the king was directed towards the religious sentiment of the "Sacrificing King," who was subordinated to the chief priest. This displays the importance of religion in ancient politics. This displays the importance of religion in current politics.

have these upsetting changes retain as much of the old as possible, and if the magistrates are different in number and authority and term from the old ones, they should at least keep their names (Machiavelli 1965: 253).

Renewing everything completely is like being in a tyranny, since such a renewal requires absolute power: “he who intends to set up an absolute power, such as historians call tyranny, ought to renew everything”(Machiavelli 1965: 253). But a good man rejects such cruel methods, as “any man ought to avoid” them, rather than to be “a king who brings such ruin on men”(Machiavelli 1965: 254).

In the introductory section of the “Preface” of Book II of *The Discourses*, he outlines a more distinct display of the recurrent historical use to comprehend the ancient-modern relations, and more particularly, the worthy use of history by historians. First, Machiavelli identifies and criticizes the use of nostalgia in some historians and elderly men: “they praise not merely those ages they know through the accounts left by writers, but also those which they, now being old, remember to have seen in their youth” (Machiavelli 1965: 321). But they bring about mistaken assessments. Most of the nostalgic historians “are so subservient to the fortune of conquerors” (Machiavelli 1965: 321). He admits the possibility of a mistake, since “in ancient affairs we do not know the whole truth” (Machiavelli, 1965: 321). In nostalgia, “those times of bad repute” are concealed, and those bringing “glory” are overly revealed. He unleashes himself from the simplistic use of the ancient to criticize the modern (Machiavelli 1965: 321).

At this point, he seems in coherence with the modern opinion. But the response is not to turn away from the past, but the opposite, *to use the past more forceably, without the mistakes that arise from this nostalgic use of history*. The praise of the past should *not* be done through nostalgic weakness. And he even admits that, at times, the past can be worse than the present. The ardent man should know when to use the past, and when to forget the past. Nietzsche’s recognition of the “advantages and disadvantages of history for life” is reminiscent of Machiavelli’s use of history. We see in Machiavelli a direct appeal to strength and honesty in the judgement of glory or a downfall in the historical evaluation. In other words, we see the recognition of superiority and/or inferiority in the past.

The difference of approach, one being directed towards present modern study, or one towards the ancient, is upon the assessment or judgements of the good or bad present-day condition. Such a judgement is a measurement of the strength or weakness in assessing the nature of historical conditions. This judicial measuring line distinguishes the good or bad use of history. In “complete knowledge” the things you deal with are “in no respect hidden from you, and you recognize in them along with what is good many other things that displease you,” so “you are forced to judge them inferior to the ancients” (Machiavelli 1965: 321). Yet, “the present may be superior”; therefore, it “may deserve much greater fame and renown than the past” (Machiavelli 1965: 321). He, who is born in a state of a well-organized government and “praises ancient times more than the modern, deceives himself” (Machiavelli 1965: 322). But one who has praise for the ancient more than the modern, “when the time has come for it to descend toward a worse condition,” they “do not then deceive themselves” (Machiavelli 1965: 322). It is obvious that Machiavelli is living through a time of descent to “a worse condition,” one of the worst in Italian history (Machiavelli 1965: 322).

The following description of a foul condition of the present can be aligned to Machiavelli’s own experience during his time, and the ongoing experience of the abuse of justice and authority in our contemporary times:

...in these, there is nothing to redeem them from every sort of extreme misery, bad repute and reproach; in these no care is given to religion, none to the laws, none to military affairs, but they are foul in every sort of filth. Moreover these vices are so much more detestable the more they are found as those who sit in judgment seats, give orders to everybody and expect to be adorned” (Machiavelli 1965: 323).

One now has reason to find fault in his own time and find greatness in the ancient. In a worsening condition, Machiavelli must praise the ancient and criticize the modern: he must praise the “excellence that then had prevailed” and be opposed to “the corruption that now prevails” (Machiavelli 1965: 324). For Machiavelli, this task, which is having a clearer view of the essence of the human, in the required performance of bold human action, could not be “clearer than the sun” (Machiavelli 1965: 324).

The historical judgements are linked to the necessity of proper understanding of the nature of the conditions, since different judgements should be made under different conditions. The differing conditions may turn upside down the judgements of virtue and vice. In *The Discourses* III, 41,¹² 42,¹³ and 43,¹⁴ lessons from the learning of history is repeated, particularly to Machiavelli's own condition; that is, at such a potentially disastrous condition, all standardized forms of morality should be left aside: "there must be no consideration of just or unjust, of merciful or cruel, of praiseworthy or disgraceful; instead, setting aside every scruple, one must follow to the utmost plan that will save her life and keep her liberty" (Machiavelli 1965: 519). At times, "fame can be gained in any action whatever" (Machiavelli 1965: 520). The appeal here is a common formation in *The Prince*. In the most disastrous conditions of Italy, any leader had to do almost anything to save his cause. Vice is need at these times in order to win back virtue. Nevertheless, the successful prince had to have virtue in the backdrop in confronting a devastating condition. The praiseworthy or disgraceful judgment on the conduct of the prince is not an easy task: "we debate at length in our tractate *On the Prince*, therefore at present we shall say nothing on it" (Machiavelli 1965: 520). The defence of a *patria* [homeland]¹⁵, under a condition of necessity, should be at no expense. The virtuous elements should be forgotten, but only temporarily. The first section of Chapter 43, as previously identified, displays a summary of his use of natural cosmology and cyclical history, on the determination of vice or virtue:

Prudent men are in the habit of saying – and not by chance or without habit – that he who wishes to see what is to come should observe what has already happened, because all affairs of the world, in every age, have their individual counterparts in ancient times. The reason for this is that since they are carried on by men, who have and always

¹² "One's Country [Homeland] Should be Defended Whether With Disgrace Or With Glory; She Is Properly Defended In Any Way Whatsoever"

¹³ "Promises Made Under Compulsion Should Not Be Kept"

¹⁴ "That Men Born In Any Region Show In All Times Almost The Same Natures"

¹⁵ "Homeland" is the translation preferred for Machiavelli's use of *patria*. We will see that another translation was made of this term in the chosen translation of *The Prince* by translator, Leo Paul S. de Alvarez.

have had the same passions, of necessity the same results appear. It is true that human activity is at one time more efficacious in this region than in that, and more in that than in this, according to the nature of the training from which the people acquire their manner of life. Future things are also known from the past ones if a nation has for a long time kept the same habits, being either continuously avaricious or continually unreliable, or having some other similar vice or virtue (Machiavelli 1965: 521).

The future is tied to the past in his view of history. This quintessential view also appears in *The Prince*. There are obvious links between certain themes of *The Discourses* and *The Prince*. *The Discourses* is not exclusively concerned with republics, and *The Prince* only simply concerned with “principates.” There are continual references of one work to the other. This lesson on history in *The Discourses* is evident in the last section of Chapter XIV of *The Prince*, “What A Prince Should Do”:

But as for the exercise of the intellect, the prince ought to read histories, and to consider in them the actions of excellent men: to see how they governed themselves in wars, to examine the causes of their victories and loses, in order to avoid the latter and to imitate the former; and, above all, to do as has been done in the past by some excellent man, who has chosen to imitate someone before him who was praised and glorified, and who always kept his deeds and actions before him, as it is said that Alexander the Great imitated Achilles; Caesar, Alexander, Scipio, Cyrus...Machiavelli 1980: 90).

Near the end of *The Discourses* similarity is displayed with the end of *The Prince*, the means of necessity for the saving of Italy. Even though the appearance in *The Prince* is on the Italian situation, we are often reminded that such lessons are meant to be taught in any circumstance in history. It is meant to judge upon the knowledge of excellence and its imitation on present-day conditions. It is particularly addressed to occasions when action is emphatically important, and provides an opportunity for meaningful action to help re-order society. It re-iterates and displays the importance of “historical cycles,” which provides a better understanding of the present time.

One thing is clear in Machiavelli: in the proper assessment of living through a decline, one must learn history and imitate the ancients, and it is from the use of

these premises that praise or blame, strength or weakness, is measured in the human, in his bid to better the condition.

2.2.3. Cosmological History On the Grand Scale: The Effects on Knowledge of the Past, Present, and Future

It has been claimed that Machiavelli uses cosmology as a basic historical element in his educational approach. Referring to Machiavelli, Leo Strauss claimed of “the cosmological basis of his political teachings” (Strauss 1959: 47) And Anthony J. Parel stated clearly, “without hesitation,” that there is a “cosmology underlying Machiavelli’s political philosophy,” (Parel 1992: 5) which takes a position of the “eternity of the world” (Parel 1992:6). But, as one can see, at times, “some parts of it may perish” (Parel 1992: 6). Yet, nevertheless, “the Machiavellian cosmos never perishes” (Parel 1992: 6). From this cosmological basis, history is looked upon on a grand scale.

In Chapters 39 of Book I¹⁶ and 43 of Book III¹⁷ of *The Discourses*, the grand historical scale looks at the relations of temporal differences and eternal sameness in the cyclical view of the past, the present, and the future. He focuses on the general sameness of human nature, with reference to political affairs, as applicable for the necessary changes in the future of particular differences in temporal conditions. The relation of eternal sameness with particular temporal difference attains his sense of “newness” in order “to foresee” the “future ones” (Machiavelli, 1965: 278). These are lessons not only for his “modern times” in the necessary relation to the ancient, but the future as well (Machiavelli 1965: 278):

He who considers present affairs and the ancient ones readily under-stands that all cities and all peoples have the same desires and the same traits and that they always have had them. He who diligently examines past events easily foresees future ones in every country¹⁸ [republic] and can

¹⁶ “Why the Creation of The Decemvirate Was Injurious to The Liberty Of That Republic, Notwithstanding That It Was Set Up By Free and General Vote”

¹⁷ “That Men Born In Any Region, Show In all Times, Almost the Same Natures”

¹⁸ The Italian version uses “*republica*” (Sasso 2000: 145) that is mistakenly translated as “country.” Again, another major concept developed by modernity is nationalism or the forming of a “country.”

apply to them the remedies used by the ancients or, not finding any that have been used, can devise new ones because of the similarity of the events. But because these considerations are neglected or are not understood by those who read or, if they are understood, are not known to rulers, the same dissensions appear in every age (Machiavelli 1965: 278).

The worthy “newness” can only come about from the knowledge of the old. A proper understanding of present conditions can only come from comparison to the ancient, in order to know what can worthily be newly done. This is the clearly stated method of the use of history in relation of the present to the past and onto the future. These lessons are directed to “every age.”

For Machiavelli, there are no affairs that are seen as completely new. History, coupled with the Heavens and *Fortuna*, are factors that display its determinateness, but it is from a cyclical view, a natural cosmological circle of the rise and fall of civilizations. It is a view of determinateness completely opposed to the versions of modern historical determinism in either Hegel or Marx, as being designed by a uni-linear progress in history to an apocalyptic and eschatological “end of history,” as a pinnacle of civilization, “made by man” (Grant 1969: 6-8). But for the ancients, human action can only come from the knowledge of the cosmological framework, a knowledge of history from which essential decisions for action can be made by imitation. The modern version encompasses ironically and paradoxically the religious final salvation here on earth, made by man, that would last for ever and ever, a withdrawal from the external world.¹⁹ Machiavelli is far-removed from such a view in his understanding and use of history. For him, part of the essential and religious acceptance of life is to acknowledge that strife

It appears some of the choices in translation made by Gilbert are done through a modern framework of values.

¹⁹ For Hegel, the power of God that forms history also is used to find the final salvation in the “nation state,” a task “assigned to the Nordic principle of the Germanic peoples.” (Hegel 1991: 480) Irony and paradox continues, since from “absolute negativity,” somehow a “turning point” comes about, “which has been in and for itself,” where the Spirit now grasps “infinite positivity,” the principle of the unity of the divine and human nature through progress in history to its everlasting culmination, i.e., the “end of history,” that element developed through the modern belief of progress in history. This modern believe in Progress was also maintained in Marx. The consciousness of the cyclical nature of history envisions such a claim as a harmful illusory fantasy.

and warfare is a part of the human condition. Such an admonition of a Utopian belief would be an illusory fantasy, one not adhering to the reality of life. It would be considered a destructive product of the weakened character of man. From the weak, degenerating position, the potential for meaningful human action is severely diminished.

In the concluding section of the “Preface” of Book II, the direction of lessons move towards the use of history as being a proponent for meaningful action. He speaks clearly about his educative intent for the future, with the archetypal exemplary lessons from ancient Roman times, with the power of Heaven and *Fortuna*. One can also surmise, that within this new cosmological view, even though he has been virtuous, he has not been so “loved by Heaven,” and he has not been able “to put it into effect.” It takes strength in human character to accept this. One can say that his “love by Heaven” was made in the creation of his writings and their importance not only within, but outside his particular temporal period, in tune with the natural cyclical element of his teachings:

But since the thing is so clear that everybody sees it, I shall be bold in saying clearly what I learn about Roman times and the present, in order that the minds of the young men who read these writings of mine may reject the present and be prepared to imitate the past, whenever Fortune gives them opportunity. For it is the duty of a good man to teach others anything of value that through the malice of the times and of Fortune you have been unable to put them into effect, in order that since many will know of it, some of them more loved by Heaven may be prepared to put it into effect (Machiavelli 1965: 324).

Those “loved by Heaven” is a call for the new young future actors who are willing to take on the job at hand. Young men are needed to override the present and who are prepared to imitate the past. It is through this manner that man can interrupt the cyclical process. We can say that this is what Machiavelli conceives as human action: first, to understand the present through the use of history and with this knowledge to use *virtu* and the other related elements to rise above being the victims of nature. The strength engendered from knowledge, virtue, and courage in this process is to be valued with reverence.

A part of the educative approach of ancient exemplary historical lessons includes a reverence of religiosity that is quite different than the modern direction of religious reverence. The ancient cosmological element in ancient forms of religiosity is obviously crucial for an understanding of Machiavelli's work, according to Anthony J. Parel, who titles his book, *The Machiavellian Cosmos*. In it he states, that a major intent by Machiavelli in *The Discourses* is "to correct the 'error' of the Christian interpretation of history," an error that is the root of modern historicism (Parel 1992: 27). Christianity is vehemently opposed to ancient pagan religion. Machiavelli is above and beyond the predominant Christian use of history, and elevates ancient religiosity above Christianity. From religious reverence on the cosmological historical cycles, one can recognize the *occasione* when *Fortuna* gives the human an opportunity to act.

More profundity is displayed in the relation of history to religion seen in *The Discourses* II, chapter 5.²⁰ The implications are elaborate. The circular rise and fall of civilization is repeated in religious sects. With such an historical view, the eternal element becomes present: "The world is eternal," remarks Machiavelli. Yet historical records only survive for around 5,000 years. "Such records of the past are blotted out," he states, partly by the cause "of men," and also "a part from Heaven" (Machiavelli 1965: 340). With the rise of new sects in religion comes a desire to "blot out" the old: "This is evident if one considers the method that the Christian sect has used against the Pagan, for it has brought to nothing all of its laws, all its ceremonies, and blotted out every reminder of that old theology" (Machiavelli 1965: 340).²¹

He states, that historians in favour of the change in religious sects, such as Diodorus Siculus, for example, is "full of lies." In getting rid of "all ancient records," we see the persistence in the Christians by "burning the works of poets

²⁰ "Change in Religious Sects and Languages Along With The Coming of Floods and Plagues Wipes Out Records"

²¹ In history, this recognition of the danger of "religious sects" becomes important for today. Christian history also sees the destructive aspects of sectarian violence in the period of the Crusades, deemed to be the first "Holy War." The violent warlike separation of Christianity in confronting sects occurred in the Protestant Reformation, as the cause of long-standing civil wars in seventeenth century England. Sectarian violence is recurring today in the civil war of Iraq and other Middle Eastern countries.

and historians, throwing down images, and destroying everything that might give any suggestion of antiquity” (Machiavelli 1965: 340). Just as the records of human practices are “blotted out,” so are human civilizations by the power of nature. Perhaps, the pagans did the same for previous religious sects. But this difference can have essential consequences and importance. The development of history in the contemporary mind can aid to protect against the near obliteration of civilizations of the past. But can this aid for protection impede entirely upon the natural cosmological contention that out “of necessity the world is purged”? (Machiavelli, 1965: 340). The human can never have control over Nature. He cannot determine history.

The topic shifts into a more eternal, philosophical direction, where the concern is not the change of sects, but the almost complete eradication of the race of man through natural cataclysms. Plagues, famine and floods “wipe out the race of men” (Machiavelli 1965: 340). It is “mostly universal.” Many of those who remain after the cataclysms are mountaineers, ignorant of politics and anything ancient. There is a lot of ancient life that we still do not know no matter how much more ability we have with technological means to acquire archaeological evidence. “Nature many times moves herself,” he states, “and makes purgation for the health of those [natural] bodies, the same appears in this mixed body of the human race” (Machiavelli 1965: 341). The human race is mixed between potential for action, and yet is Natural. Nature, by the Flood, purified the human by the purgation of the world. Even though the humans can wipe out records of a people of the past, nature can almost wipe out all of man. Perhaps, the Flood is returning, as it did in the story of Noah in the *Book of Genesis*.

What has happened through Nature in the obliteration of much of earth with the Flood could also happen to the nature of man. At one point, “human craft and malice have gone as far as they can go, of necessity the world is purged in one of the three ways mentioned” (Machiavelli 1965: 341). This may even suggest that there was a previous technological age that has been obliterated, but it is just not known, nor can it be known. Such a contention could only be understood from the perception through natural historical cycles. Such a suggestion has not even been

considered by those who have power in fostering the devices of technological crafts in this technological age. The lessons is, that *they should*.

He also returns to refer to the ancient Tuscans, whose imitation is impossible, since the details on their greatness have been lost. All we know is that the Tuscan civilization was great and nothing more: “This power and glory were first decreased by the French then destroyed by the Romans; it was indeed so completely destroyed that, although two thousand years ago the power of the Tuscans was great, at present there is scarcely any record of it” (Machiavelli 1965: 339). With so much praise for Rome, we are now given some confusion where Rome destroyed a previous civilization. Confusion is enhanced by Strauss, who, at one point, stated the opposite: “the Romans did not destroy nor even attempt to destroy, the religion of the Tuscans” (Strauss 1958: 143). But this confusion comes about through the recognition that even if a principedom or republic acquires a high level of excellence in civilization, in religion and politics, it cannot escape the forces of nature that, at a certain time, such a state will fall and destruction arises. We at least know that the Tuscan civilization formed a great state of “utmost glory of authority and arms, and with the highest reputation in manner and religion” (Machiavelli 1965: 339). Perhaps, when Rome grew, she had learned a lesson. The development for preservation of the past came about after Rome had grown into a civilized republic. The fault with Christianity is that it had the potential for a developed historical insight, yet was more fiercely against the pagan religion of the past history.²² The key lesson seems to emphasize the malice in the destruction of history, and the strength required to face the reality of the power of the Heavens and Nature over the power of man.

Specific practical examples on the use of history gets transferred to the essential grand overview of the Heavens and *Fortuna* in *The Discourses* Book II, Chapter 29: “Fortune Blinds the Men When She Does Not Wish Them To Oppose

²² For an example of his beneficial contribution, Strauss, a Jewish scholar who escaped Nazi Germany, added Judaism in similarity with Christianity on this matter: “Judaism and Christianity attempted to destroy every vestige of pagan religion” (Strauss 1958: 143). Later on we will see that one can sense some paganism in the story of Moses.

Her Plans.” Machiavelli displays the understanding of the movements of the “Heavens” and their relation to *Fortuna* onto the public affairs of man:

If we observe carefully how human affairs go on, many times we see that things come up and the events take place against which the Heavens do not wish any provision to be made. And if this I am going to speak of happened at Rome,²³ where there was such great efficiency, so much religion, and such good organization, it is not strange that such things happens more often in cities or countries [province] which lack the things aforesaid (Machiavelli 1965: 406).²⁴

The motion of heavens almost entirely explains the course of history. These examples are “very noteworthy for showing Heavens’ power over human affairs,” since “Heaven for some reason wished the Romans to know its power” (Machiavelli 1965: 406). Heaven wished Rome to know that she determined Roman history to a tremendous extent. Such an occasion, with the benefit of *Fortuna*, as happened in Rome, is rare. I will add that she – Rome – could partially controlled the power of the heavens, and “weave the designs” of *Fortuna*, through her established authority.

Fortuna chooses “great things,” but also “brings to pass great failures” involving putting men to death, or depriving them of “doing anything good” (Machiavelli 1965: 407-408).²⁵ By “persistence and strength,” Rome eventually succeeded against the possibility of great failures. At times *Fortuna* afflicted Rome, “but did not wish entirely to ruin her” (Machiavelli 1965: 408). In the conclusion of this chapter, Machiavelli states that “men are able to assist *Fortuna* but not to thwart her. They can weave her designs but cannot destroy them” (Machiavelli

²³ Believe it or not, this is an exact replication of the wording given by Allan Gilbert in his book. For me, there is a grammatical error in this clause. The Italian version states: “*E quando questo che ho dico intervenne a Roma,*” which means, “And when this that I have stated intervenes (or “is present”) in Rome” (Sasso 2000: 372).

²⁴ In this quote the word “countries” is taken from “*provincia*”, which is a key concept in the proper understanding of Machiavelli’s work. In the “Translation, Interpretation, and Notes” of *The Prince*, Leo Paul S. de Alvarez intensely studies Machiavelli’s use of *provincia* translating it as “province,” not a country. What is translated as “cities” and “countries” was singularized in the Italian version. Such precise distinctions must be given in a good translation, since it can have a significant effect on proper understanding and interpretation.

²⁵ The full sentence reveals more: “And if somebody there is able to oppose her, she either kills him or deprives him of all means for doing anything good” (Machiavelli 1965: 408).

1965: 408).²⁶ The destruction the entire weave of the organizational fabric is not progress, but regress in political order. Since *Fortuna's* purpose cannot be fully known, as she “goes through crooked and unknown roads,” the men, who are able to assist and not thwart Fortune, should not “give up hope” (Machiavelli 1965: 408). We are introduced to a completely different depiction of human determinism, as well as the nature of history. *Fortuna* has much of that determinism in the nature of conditions.

In the following chapter,²⁷ in describing the different present proceedings from the ancient, we also see “everyday miraculous losses and miraculous gains. Because where men have little ability, *Fortuna* shows much of her power, and because she is variable, republics and states often vary” (Machiavelli 1965: 412). To do so, one must praise and learn from antiquity: only until “one arises who is a great lover of antiquity that he will rule *Fortuna* in such a way that she will not have cause to show in every revolution of the sun how much she can do” (Machiavelli 1965: 412).²⁸ The general lesson is that only with human persistence in strength and virtue, coupled with the acceptance of Her fortitude - which means the acceptance of the nature of life - can the human achieve one's own fortitude through the benefit of *Fortuna*. These are lessons that extend from the cosmological world view.

The enormous grand scale over time and history used in Machiavelli's historical analysis displays his cosmological incentive in describing the state of human affairs. He employs a unique religious reverence for reality in a divergent sense, with the relations of the eternal and the temporal. His “originality” is in the cyclical use of history, where there is no beginning, no source, and certainly, no end, in the state of nature. Even though these views stem from the ancient, they are continuously renewed during “times of transition.” If there is an historical thinker that is claimed to have resemblances with Machiavelli, it is the Greek historian,

²⁶ He refers to an ancient example, the story of Camillus, who recaptured a region of Rome previously defeated, which was similar to the events in the early battle of Rome against Etruscan power at the city of Veii, 396 BC (Machiavelli 1965: 408).

²⁷ “It Is Dangerous To Believe In Banished Men”

²⁸ Machiavelli's view on “revolution” will be clearly revealed in Chapter V, “Authority.”

Polybius, who also wrote a history of the Roman Republic during another time of transition, and engaged in similar political affairs, as did Machiavelli.

It becomes educationally productive to use a comparative historical example in relation to Machiavelli himself, to better understand not only Machiavelli's historical conceptualization, but our own present condition. We will see these proceedings in the comparative analysis with Polybius, who had uniqueness during his "time of transition," at the beginning of the fall of the Roman Republic. In the proceedings of seeking independence in the Aechean league in Greece, he was imprisoned by Rome. But afterwards he fell in love with her, to such an extent, that he devoted all his scholarly ability to writing "*The Histories*" of Rome. Polybius' importance continues to cyclically arise during times of crisis, at the threshold of ages. His works have arisen in interest today, therefore his relation to the current day becomes pertinent; and therefore, as follows, Machiavelli's works become important for today.

2.3. Resemblance and Distinction in the Cyclical Histories of Polybius and Machiavelli

The only other scholar to which Machiavelli displays some similarity is Polybius (203 – 120 BC), a Greek military man from Megapolis, who was determined in his military and political affairs to maintain the independence of the Aechean League. As such, Polybius was a forerunner of Machiavelli, since Polybius engaged in political affairs similar to Machiavelli, who was the Second Chancellor of the Florentine Republic from 1498 to 1510 in charge of foreign and military affairs.²⁹ During the war between Rome and Perseus of Macedonia, to whom the Aechean League was associated, Polybius was detained as hostage by the Romans for seventeen years. But he ended up loving Rome, so much that he was motivated to write her history precisely, through his political and military experience. The

²⁹ It is stated by many that Machiavelli never mentions Polybius. However, in Chapter VI of *The Prince*, when Machiavelli is describing the virtuosity of Hiero of Syracuse, he uses a quote: "For that man lacked nothing for ruling but a kingdom" (Machiavelli 1980:35). De Alvarez states, in the related footnote, that the Latin language was maintained in the quote that Machiavelli used in the original *Prince*, and therefore there is a suggestion that such a quote belongs to either one of two references, and one of them is from "Polybius' *Histories*." (de Alvarez 1980: 38)

interest in Polybius cyclically arises at threshold of ages, where one is declining, another arising. His relations with Machiavelli are pertinent, and reveals Machiavelli's relevance for today.

There are both similarities and differences in the use of history by Polybius and Machiavelli. Polybius was also original in his combination of "scientific" factual research with a renewed ancient cosmological standpoint. It involves a cyclical view of history that also incorporates a version of the "grand historical cycle"³⁰ explicated by Polybius as "characterized by cycles of birth, flowering, degeneration, death and renewal" (Inglis and Robertson 2006: 6). As F.W. Walbank states in his little book *Polybius* (1972), the intent of this Greek historian, who "felt himself identified with the Roman point of view," was "not simply [to] bring a new direction to the writing of history," but also "taking up," yet changing "an old tradition": "In this, as in much else in Polybius's *Histories*, innovation and tradition march side by side" (Walbank 1972: 31). He closely examined the political, military, and religious conditions for Rome's success in the Second (218-201 BC) and Third Punic Wars (149 – 146 BC).³¹ The resemblance of Polybius is obvious in the works of Machiavelli, as he as well investigates the political, military, and religious conditions of the Roman Republic, and uses them as exemplary lessons for his own political, military, and religious conditions. Titus Livius, who Machiavelli uses as a key point of reference, often uses Polybius as a source of reference. We see a comradeship amongst these historical figures. It can be said that Polybius had a "modern" scientific approach in recording history, as some consider Thucydides to be his predecessor:

He narrates his History upon what he had himself seen and upon the communication of eye-witnesses and actors in the events. In a classic story of human behaviours, Polybius captures it all: factionalism,

³⁰ This description of the histories of Polybius, "grand historical cycle," is used by James Wisner in his section entitled, "The Histories of Polybius," in his *Political Philosophy: A History of the Search for Order*, page 65.

³¹ The Second Punic War (218 – 202 BC) is more commonly known as "The War Against Hannibal." Polybius was released in 150 BC, but through his close friendship with Scipio Aemilianus, the grandson of Scipio Africanus, he was present at the capture and destruction of Carthage in The Third Punic War (149 – 146 BC). The Punic Wars refer to wars with Carthage, since the Latin word for Carthaginians is *Punici*. (Hadas 1956: 27-46)

xenophobia, duplicitous politics, horrible battles, brutality, etc.; along with loyalty, valor, bravery, intelligence, reason, and resourcefulness...provided a unified view of history. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polybius:1>).

Similarly, Machiavelli's exemplary lessons focus almost entirely on the Roman Republic, and, like Polybius, concentrated on the political success of the Roman constitution through, what has been incorporated by Polybius, the sociological doctrine of "*anacyclosis*." "*Anacyclosis*" combines the cyclical view of history by explaining the cyclical transformations of the three basic forms of government, the "benign" (monarchy, aristocracy, and the popular tribunes), with the three ensuing "malignant" forms (tyranny, oligarchy, and *ochlocracy*). The first three good forms circularly transform into the three malignant due to incessant political corruption, from a transformation from public concern to private concern, or a transformation from authority to lust for power. Through both Polybius and Machiavelli, Rome was seen as an exception that sustained the benign, lengthening the public good before the natural and inevitable transformation to her fall.

The Roman constitution contained all three basic bodies of rule within it. It was a "mixed regime," a "mixed body." It blended together - in balance - kingship (*princeps*), aristocracy (the Senate), and democracy (the Tribunes of the People), which Machiavelli stated as "princedom, aristocracy, and popular government" (Machiavelli 1965: 199). Polybius clearly distinguishes, as does Machiavelli, the relations between the three forms of government mentioned above with the cyclical rise in political conditions, and the three corrupted forms of government, as they fall, "*tyranny, oligarchy, and ochlocracy or mob rule*" (Wiser 1982: 65). The Roman constitution contained within it a complex series of checks and balances of all three competing political realms, preventing one particular group from exercising its power over another, "because one keeps watch over the other" (Machiavelli 1965: 199). With this balanced form of authority, good political public order will be sustained by interrupting the natural cycle of history. These are clear lessons in both Polybius and Machiavelli.

We can see more of an influence of Polybius on Machiavelli and its direction to contemporary times. Anthony J. Parel uses Polybius' *anacyclosis* to

describe Machiavelli's "circular movement" in the rise and fall of order: "instances of 'chance', or human modifications, certainly affect *anacyclosis* as Machiavelli understands it" (Parel 1992: 31-32). Polybius uses *anacyclosis* to describe the cosmic understanding of eternal return that underscores ancient cosmology; and this notion of eternal return has been re-configured in the political thought of contemporary times. In this eternal *mythos*, a fall is never complete, nor is a rise in civilization. In other words, there is no "end to history." There is no "final state" in political organization. From the cyclical universal historical view, death breeds life in the ancient cosmological mythology. But for Polybius and Machiavelli, the eternal *mythos* and *cosmos* carried with them the intermittent human action, or *logos*, to disrupt the cycle, and allow the sustenance of human control. This version of *logos* has been extremely distorted in modernity. Reason has been reduced only to modern science, the new form of metaphysics. *Anacyclosis* is renewed from the early, not the pessimistic Stoic cosmology, by both Polybius and Machiavelli, as being tied more to practice and action, not in the contemplative philosophical theorizing of unreal metaphysical contentions. This made Roman thought distinct from the association to the classical Greece of Plato and Aristotle's time. The use of *anacyclosis* is divergent from Platonic metaphysics of elevating principles such as 'Justice' as being external to the physical, earthly world.

From the adaptation of *anacyclosis*, arises the supreme merit of "universal history." From the ancient scholars, only through the cosmological sense of universal history can one understand the recorded events in the play of natural forces. The interplay of human virtue and the *Fortuna* of nature incorporated together, is required "to understand and appreciate the work of *Tyche*," the Greek word for *Fortuna* (Walbank 1970: 9). The establishment of a cosmological universal view encompasses an eternal recurrence through the accepted historical-cyclical process. Every archetype or distinctive sacred moment was felt as recurrence of the past and natural, rather than the modern simple passing of time, as its understanding of history. And the importance of the present action was to the extent that it was an imitation of the sacred archetype of the past. It is a flaw if historians do not use such a universal archetypal model of history with the cyclical

propensity of similarity.³² Events cannot be seen in their proper proportions, and this includes the exaggeration of those events that should not be: “‘To believe in things which are beyond the limits of possibility reveals a childish simplicity, and is the mark of a blunted intelligence’ [(Polybius xvi)]” (Walbank 1970:16).

A comparative history is needed for an understanding of reality. It teaches for Polybius, through exemplary lessons, an educational approach used vehemently by Machiavelli. *Tyche* or *Fortuna* can be easily transposed into the understanding of activities that are beyond human means, control, and comprehension: “‘In the case of things in which it is difficult or impossible for mortal men to grasp the courses, one may justifiably refer them, in one’s difficulty’...to *Tyche* [(Polybius xxxvi)]” (Walbank 1970: 17). Correspondingly, Machiavelli uses similar exemplary lessons from history to be used in practice, coupled with the perplexities of *Fortuna*. Nietzsche, in his *The Advantages and Disadvantages of History for Life*, clearly states the value of this educational approach of Polybius, which can be extended to Machiavelli:

Polybius, for example, calls political history the proper preparation for governing a state, and the great teacher who, by reminding us of the sudden misfortunes of others, exhorts us steadfastly to bear the reverses of fortune (Nietzsche 1980: 15).

In his “scrupulous search” he coupled historical detail with “chance.” The hegemony of the Mediterranean world was “an event completely without precedent in the past...which far surpasses any that exists today or is likely to succeed it

³² A relevant and moving example of the Roman cyclical sense of history, and her foundational ties to Troy, can be seen in the report of the response of Scipio Aemelianus, after having won the Third Punic War over the Carthaginians. Carthage, after having partially recovered from the two previous wars, alarmed the Romans by beginning the Third Punic War, from circa 149 to 146 BC. Carthage started a three-year siege at Masinissa, until it was ended by the army of Scipio Aemelianus, the close friend, colleague, and tutor of Polybius. Scipio moved into the citadel of the city of Carthage, which had flourished for 700 years, and “was now being utterly blotted out and destroyed.” (Appian, *Punica*, cited by Moses Hadas, 44) Scipio completely annihilated Carthage. It is said that he wept in lamenting on the fate of the enemy’s city, since he perceived that the same would happen to his own. Within this, Scipio, in tears, recited lines from Homer’s *Iliad*, and in his mind came the recurrence of similar cyclical-historical events: the recent destruction of Carthage, the recognition of the fall of Troy, the continual downfall of empires, the Assyrian and Persian, the latest fall of the Macedonian empire, and then, the future inevitable fall of his own Republic, where Rome’s footsteps would follow those of its foundation, the great Republic of Troy. Scipio cried as he stated: “*The day of the destruction of sacred Troy will arrive. /And the slaughter of Priam and his people. (Iliad 6.448f)*” (Hadas 1956: 44).

[(Polybius, xxxix, 8.7)]” (Walbank 1970: 34). For Polybius, Rome: “may be the claim of history in general...as political history” (Walbank 1970: 7-8). He was part of the stream of thought somewhat similar but more intense in academic merit and level of historiography than the “father of ‘international relations’...Thucydides” (Inglis and Robertson 2006: 4).

In the article by Inglis and Robertson, “From Republican Virtue to Global Imaginary: Changing Visions of the Historian Polybius,”³³ they state that Polybius is important for giving insight into contemporary affairs: “It is Polybius’ historiographical rather than political ideas which allow him to be seen as the most significant ancient precursor of a present-day focus on ‘global’ affairs” (Inglis and Robertson 2006: 12).³⁴

From this, comes the contention that a re-formulated study of history is necessary to comprehend global affairs. In accepting this notion, Machiavelli is also a precursor to present-day globalization. From it, comes the contention that a re-formulated study of history is necessary to comprehend the internationalism of the present-day. From this, one can also easily envisage his profound influence on Machiavelli: “The most famous of the Florentine appropriators of Polybius was Niccolo Machiavelli, the very figure many people throughout history have regarded Polybius as most resembling” (Inglis and Robertson 2006: 7). The lesson learned and that Machiavelli asserted was that “a balance of forces” is needed, which constituted “Rome’s health and longevity as a republic,” as this was “proof that her constitution was successfully mixed and balanced against Fortune’s wheel of decay and corruption” (Inglis and Robertson 2006: 7). Repetition of Polybius occurred during Machiavelli’s lifetime, seventeen centuries later, with general similarities, at the downfall of the Florentine Republic: “While the republic did fall prey shortly

³³ Even though one can see the appropriateness of the title, off hand, I have had an intuition of the inappropriate use of the word “imaginary,” and it seems that may be correct. The common meaning of “imaginary” is “existing only in the imagination” (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, p. 588). It is well known that globalization involves different and conflicting images, but attaching the term “imaginary” and the ironic distinction of ‘globalization’ to Polybius’ and Machiavelli’s worthiness, escapes from his depiction of the real within the mythological whole view that is required in the understanding of real practical historical events.

³⁴ Although, it should be recognized that it is difficult to separate the historical from the political. It is almost as if Polybius is wrong or unimportant with his depiction of political affairs. If that is the case, then it is very non-agreeable, and the article bypasses a related and crucial component.

afterwards to the ambitions of the Medici monarchy, it is nonetheless instructive to note that Polybius was regarded by defenders of the tradition as a vital force in keeping the flame of republican virtue alive” (Inglis and Robertson 2006: 7). Polybius was recounted during the Renaissance and also in the present-day. It is an example that displays a return to the ancient in the general similarity of the educational approach of the Renaissance, and of the contemporary realm of political thought of the present-day.

Inglis and Robertson also state, that “there is a modern tradition that sees him as a kind of Machiavelli of the ancient world,” one who gives “practical advice in statecraft” (Inglis and Robertson 2006: 5). His original “eternally recurring cycle of human affairs” (Inglis and Robertson 2006: 5), as central in Polybius’ philosophy of history, was influential to Vico in the 18th century, who later influenced “Hegelian and Marxist theories of historical change” (Inglis and Robertson 2006: 5). Yet these influences were later curtailed an element extending from the classical Graeco-Roman tradition. The latter-day use that was imposed upon the Western philosophy of history, with this lack of understanding of Rome’s distinction, can easily be a misuse. His cyclical use of an ancient cosmological framework to teach upon meaningful actions for the present was essential.

Polybius was an inspiration for many subsequent writers from the Renaissance onwards. He created “certain elements within the contemporary human sciences” (Inglis and Robertson 2006: 2). He is acclaimed as being “a foundational figure in efforts to think about the ‘global’ level in human affairs” (Inglis and Robertson 2006: 2). Being so, one can say the same for Machiavelli. Both Polybius and Machiavelli had some reliance to ancient cosmology, but only to a certain degree. They partially broke away from the Stoic cosmology,³⁵ and, one can state, that there was a “modern” element both in Polybius and Machiavelli, meaning an address to the temporal divergence from the past, and the understanding of this

³⁵ Polybius and Cicero are considered products of the “Middle Stoic” period that differed from “the element of idealism” of the “early Stoics” in accommodating its teachings to Roman practice (Wiser 1982: 76). It was directed by the “establishing those general principles to which all governments should conform...a mixed constitution which would contain selected elements of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy” (Wiser 1982: 77).

temperance coming from a comparative analysis of the Roman constitution, a synonym for Roman authority.

Even after addressing with criticism his own present-day nostalgic use of the past, Machiavelli more boldly returns to the ancient to address his present-day modern conditions. However, instead of being motivated by the current success of Rome, as was the case for Polybius, it was, for Machiavelli, driven by his present-day political, military and religious crisis, a crisis like never before in Italian history. Machiavelli partially broke away from Polybius, and one can say Livius.³⁶ But the break-away is only partial and one that is necessary.

Even though the relations stated by Inglis and Robertson are enlightening, the differences between Machiavelli and Polybius were not announced. It is true that Machiavelli uses the “grand historical cycle” of Polybius as the model for much of his own view of history, politics, and the relations of the nature of the Heavens, *Fortuna* and *virtu*. It can be said, that the general approach is similar, even though there are distinctive particular differences. The “newness” in Machiavelli, if anything, adds another dimension to Polybius’s “grand historical cycle.” In this manner, he can be closer to Livius (59 BC – 17AD), since both of them experienced the downfall of the Roman Republic. This other dimension is the concentration on the intermittent greatness *or failure in human action* that temporarily interrupt the natural cycle. The adhering difference is important in full consideration of the works of Machiavelli. It may be another aspect of his “path not yet trodden by anyone.” Polybius’ alteration from the cyclical pattern was in the sustenance of the rise of civilization in good authority and order: for Machiavelli, the disruption may *not* only be in the preservation of good political order, ***but the prolongation of the fall of civilization; that its failure, extends the disorder.*** Instead of human virtue suspending the heightened civilization that partially breaks-up the historical cycle of rise and fall, Machiavelli foresaw, that in his “modern” period, by forgetting of the ancient, the natural cycle would break-up, not by a prolonged rise in civilization,

³⁶ But this “break” from past historical figures is not necessarily a critical stance. The partial difference in historical interpretation is necessary as its newness is in adopting to new temporal conditions.

but the prolongation of the fall of civilization, the suspension of the lower-level of human performance, on the brink of nihilism.

Instead of submitting to the modern process, he more forcibly returned to the ancients to combat the historical battle for his praiseworthy goals. His discourses, through historical cycles, were a counter-movement to the nihilistic tendencies that were beginning to arise during his time. This appears as Machiavelli's renewed consciousness used in his renewed cyclical history.

In this recognition, of Machiavelli's own sense of originality, his "path not yet trodden by anyone," is a renewed sense of the "work of art" towards political affairs: excellence, virtue, honour, and glory, coming from the ancient. This calls for an analysis of the literary techniques in his style, a cathartic revelry of health even amongst chaos. The literary style of his "historiography" is important in his educational approach, and is a means to provoke meaningful action in any present-day.

2.4. Machiavelli's 'Historiography' and Literary Style

Machiavelli's educational approach is through his literary display of exemplary lessons in history, with the effect of a new literary style outside of the standardized rhetoric from the previous world of Medieval Christianity. His historiography is a part of the disruption of philosophy, metaphysics, and religion. It is a "new" literary approach stemming from the consciousness of the ancients. It generates an understanding reminiscent of modern and contemporary forms of literary analysis. In general, he continually engages in human discourses directed to those of his day, and with exchange of those in the past. In the use of history, he tells stories. It is reticent of the comment today, outside of the belief in truth generated by modern scientific principles that a distinctive part of human nature in the use of language is that all we can do is tell stories. Literary stories have been renewed today as a legitimate academic manner for arriving at knowledge of the human condition.

Machiavelli's literary style is part of the formation of "the state as a work of art" (Burckhardt n.d.: 1). The direction of his work of art is associated with his

virtuous pursuit of excellence, prudence, honour, and glory. It is revealed in an ancient cosmological world view, where the art of governance includes the “art of war.”³⁷ The work of art engenders virtuous action in his readers, a catharsis for strength in a difficult condition.

The literary techniques in Machiavelli also display his uniqueness and originality. His prominent literary techniques are revealed in the use of a multitude of interchanges of discourse, through various times and spaces, of various characters, on clear, practical, and essential topics. The insights generated in this section are unique in themselves, since the scholarly works on Machiavelli’s artistic features have been few. They are necessary in attempting a proper understanding and interpretation.

Many of his misunderstandings come from the lack of knowledge of the effects of his literary play games. There is a multitude of ambiguities and inconsistencies in *The Prince*; there is less in *The Discourses*, but they are not entirely erased. These literary games come from the essential lesson that, in the human nature of politics, there is never a clear absolute answer. Much is dependent on the play of forces of *Fortuna*. This lesson is transcended through literary techniques, where he clearly displays lessons, from historical sources that provides a general basis to form productive decisions of actions upon a imposing condition, without guarantee. This situation is reminiscent of the situation of the present-day.

³⁷ Machiavelli’s *On The Art of War* is another literary work which begins with one discourse between Machiavelli and Lorenzo Di Filippo Strozzi, “A Gentleman of Florence,” that develops into the recall of another dialogue. One can easily see the problems identified by Machiavelli personally are similar to the ones in the present-day. The beginnings contend with the problem of the division of the soldiers and the ordinary citizens, and a discourse about the possibility that such divisions can be lessened. Machiavelli’s states that his modern “military institutions have become completely corrupt and far removed from the ancient ways” (Preface: 1). From it comes, “sinister opinions” that have arisen “which makes the military hated and intercourse with those who train them avoided” (Preface: 1). But for Machiavelli, “it is not impossible to restore its ancient ways and return some form of the past virtue to it,” and that he has “decided not to let this leisure of mine pass without doing something, to write what I know of war, to the satisfaction of those who are lovers of the ancient deeds” (Preface: 1), and to propose the works “who shine because of their nobility, wealth, genius, and liberality,” for “I know you do not have many equals in wealth and nobility, few in ingenuity, and no one in liberality” (Preface: 2). The book is somewhat similar to Platonic dialogues but less idealistically philosophical, and more directed to the real conditions (Machiavelli *Art of War*: 1-2).

The blend of seriousness with the ironically comical literary-play of ambiguities and inconsistency reveals the modern political crisis, generated from the ancient understanding of nature that the world, assumingly “made by man,” is nearly beyond human control. With Machiavelli’s ancient view of Nature, some element of Fortune is always required to correct the political difficulties. As such, it engenders ponder in the reader. It invokes an appeal to artistic quality as a precursor to valuable interpretation and action.

His historical discussions from the cosmological view, employs the use of direct serious lessons, with elements of satire, mockery, and the literary play games of concepts, which cannot be logically conceived or administered in modern consciousness. The use of hidden truths and noble lies displays the complexities and the unclarity of his interpretations. Machiavelli reveals that his literary consciousness seems similar to the contemporary discourses on the nature of interpretation.³⁸

There are significant insights gathered from an important work by one of the leading political thinkers of the twentieth century, can be closely combined with Machiavelli’s artistic features. Hans-Georg Gadamer’s *Truth and Method*, uses a distinguished description of a literary “play” in a “work of art” that bestows an understanding of the complexities of Machiavelli’s “works of art.”

³⁸ From Franco Gaeta, ed., *Machiavelli: Lettere*, page 405. The exchange of these two letters, of Guicciardini and Machiavelli, displays the contemporary literary consciousness of Machiavelli. Guicciardini’s letter was responded to by Machiavelli on the same day. Guicciardini’s warning went as follows: “I believe they will serve you to your expectations and search for the honour in your soul, which is obscure in this age, because we have always had to live in a contrary profession that is attributed mostly to foolishness rather than the good. I remind you to respond as quickly as possible, because there are two dangers in this process: one, that those holy friars do not attack your hypocrisy with theirs; the other, is that the ‘air of Carpi’ will not turn you into a liar, because this is your influence, not only in this age, but many previous centuries. And disgrace to be linked to the homes of some Carpigians, would be your cause without remedy” (Machiavelli 1961: 402).

Machiavelli responds: “Your holiness knows what these friars say, when one is confirmed in grace, the devil has no more potential to tempt it. I have no fears with these friars who cling onto me as a hypocrite, because I believe that I am well enough confirmed in grace. To the quantity of lies given from the Carpigians, I do not wish to be measured by all of them, because it is a piece that does not measure my degree of quality; because, **up until now, I never say what I believe, and I never believe what I say, and nevertheless, at times, some truth comes to me that I hide in lies, which is difficult to discover**” (Machiavelli 1961: 404-405).

Guicciardini is convinced by Machiavelli’s profundity and fortitude: “when sent to the friars to place discord in them, or at least to leave a swarm of bees on them at some time, is the most distinguished action that you will ever do: not only that, but so is the stimulus, no matter how difficult, that confronts their aversion and malignity.” (Machiavelli 1961: 406) Such an interchange of letters displays that the Renaissance thinkers were ahead of their time.

Understanding, under the groundwork of a cosmological Nature, must take on the indeterminate play of forces for the acquisition of knowledge, as knowledge is a primordial component in Machiavelli's educational procedure. Understanding in the present world, according to Gadamer, is an essential concern: "Understanding must be conceived as a part of the event in which meaning occurs" (Gadamer 1996: 165). The understanding of art, "always includes historical mediation" (Gadamer 1996: 165). The loss of tradition and the loss of historical knowledge, "rouses...hermeneutical reflection" (Gadamer 1996: 165). These relations, of history, knowledge, and interpretation, are essential features in analyzing Machiavelli and recognizing their productive effect in the educational process. History generating knowledge and hermeneutical reflection, create understanding, and provides a means for a re-construction at times of downfall: "Re-constructing the conditions in which a work passed down to us from the past was originally the constituted as undoubtedly an important aid to understanding it" (Gadamer 1996: 165). This re-construction can be applied to the present condition, as Machiavelli did in re-constructing lessons from the past in his current turmoil through a work of art, an art that transforms the current-day "aesthetic and historical consciousness" to create a new productive consciousness.

Machiavelli's artistic orientation attempts to create a revolution in the creative consciousness of man. The previous fixed forms of order are dismantled, under a new time-space configuration. The past, present, and future is made to appear fluid, which is suggested in the cyclical recurrence of events. In this manner, his works display the actual temporal reality. The typical historical distance from the past is cast away. The immediacy of the distant past becomes a creative constituent for the present-day. We have a space-time configuration which brings together the author, the characters referred to in the text, and the future readers. These historical play of forces displayed by Machiavelli show their appropriateness for present-day discourse, which more fervently envisages the decline in modernity, generally similar to the decline that Machiavelli experienced in the Medieval Christian world. In both of these "times of transition" historical discourse is required to understand one's own condition.

We are beginning to see how much Machiavelli's historiography is important on global affairs, which was something stated by Inglis and Robertson, but not explained. We have an exchange in the voices of characters in the Roman army, Roman politics, Moses, Cyrus, Theseus, and Romulus; and a verbal exchange in other authors, such as Polybius, Livius, Tacitus, Xenophon, Cicero, etc. It is that timeless exchange that is the seed of Machiavelli artistry and educative approach.

The virtue in Machiavelli's artistry gives the legendary heroes "new clarity and force" in the adjustment of historical detail to the temporal conditions. The "heroic drama" in Machiavelli is personal and dramatic confrontations, reminiscent of his personal, dramatic confrontation.³⁹ This becomes necessary in lessons in the history of politics.

An exposition of his educational approach, through his distinct literary artistry, displays an implicit comment on the essential conceptualization of present-day philosophical discourses, of ontology and epistemology, that a proper understanding of the nature of being renders productive forms of knowledge. Knowledge stemming from the cosmological consciousness as the essence of human nature, is a re-working of *humanitas* – humanism – that began in the Roman Republic, was re-configured by Machiavelli, and repeated in another time of decline through the concern for humanism of the present-day. It also provides a depth of influence of the educational worth in a literary work of art.

³⁹ One can see the conflicts he faced over *virtu* and *Fortuna*, and the extent of his misfortune in a letter he wrote to Francesco Vettori, December 10, 1513. This gross misfortune was nevertheless coupled with becoming more forceful in the application of ancient knowledge through the means of imaginary, verbal conversations he made daily with ancient great heroes, which became the source of *The Prince*: "As such I turn away, and enter into scraping off the vermin acquired in the mildew of my brain, and I satisfy the malignity of this fate of mine, as I am content in this path to see if *Fortuna* would not shame herself from prosecuting me. During the evening, I return home, and enter my study. In entering, I take off my daily vestments, full of mud and filth, and I put on the courtly regal garments, and decently re-dressed, I enter into the ancient courts of ancient men, where I am received lovingly from them. I feast on that food that is mine alone, and for which I am solely born; there, I do not feel ashamed at all speaking with them, and asking them the reasons for their actions, and they respond to me with their humanity. And for those four hours, I do not feel any boredom, I forget every worry, I have no fear of poverty, and death does not frighten me. I deliver myself entirely to them. And because Dante stated that true science cannot be made without being retained internally in thought, I noted these elements in their conversations that I made of utmost importance, and I composed a little work *De principatibus*, where I delve as profoundly as possible in the deep thoughts on this subject, where I consider what a principality is, of what kind they are, how they are acquired, how they are maintained, and why they pardon themselves in their loss" (Machiavelli 1961: 303-304).

His literary creativity is described powerfully by a fellow Italian living five centuries later; that is, Benedetto Croce, who reveals aspects about *The Prince* that are uncommon, yet similar to the interpretation arrived at in this work.

Benedetto Croce, a compatriot philosopher of art and literary critic, whom Gramsci both accepted and rejected, brilliantly elucidates Machiavelli's writing style in his, "*Una Questione che forse non si chiuderà mai: La Questione del Machiavelli*," ("A Question that May Never End: The Question of Machiavelli") This article further extends the understanding of his inconsistencies, ambiguities, and 'errors' in his historical exemplary mode. It is claimed that Machiavelli "questions speculative logic," and this is a part of his "inventive philosophy" (Croce 1949: 2), which questions the dogmatic philosophy of morals. The historical exemplary mode carries with it a pertinent question that will never end. His works are presented *without* the common "modes and orders," without definite formulas, without systematic order, without technical literariness or initiative, yet consisting essentially of the profound concepts by which one transmits spiritual values, and the category of the real; they are also components of complete diversity and dispersal of respect for the concepts that are called empirical that designate classes of facts and figures (Croce 1949: 2). From within all of these precepts, there is a loss of any particular logic. The literary satire in *The Prince* goes beyond the modern reduction of the superficial subject-object logical framework. Machiavelli returns to the ancient use of cyclical history for eternal lessons rendered on the activities of man. There are portions in the composition of *The Prince* that are not far removed from the farcical humour in his plays, especially *Mandragola*, "The Mandrake," where "satire and farce became the hallmark of success in this play" (Croce 1949: 1).

This "industry" and these poetic forces of uncertainty are not just words in the wind, but they do not succeed in effect if they are not indirectly exposed; therefore, the appearance of logic continually confuses the traditional response and provides only superficial solutions to many of the problems. As Femia tell us, his use of "figurative language" (Femia 2004: 41), easily causes misinterpretation. If his "words on the page are filtered" through "an interpretive framework of conventional understandings and assumptions," it "delimits their semantic and lexical content" (Femia 2004: 87). These are suggestive explanations of the numerous

misinterpretations of his works. Even the traits that provide a just resolution of these problems, do not allow the full possibility or full consciousness of a presupposed method that strongly secures the readers' thoughts. In this way, he addresses the requirement in the strength of vitality, the spirit of consciousness that operates in every instant of life. With such "concepts of poetry and art, the beautiful and the ugly, that is always in the minds of men and generated in the works of poetry and the arts," is "a discovery of esthetic vision against the intellectual rationality and Cartesian mathematical reason" (Croce 1949:3-4). With this, Machiavelli "displays difficulty in modern philosophic logic" (Croce 1949: 4). It is a never-ending moral process, therefore, "the question of Machiavelli will remain one of those that will never be closed and will not be passed over into archives, since it is diverse from all other passive conclusions" (Croce 1949: 9). Croce and Femia display, in contemporary style, the criticisms, within Machiavelli, of modern concepts, assumptions, and reason.

The last analysis by Croce displays Machiavelli's disrupting process of modern scientific logic and reason. It is an inherent criticism of modern metaphysics, on top of the criticism of the metaphysics of classical political philosophy. It is clear that the workings of his discourses are from the ancient cosmological source, within its thought process of cyclical history within the powers of nature. The source of this "newness" is outside the metaphysical source that designates the Western tradition.

Machiavelli is significant on these matters, since one can easily surmise a productive criticism of those ideals of late modernity. From this analysis comes the argument, that Machiavelli is more relevant in a "time of transition" – such as the decline of modernity – than other time periods, since this time is more directly related to the "time of crisis" during his day. The question of Machiavelli has a long-lasting component within it. Not only is he important for ancient or for his modern period, but also the latter modern period, and our current period, which sees a decline in modernity.

2.5. Opposition to Modern Historicism: ‘Progress in History’

Through the process of a close rendering from his works on the topic of history, the next step is the comparison of his conception of history with the modern, and in particular, the latter-day modern of the Enlightenment period. It is beneficial to compare Machiavelli’s ancient cosmological view with the starkly contrasting view of history in modernity. As we have indicated, early modernity started the process of forgetting the past, which was made commensurable by the view of the latter period of modernity, with the belief of “progress in history.”

The idea of progress in history was developed during the Enlightenment period, a remnant of the scientific revolution. From the beginnings of the scientific revolution, the influential elements on the scientific character of modernity, the needs for a “total renovation” (Wiser 1982: 169), included a forgetting of the past (Wiser 1982: 169). A scientific method was derived to control nature, which was conceived by Francis Bacon under an “egalitarian epistemology” that “discounted the claim for natural hierarchy” (Wiser 1982: 172). This discarding of the natural hierarchy “gave support to the democratic character of the modern age” (Wiser 1982: 172). The Baconian “conception of nature and of science” began the abrupt changes in modern society (Wiser 1982: 175). The opposing modern consciousness even inspired ‘philosophy’ to be enraptured by these abrupt conceptual changes, where “the modern spirit” was emerging in Descartes, “a founder of modern philosophy” (Wiser 1982: 175). Through the use of modern reason, it made people believe that “it was people and not divine providence who determined the course of empirical history,” and a “systematic philosophy of historical progress” was made (Wiser 1982: 243). In keeping a particular notion of progress in history, many scholars have noted that Hegel, the champion of modern consciousness, did not escape the flaws of German Idealism. We will reveal that the cyclical view of history is opposed to what has been designated as the modern historical consciousness, particularly the concept of progress in history. There are lessons from the Machiavellian educational approach that can relieve the mistaken view of harmful idealism in modern historicism. It is influential in rendering Machiavelli’s worth during the present-day, our contemporary time.

Many scholars, following Nietzsche, state that the retaining of the ideal of being at the pinnacle of modern historical consciousness and civilization is a harmful sham. Yet this idea is not discouraged from our educational process, even through to the twenty-first century:

there has been no dangerous change or turn in the German education of this century which has not become more dangerous through the enormous influence, continuing to the present moment, of this philosophy, the Hegelian (Nietzsche 1980: 47).

Part of this danger, Nietzsche admits, comes from what Hegel did not say - what he wished to blind himself from:

for Hegel the apex and terminus of all world history coincided in his own Berlin experience. He should have said that all things after him are properly judged to be only a musical coda of the world historical rondo; more properly yet, to be redundant. He did not say that (Nietzsche 1980: 47).

This is a clear indication that there is an underside to Hegel that inverts and implodes the motivating imperative that sought to give humanity its justification and sovereignty. Nietzsche reveals the unsaid side of Hegel. Hegel's insights are important. But they criticize one essential aspect in his historical onslaught. Not only does he encompass the full modern consciousness, but displays it as being on a brink of deterioration. Instead of explicating upon its deterioration, he turns away. Even though he provided monumental profundity in thought, this lack of activity may portray a weakness in not being able to confront the fact that at reaching the culmination of modern historical consciousness comes its downfall.

His workings are vast in content. Michel Foucault stated that all thought since Hegel is either an endorsement or a reaction against it. Marx seemed shattered on his first reading of the *Philosophy of History* with a continual ironic religious sentiment: "A curtain has fallen, my holy of holies had been shattered, and new gods had to be found" (Easton and Guddat 1967: 46). Hegel's work on history contains the most profound completion of modern historicism:

The great impact of the notion of history upon the of the consciousness modern age came relatively late, not before the last third of the eighteenth century, finding

with relative quickness its climactic consummation in Hegel's philosophy (Arendt 1954: 68).⁴⁰

For Hegel, the "end of history" or "climactic consummation," in the alleged superiority of events during his life, gave a solution to the atrocities of destruction in the pathway of the West. It was directed towards an end: the final total accomplishment in which the culmination of human development was won by the West. The "culmination," or "end of history," was "not a religious accomplishment" (Wiser 1982: 243). It was done through the belief of the intellectual ability in modern science to "mark humankind's progress toward perfectability" (Wiser 1982: 245). Western consciousness, allocated by Hegel, encompassed a history supposedly superior to the human, that is, his "Divine History"; yet, it would be arrived at through human consciousness. It is an argument that brings together the 'Divine' and human. The 'Divine', or what was once superior to the human, through the notion of progress in history, was arrived at by the human. What was once untenable, all of a sudden became graspable. A laughable paradox begins at the rendered full consciousness of modernity.

"History was Divine" for Hegel through the ironic combination of the spiritual and the actual. The 'Divine' is portrayed in the universal validity of history to justify the ironically secular superiority of Europe, with first, the activities of Napoleon Buonaparte, and then the championing of his current-day Prussian state, as the highest political formulation in human history. For Hegel, these versions of the "end of history" entail the pinnacle of Western civilization, the achievement of the "Absolute Spirit," "absolute knowledge," in "totality," the "whole of reality." The: "Thought which Philosophy brings with it to the contemplation of History, is the simple conception of *Reason*" (Hegel 1956: 9). And this *Reason* is "sustained by the Universe to the Divine Being" (Hegel 1956: 9). *Reason*, in this manner, for Hegel, is "*the infinite complex of things*," with an "absolute final aim" and brings together not only "the phenomena of Nature," but "also the Spiritual Universe" to form the "History of the World" (Hegel 1956: 9).⁴¹ All previous events in history

⁴⁰ From the chapter, "The Concept of History: Ancient or Modern," *Between Past and Future*.

⁴¹ The italics and capitalization in these citations from page 9 are those of Hegel.

were only building blocks to the final, absolute end. As such, Rome according to this Hegelian view, only arises in pursuit towards the end, and its “pursuit is merely *abstractum*” (Hegel 1956: 9). Therefore, for Hegel, “World History,” “*Reason*,” “Nature” and “Universal Spirit” were divine elements to which all previous history was directed under a uni-linear interpretation of historical proceedings. But a doubtful transformation from the religious to transcendental ‘reality’ is revealed when both are assumed to be incorporated in modern history: it reveals the ironic “reconciliation between the Divine and Secular” to which the recent historians of ideas have insisted in questioning such a proposal (Hegel 1956: 447):

whether Hegel’s ‘cunning of reason’ was a secularization of divine providence or whether Marx’s classless society represents a secularization of the Messianic Age (Arendt 1954: 69-70).

Instead of the “end of history” being reached through historical formulation as the height of the development of the ‘west’, *it arrived at the beginning of its downfall*. Hegel unknowingly or avoidably revealed the decline of modernity.

In an article by Jacques Derrida, an acclaimed Nietzschean scholar, the Western project is both culminated and imploded within Hegel’s discourse. The meaninglessness of Hegel’s and modernity’s historicism is re-iterated by George Bataille, cited frequently in the article by Derrida. Both of them suggest that “Hegel has failed” (Derrida 1978: 251). Bataille, although admitting that “the dialectic of the master and slave’s lucidity is blinding,” ends up, like Derrida, erupting into *laughter* after a full consideration of Hegel’s discourse. It seems this is a necessary condition of its completion. Bataille represents this paradox in these words:

The privileged manifestation of Negativity is death, but death, in truth, reveals nothing. In principle, death reveals to Man his natural, animal being, but the revelation never takes place. For man finally to be revealed to himself he would have to die, but he would have to do so while living... But this is a comedy! (Derrida 1978: 257).⁴²

⁴² For Hegel, idealism becomes solidified, in his opinion, with the actual. The pinnacle of metaphysical elements, previously conceived as above the consciousness of man, all of a sudden becomes ‘real’, first, in the Battle of Jena, and later, in the Prussian state during his day. One can perceive a previous indirect criticism in Machiavelli of this element of political philosophy, begun by Plato and completed by Hegel in his version of German idealism. In truth, the ideal has little to do

Clearly, to arrive at a conclusion such as Hegel did - that this New World is the Age of Absolute Knowledge - is a failure. Nietzsche calls this Absolute Knowledge, nihilism.⁴³ This is precisely how Nietzsche radicalizes Hegel's historicism. Hegel fails because he brings himself to the end of the cliff, and turns away. But this does not keep Hegel's discourse from being the highest expression of conventional beliefs, as that which expresses most profoundly the characteristics of most of our current political activity. Perhaps Hegel did not want to go as far as he did under the grounds of progress in history.⁴⁴

From Arendt, a Nietzschean scholar who lived in the twentieth century, her first chapter, "The Concept of History: Ancient and Modern," in her book *Between Past and Future*, we see the relevant distinction of knowledge of "meaning" and "end" for the contemporary condition: "The growing meaninglessness of the modern world is perhaps nowhere more clearly foreshadowed than in the identification of meaning and end" (Arendt 1954: 78).⁴⁵ Hegel's "World History" towards a final and absolute end may be revealing, but he and all others who assess history in this manner are "never interested in the past," and his attempt "is far from being successful." (Arendt 1978: 47II) Arendt brings the illusory historical assessment on Hegel and Progress in History into relevance when considering the, "problem by which modern thought is haunted" from the view of "Progress of the human race," by "Hegel and Marx" (Arendt 1982: 4-5).

with the real. In Western idealism, the exaggeration of the superiority of the human, in the perception in capturing consciously and actually what was once above human capability, points towards madness in Western human consciousness, generating laughable contexts completely void of reality.

⁴³ For Nietzsche, nihilism is rooted "in the Christian moral one," and states that Hegel is directing towards a "philosophical moral God." But this is "the end of the moral interpretation of the world," where it "no longer has any sanction after it has tried to escape into some beyond," which "leads to nihilism." See Book One, "European Nihilism," Aphorism 1, *The Will to Power*, p. 7. (Nietzsche 1967: 7)

⁴⁴ This can be revealed in the comment made by Mircea Eliade in the "Terror and History" chapter of his *The Myth of Eternal Return*: "all the cruelties, aberrations, and tragedies of history have been and still are, justified by the necessities of the 'historical moment.' Probably Hegel did not intend to go so far" (Eliade 1954: 148)

⁴⁵ Hannah Arendt, "The Concept of History: Ancient or Modern," *Between Past and Future*, (Arendt 1954: 78).

As has been previously argued, modernity attempts to aim at the immortality of man. But with the drive to such an end, paradoxically, the opposite is derived:

This process, however, is incapable of guaranteeing men any kind of immortality because its end cancels out and makes unimportant whatever went before: in the classless society the best mankind can do with history is to forget the whole unhappy affair, whose only purpose was to abolish itself (Arendt 1954: 79-80).

It continued with the growth of modern science to its “end,” with a belief in whatever version of an apocalyptic and eschatological “end of history.”⁴⁶ It appears evident in Foucault's article, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” that he wishes to demonstrate Nietzsche's “effective history” is outside the traditional necessity for “apocalyptic objectivity” (Foucault 1977: 152). Therein, the “apocalyptic objectivity,” identified in Hegel's perspective, is the specifically Western imperative. The notion of the “end of history,” through the belief of progress in history, carries with it a perceived sense of betterment to a superlative goal, a final state of being. The current-day popular sentiment is still impeding the necessary knowledge given in the contemporary realm of political thought. However, one can assess that a few present-day developments question the modern premises and are open to the new pathway of thinking of the contemporary.

We have learned that the revealed cyclical view of history has an effect on the manner of hermeneutic and epistemological derivations. It is disruptive of the classical conceptions, forming a truly new and productive manner in the study of political affairs and the nature of man. It encompasses new divergent values, meriting a new ordering of the “old” and “new,” good and evil. It is a different framework from the common everyday, and used to re-vitalize relations to the world-that-be and to form meaningful human action. The knowledge and use of this divergent historical sense impels a ‘religious’ reverence which can be addressed to our day, just as he addressed the ancient Romans to his day.

Machiavelli met the requirement to be meritorious in a time of transition. This is revealed in the foremost element of his educational approach, the use of the

⁴⁶ “Eschatology” is closely related to the apocalypse, since it is the part of theology concerned with death and the final destiny of mankind.

cosmological view of history, which is being re-born in the realm of contemporary thought. Machiavelli has returned in the process of a re-construction of Western history, as he is now seen as a starting point. The new contemporary lessons have started today with him in the attempt of beginning a new Renaissance. The worthiness of Machiavelli's view of history will be made clear in the final chapter of this work.

CHAPTER III

RELIGION

“From the days of John the Baptist
Until now, The Kingdom of Heaven
Suffereth Violence, and the Violent
Bear it Away.” Matthew 11:12

Epistle Introduction in Flannery O’Connor’s
The Violent Bear It Away

The “amazing religiosity” of “the ancients” is
of “the gratitude it exudes: it is a very noble
type of man that confronts nature and life in
this way,” which is a way “to affirm life inspite
of all its terrors with remarkable and noble
strength above resentment.” The direction
of ancient religiosity is opposed to that of
monotheistic religions.

(Taken from Aphorism 49 and its footnote in
the “What Is Religious?” section of Nietzsche’s
Beyond Good and Evil, with a final comment)

Where the eagle glides ascending,
there’s an ancient river bending,
through the timeless gorge of changes,
where sleeplessness awaits.

I searched out my companions,
who were lost in crystal canyons,
where the aimless blade of science
slashed the pearly gates.

Neil Young, “Thrasher”

3.1. Preface

The topic of religion engenders enormous debate on its relation to politics in the present-day. One can easily admit that Machiavelli severely criticizes the Christianity of his day; but, oddly enough, through a clear analysis, this does not imply that he is a modern secular thinker. Machiavelli does not reject religion from politics; quite the contrary, since, for him, religion, as well as politics, are considered as essential elements of human nature. He may have lived during the dawn of modern secular time, but one can argue that he was not linked to the

propagation of the rise in secularism in modernity. His view of religion is certainly original and unique, outside of the common recognition. It not only questions the development of Christianity, but calls for an investigation of the nature of modern secularism. In facing the decline of the previous time period of Medieval Christianity, and the rise of completely new attitudes towards religion in modernity, a brief knowledge of this historical change is required for a proper study of religion under these contexts.

In *The History of Florence, Book I, Chapter 5*, “Changes in Italy in Barbaric Times: 395-493,” Machiavelli describes that these barbaric times are due to the disastrous changes historically, and with it came the recognition that the changes in religion were equally important. These were “times of misery” in Italy, by being overrun by barbarians similar to the corruption and destruction of the forces of power in his own time. He speaks of the damage done to the republics and princedoms overrun by not only “external force,” but also “internal discords”: a damaging situation where “their laws, their customs, their ways of living, their religion, their speech, their dress, their names,” were changed severely, with such complete newness that it was “enough to terrify the firmest and steadiest mind” (Machiavelli 1965: 1040). At that time, they faced the change from ancient paganism to Christianity.

The transition from the ancient pagan consciousness to the Western historical consciousness is evident in the Judaeo-Christian formation of the eschatological and apocalyptic literature in the Bible. The experience of life on “the city of earth” was one of suffering. The suffering was appeased by a Covenant with God, which provided a future fulfillment, some future end. Time was conceived as a beginning, moving toward an end, as Hannah Arendt reinforces in her essay “The Concept of History: Ancient and Modern”: “Only our religious tradition, it is said, knows of a beginning and, in the Christian version, an end of the world” (Arendt 1954: 65). From the beginning-end format of history, events of the future were considered different from the events of the past. The difficulties of earthly life were conciliated by the future world, “the city of God.” Heaven, and not earth, becomes the repository for greatness, perfection, and immortality. These elements were considered impossible in the earthly world. In life on earth, the human is nowhere

near God. But, it is clear that this “new world” created by the Judaeo-Christian sentiment, was done at the expense of the dignity of this world, the present life on earth.

From the opposing tendencies in spiritual belief came the contending direction of historical consciousness. A “well-defined outline of world history” began with Christianity, “and the first philosophy of history is presented in Augustine’s *De Civitate Dei*” (Arendt 1954: 65). Augustine (354-450 AD), an early Christian, spends much time in his main text, *The City of God*, with a long criticism of ancient paganism, even though his father was pagan, and he originally broke from the Christian influence of his mother, and adopted to the religion of Manicheism, “Christianity’s chief rival in the field of ethics” (Wiser 1982: 93). He swayed back to Christianity after paganism was banned from Rome in 391 AD, and Christianity was established “as the official civil religion of the empire” (Wiser 1982: 93). After the fall of the Roman Empire in 410 AD, Augustine responded to the charge of political inferiority of Christianity with “a total critique of the pagan world-view” (Wiser 1982: 93). Ironically, Christianity “was not intended primarily [as] a political or social doctrine” (Wiser 1982: 93). The opposition of religion and politics was conflicting, and this was manifest in the separation of his “city of earth” and the “city of God.”

Christianity dogmatized its beliefs in order to remain victorious in the contest over the secular forms of power. The “joys of heaven” still convinced those of high stature, such as Thomas Aquinas, (1225-1276) that Christianity was superior to secular temporal powers, even after “watching the unspeakable sufferings in hell,” which allowed violence to persist under Christian rule: “violence was permitted to insinuate itself into both the very structure of Western religious thought and the hierarchy of the Church” (Arendt 1954: 132-133).

As Wiser (1982) summarizes, in facing the related confrontations at the end of Medieval times of the spiritual and temporal powers, of faith and reason, of religion and philosophy, of the church and the state, Aquinas responded with the Christian belief of eternal salvation through the grace of God. For him, it was natural reason, influenced by Aristotle oddly enough, to serve Christianity, where God is a rational end. Politics, according to Aquinas provided some means for the

good, and not necessarily evil as it was with Augustine. Its basis was formed on the attachment of reason to faith, of religion to philosophy, and therefore the state was more closely aligned to the church under these premises. But political authority was not the final authority. The higher end of spiritual perfection was more significant than the temporal powers of politics (Wiser 1982: 117-122). In that manner, the tensions between spiritual and temporal powers were not dissolved.

The more evident thinker that displays the fall of medieval Christianity and the on-going conflict of the spiritual and temporal, can be seen in the strange and odd developments in the thought of Marsilius of Padua, (*circa* 1275-1342) the last thinker before Machiavelli. As Fortin states, he “lives in another world” (Strauss 1973: 251).

Marsilius was a “Christian Aristotelian, yet “both his Christianity and Aristotelianism differ profoundly of the most celebrated Christian Aristotelian, Thomas Aquinas” (Strauss 1973: 251). His “commonwealth” is “both this worldly and other worldly” (Strauss 1973: 251). Aristotle is used for the “this worldly,” and even though Christianity “is exclusively, or chiefly concerned with the other life, it too, makes men’s fate in the other world dependent on how they lived in this world” (Strauss 1973: 253). This is his “democratic rendering of Aristotelian principles,” which is one of many “strange misinterpretations” of Aristotle, “who preferred the sovereign government of the gentlemen (aristocratic) to the sovereign or government of the people (democratic)” (Strauss 1973: 256). The strangeness continues in his main work *Defender of the Peace*, where he “emphatically set forth and literally at the same time retracts the doctrine of popular sovereignty” (Strauss 1973: 259). The “religiously neutral concept,” essential for Marsilius, was “anticlerical,” since the people should rule in stead of the clergy, and sided with “the Roman emperors, ancient or medieval against the popes” (Strauss 1973: 256).

Among this strangeness, comes confusion at this “time of transition,” a “time of crisis” between two worlds. In amongst all these conflicts and strange assertions, Machiavelli steps out from any usual association with Christianity and Aristotelianism to combat the two swords of spiritual and temporal existence. Machiavelli’s spirituality is not separated from the temporality of life on earth. This study shows that Machiavelli is involved in a renewal of ancient paganism in order

to combat the decline in Christianity. Quoting Meinecke, Isaiah Berlin writes: “Machiavelli’s doctrine was a sword thrust into the body politic of Western humanity, causing it to cry out and to struggle against itself” (Berlin 1979: 39).

3.2. General Overview of Machiavelli’s Relation to Religion

A starting point to understand the complexities of Machiavelli’s relation to religion is to outline his need to contest the effects of Christianity. The hope was, as Burckhardt informs us, by these created words attributed to Machiavelli, that it “would draw the steel from the wound” (Burckhardt n.d.: 114). The wound was the rule of the Papacy, which was corrupt; the steel would be used to annihilate that body that gave power, which was the Church itself, “the source of all foreign intervention and of all divisions of Italy” (Burckhardt n.d.: 114). If it can be said that Machiavelli’s attack on the “spirituality of Christendom,” was only an attack on its declining spirit, born and grounded in his present-day Christianity, then he did not entirely discard Christianity wholeheartedly.⁴⁷

One of Machiavelli’s tasks is to re-instigate versions of ancient paganism back into Christianity, a re-instatement of the worth in ancient paganism that is so bitterly opposed by popular Christianity. Ancient paganism, as the seed of the Italian Renaissance, breeds a religious view in sharp contrast to the modern contention: “The Renaissance rediscovered and revalorized paganism” (Eliade 1959: 227). Machiavelli was motivated by the growing emphasis of the Renaissance on creative action, instead of traditional Christian moral precepts, where pragmatic approaches and a close sense of realism was lost in the illusory imaginary world views, exacerbated by the manipulation and corruption of the constrained religious

⁴⁷ “In Machiavelli,” Parel resumes, “the heavens do remain the source of religion, and Fortune the presiding deity” (Parel 1992:59). In the last sentence in his chapter “Heaven, Religion, and Politics,” Parel states: “Machiavelli is a neo-pagan whose aim is to paganize rather than to secularize Christianity” (Parel 1992: 59). Nevertheless, his form of neo-paganism does not want to throw out the notion of Christianity, nor therefore “God,” entirely. It must be stated that for him there are elements in the Christian Church that are not religious, and the so-called religious figures have no regard for what he considers a true religious faith. One cannot dismiss the role of religion in Machiavelli’s work. His work on religion is a genealogy of faith, a description and use going back to its roots, and reformed again in the present to banish the harmful to re-create the strength in vitality. His genealogy of faith includes the ancient historical and political sentiments to overcome the dominance of the decline in history and politics in Christianity.

impetus. In general, such illusory activities still persist today in ideologies, albeit with an oppositional stance on religion.

In Machiavelli's view, there are cyclical interrelations of history, religion, and politics: "For just as the heavens control the general laws governing the movement of history and politics, so also, according to him, do they control the movement governing the rise, renewal, and fall of religions" (Parel 1992: 45). According to Machiavelli, one can say that, if there were elements available to the human to contend the powers that be - of the Heavens, *Fortuna*, the gods, and "God" - they would be politics and religion, which are essential elements in human action: "Machiavelli did not wish to separate politics from religion. Indeed, he saw the latter as indispensable to the smooth functioning of the state" (Femia 2004: 38). Machiavelli's concern for religion is tied to the recognition of the greatness of the Roman Republic. For him, its latter-day downfall in politics is coupled with the downfall of religion.

In tracing the origins of the word in the article, "What Is Authority?," Hannah Arendt reveals the tie of religion not only to history, but political authority as well. As mentioned in the introduction, religion comes from the Latin word *re-ligare*, "to be tied back" (Arendt 1954: 121). One can presume that "*re-ligare*," a Latin term, has its roots in Rome. The derivation of *religio* from *re-ligare*, Arendt claims, is the doing of a Roman himself, Cicero, therefore establishing its particular Roman Republican distinction (Arendt 1954: 292). Not only is the greatness of its religion used as an educational premise, but also is its downfall.

In the process, Machiavelli implies that Christianity should accept the ancient forms of belief. Christendom has not maintained "the form in which its giver founded it" (Machiavelli 1965: 228). This rather implicit statement, that the form of Christianity is in falsity of the true teachings of Christ, is implicitly repeated in *The Discourses* Book III.

Had Christianity carried out the original intent of Christ, Christian states would have been more united and powerful in politics and civic spirit than they were. He credits the Franciscan and Dominican Saints, Saint Francis and Saint Dominic, for doing what other friars did not, bringing back the forgotten, because if they "had not brought it back towards its beginnings," it "would have entirely

disappeared” (Machiavelli 1965: 422). In the hardship of giving the truer nature of Christ: “with their poverty and with the example of Christ’s life [,] brought it back into the minds of men when it had disappeared from them” (Machiavelli 1965: 422). It seems that all other friars had a false conception of Christ. One can even go back to Augustine, of disregard for the ‘evil’ matters of politics on earth, right up to Aquinas, and even the confused Marsilius, who found joy in the other world, not paying attention to the sufferings of hell on earth, which identifies the ultimate flaw in Christianity, as not truly representing Jesus:

Nothing perhaps in this whole development of Christianity throughout the centuries is farther removed from and more alien to the letter and spirit of the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth than the elaborate catalogue of future punishments and the enormous power of coercion through fear which only in the last stages of modern age have lost their public, political significance (Arendt 1954: 133).

The heavenly “life is everlasting” dogma was not for joy, but encouraged by “fear on earth” that was praised by Christian preaching (Arendt 1954: 133). One can infer that this sentiment in Hannah Arendt was inspired by her knowledge of Machiavelli. The ‘reverence’ he had for religion is closely linked to the reverence he had for politics, where both are depicted in contrast to those of Christianity.

With such an insight, no one can deny the importance of religion for Machiavelli. It ties together the historical distinction of the supernatural element of the “Heavens” with religion. By nature, the human can only make interpretations on the “Heavens,” the powers-that-be, as a recent-day contemporary author, John M Najemy, indicates:

religion is a matter of ‘interpretations’ whose truth or falsity is measured by the effect on behaviour, institutions, society, and history. These arguments allude to intriguing parallels between pagan religion and Christianity (Najemy 1999: 668).

The measure is not on “doctrines or truths,” but on the way the religions functioned to achieve their own political ends, and a large part of that function and the ends are made by interpretation, and measured by the strength allocated by the acceptance of life on earth, not a withdrawal from it. The measure of the worth of interpretations

encompasses a divergent set of values, outside of Christian morality. In Christianity, Machiavelli “contrasted its degenerate values with noble values enshrined by pagan religion” (Femia 2004: 39). It is a view of religion that is important for political order.

3.3 The Contrariness of Machiavelli’s ‘New Religion’: Its Effects on Politics, Morality, and Liberty

The unique combinations of these significant factors causes much confusion and many antagonistic interpretations. Almost all scholars in this field today criticize the short-sightedness of Leo Strauss and Sebastian de Grazia on their interpretations of Machiavelli’s position on religion. For Strauss, Machiavelli was “a teacher of evil,” a “diabolical” preacher, a “blasphemer” of “soulless character,” and an “atheist” (Najemy 1999: 660). In complete contrast, de Grazia believes he is a “Christian apologist, though of a peculiar kind” who, by his ‘peculiar’ drive for active political virtue, he nevertheless makes “men conform to God’s desire.” Machiavelli, therefore, is “a friend of God,” so that “behind Niccolo’s insistence on political action,” states de Grazia, “stands God.”⁴⁸ Even though we get such diverse interpretations, they both agree that Machiavelli’s position on religion is a precondition for the correct understanding of his political thought. But both of them appear limited in their understanding, for whatever purpose.⁴⁹

Once again, the great Swiss historian, Jacob Burckhardt, created a imaginary literary statement, imitating the words that Machiavelli would likely have made: ““We Italians are irreligious and corrupt above others because the Church and her representatives set us the worst example”” (Burckhardt n.d.: 432-433). The common

⁴⁸ The quotations describing Machiavelli’s religious performance and interpretations are taken from two articles: Chapter 3, “Heaven, Religion and Politics,” in Anthony Parel’s *The Machiavellian Cosmos*, p. 59, and John M. Najemy, “Papius and the Chickens, or Machiavelli on the Necessity of Interpreting Religion,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 1999, page 660. It is true that Strauss exaggerates certain aspects for seemingly suspicious practices, but to reduce his understanding of Machiavelli’s view of religion in this way is partially mistaken.

⁴⁹ One can only guess as to why we receive such divergent views that seem to contain either an ideological or traditional religious direction in the educated. It appears that Strauss has a political plan behind his appearance of careful and intense study, and that de Grazia cannot do without some form of traditional religious belief. If this is so, we have personal evidence of the trickery or weakness in our educational framework that Machiavelli would probably assess.

opinion of praising the persistence of Christian morality hides the reality of its prevalent immorality and its ruin in the “wickedness of the time.” From this assertion comes monumental inferences, where Christianity in politics has become somewhat unfaithful; it displays ‘immorality’ in contrast to the advocate of even present-day forms of ‘morality’. The implications are potent and require clear explanation.

Machiavelli applied ancient religiosity in his pedagogical desire to engender strength to overcome the ensuing weakness. Machiavelli argues from a standpoint that the use of Christianity, at his time, is not wholly Christian. Its limitation hides essentials that are crucial for him and for Italy in chaotic times. Machiavelli attempts to re-install ancient pagan virtues back into the Bible, and that such a brand of teachings can actually be demonstrated in its careful reading. Such a pedagogical approach undermines the values of Christian morality, as being not truly moral in ancient consciousness. For those who conceived earthly life as predominantly sinful, they were displaying even more sinfulness, according to the ancients.

In Italy, the Christian divine belief in order was destined to misery and destruction. The common people became subjects of the authoritarian power elite of the Papal Authority, which provided political power in the cardinals and the Pope. The Church’s limited direction to peaceful spirituality and contemplation in the servers of the Church, with the avoidance of political and military action, easily made their enslavement to Christian dogma more attractive than liberty. This “immoral” form of power-politics is comprised by the lack of knowledge and insight into the nature of Christianity itself.

The Church had become corrupt; yet men were almost forced to keep to the religion in spite of it all. Contrary to the common understanding, Machiavelli does not separate religion from its ancient historical context, from concern for good military, from republican aspirations for the people, and of administering the judgment of the good and the “wicked”:

Thus he who examines Roman history well sees how helpful religion was in controlling armies, in inspiring the people, in keeping good men, in making the wicked ashamed (Machiavelli 1965: 224).

The divergent sense of religion continued in an influential section of *The Discourses*. In the first chapter in the section entitled “Roman Religion,” a completely different version of “God” arises, a ‘God’ reformed by a return to ancient paganism.⁵⁰ He calls for ancient pagan principles in the re-forming of new, good laws and good arms to support good “modes and order.” Numa, the subsequent leader after Romulus, needed the authority of the gods, “to introduce new and unwanted laws into the city,” because he “feared that his own authority would not be enough” (Machiavelli 1965: 225). The religion that “Numa had brought into the city,” forced people into an oath not to break the new laws, which made Lucius Manlius, who falsely accused Marcus Pomponius, “through fear, withdraw the accusation” (Machiavelli 1965: 224).

The worth in this religion is the manner in which it forms good new laws. ‘God’ is directly involved in the ancient pagan practice of “oaths and laws” under Numa, “her first lawgiver,” the follower of Romulus, who established things that the founder had omitted.⁵¹ In the time of Numa came the necessity of religion to “maintain a well-ordered state” (Machiavelli 1965: 223). Oaths to the republic were formulated, where the Romans “feared much more to break an oath than to break the laws, since they respected the power of God more than that of men” (Machiavelli 1965: 224). Religion here is more closely linked to authority, the forming of good laws for the good order of the city, and inspiring civic loyalty and virtue.

He concludes by saying that the “religion introduced by Numa,” a pagan religion, “was among the chief reasons for the prosperity of that city” (Machiavelli 1965: 225). From this, he retorts about the importance of religion and the difficulties in maintaining princedoms or kingdoms without it. He repeatedly states that its importance is due to the formation of good laws, good fortune, and good

⁵⁰ In these chapters on religion, from Chapter XI to XVI, the number of uses of the words “God” and “gods” is almost identical.

⁵¹ Even though Numa was more markedly engaged in the forming of religion does not mean that Romulus was irreligious. Romulus in the formation of the beginnings of a mixed constitution was a sacred experience acquires by knowledge of the past and an imitation of great deeds before him. Politics in ancient times were a product of history and religion.

action. One can easily see that the ties to engendering the inspiration for good laws are done through the civic loyalty of the people: “Because religion caused good laws; good laws make good fortune; and from good fortune came the happy results of the city’s endeavours” (Machiavelli 1965: 225). Princedoms or kingdoms without religion will likely fail: “Because, where fear of God is lacking, it is necessary either that a kingdom fall or that it be sustained by fear of a prince which atones for what is missing in religion” (Machiavelli 1965: 225). But if any rule atones for what is missing in religion, it is likely to fail.

Machiavelli continues while still using the singular use of “God” in describing ancient Roman Republican rulers. Numa had the need of authority beyond his own, especially in the requirement of introducing new laws. Ancient forms of religion not only “caused good laws,” but were “helpful in controlling armies.” Romulus, at the beginning, “had no need for the authority of God” (Machiavelli 1965: 225). Machiavelli continues while still using the singular use of “God” in describing ancient Roman Republican rulers. For Numa, the need of authority of God was advised by an ancient mythical “*nymph*” (Machiavelli 1965: 225). The Roman people were astonished by Numa’s “goodness and prudence,” and so yielded to his every decision. The resource to God is necessary for new unusual laws that came about after the ensuing complexities in growth. This indicates the cyclical period of growth as a renewal and a slight temporal change from the beginning inter-woven tapestry, but without any opposition to the foundational principles, with their enhancement directed to the ensuing period of rise to a civilized society. The needs of “God” are claimed by Machiavelli, as being directed towards the acquired strength of the ancients: they are directed toward the valour attached to paganism, in its version of authority through the formation of good laws, and the recognition of noble leadership in wisdom and prudence. Such matters are forgotten in Christianity and modern secularism.

His “new” religion is necessary for the maintenance of authority of good laws and order in a republic, which is an authority with “divine worship,” “because one can have no better indication of the ruin of a country [homeland] than to see divine worship little valued” (Machiavelli 1965: 226). But it is a divine worship aligned to ancient paganism, the Roman religion. It is a means necessary for the

formation of a new state by a new prince, where such a formation is the most difficult. Here is the repeated lesson, that the new prince must have virtuous authority, which, at least, must be placed in the background of consciousness in acquiring power; but after that, one that must move it into the foreground for maintaining authority. If a prince does not do this, he will not last: “it comes about that kingdoms depending on the vigour of one man alone are not very lasting because that vigour departs with the life of man, and seldom is it restored in the course of heredity” (Machiavelli 1965: 226).⁵² Order dependent on one prince, will not last long. Religion can be easily abused, and can be done so easily by those lacking in knowledge, that is generated in a corrupt culture:

And though rude men are more easily won over to a new order or opinion, it is still not for that reason impossible to win over to it also cultured men and those who assume they are not rude (Machiavelli 1965: 226).

The rude are easily enslaved by a “newness” without virtuous authority. Not only them, but also the cultured can easily be subjugated under false illusions.

The people of his day who believed in “Frate Savonarola” were given as an example: “The people of Florence do not suppose themselves either ignorant or rude, nevertheless they were persuaded by Brother Girolamo Savonarola that he spoke with God” (Machiavelli 1965: 226). They believed in him “without having seen anything extraordinary to make them believe him.”(Machiavelli 1965: 226) Their beliefs were innocently lacking insight and passively motionless. Those lacking knowledge can easily become corrupt, from whatever the source may be, which generates those negative qualities. One can assume another lesson being made, that in difficult situations, the majority would rather obey tyrants than be interested in liberty. Many people turn away from politics or are driven to participate through the coercive, corrupt aspects. But even the less conspired to corruption can easily be overtaken by false illusions. Therefore, it seems that the

⁵² Machiavelli finishes this cited sentence by reference to Dante’s *Purgatorio* 7. 121-3: “Seldom does human probity move along the branches; and this is the will of Him who gives it, that it may get its name from Him” (Machiavelli 1965: 226).

“corrupt” are numerous, if the “lack of knowledge” is taken somewhat synonymously.

The lesson is that there are numerous factors which produce that ignorance that generates enslavement of being under those of power outside of direct human blame. In competing for power, the Papal Authority during Machiavelli’s days used this detriment within Christianity to continue to gain power by unscrupulous means.

The ancient form of ‘fear’ of God, or a prince, for a civic oath is needed, but since a prince is short-lived, such a devotional fear is more prone to failure, “just as strength and wisdom of the prince fails” (Machiavelli 1965: 226). A prince must organize “the salvation of a republic or a kingdom,” “even after he dies,” so that “it can be maintained” (Machiavelli 1965: 226). This is an enormous task for a prince. He must provide a faith where the people yields with belief to his every decision, and the successful prince must be knowledgeable, prudent, and brave. His natural character must go beyond power-tactics. Here is another example that the formulation of good order requires the harnessing of power under good authority. Christianity, as with most princes, has failed in harnessing power by a believable authority.

Referring to another actual ancient example, another relevant lesson is stated to correct the flaws of the “Tribunes of the People,” who, in their “consular power” were breaking up the balance in Roman constitution or authority (Machiavelli 1965: 229). In Chapter 13,⁵³ referring to Livius 5. 13-16 and 3. 10, 15, Machiavelli reveals that at one point, the people chosen as “Tribunes of consular power,” “were all plebeians” (Machiavelli 1965: 229). The Senate, “by saying that the gods were angered” (Machiavelli 1965: 229), used religion against these chosen Tribunes, in order “to overcome difficulties that could never have been overcome” (Machiavelli 1965: 231). By being “terrified by this resort to religion,” with “the power of the gods,” the flaws in the Tribune of the People made them choose “only nobles as Tribunes” (Machiavelli, 1965: 230). Here, religion was useful in re-establishing the foundation of good and noble political order in the Roman Republic.

⁵³ “How The Romans Made Use of Religion In Reorganizing Their City And Carrying On Their Enterprises And Stopping Riots”

Throughout this section, Machiavelli displays the elements that formulate ancient religious customs, practices, values and reverence, instead of Christian forms of valuations. We have been introduced to the nature of the “oaths” in Chapter 12,⁵⁴ but in Chapter 14,⁵⁵ they are compounded with the use of the auspices of “auguries” and “omens,” and with “miracles” and “oracles.” Oaths, auguries, omens are outside of the Christian morality and consciousness of good and evil. The auguries are natural signs that exhibit the divine assessment of natural reality from which “the foundation of ancient religions of the pagans” was derived, and also “caused the well-being of the Roman republic” (Machiavelli 1965: 231-232). The auguries were used in the understanding important actions, either civil or military. The omens were the foreseen observations interpreted as foreshadows of divine approval or disapproval of a proposed action. The chapter was also coupled with miracles and oracles, and also with contravention against the auspices, which occurred at times, but they were done with prudence, instead of rashness. From this comes the foretelling story of Consul Papirius and the “chickens.” It is foretelling because it reveals much about the project of Machiavelli and the play between power and authority, prudence and ignorance, reverence and the questioning of divine auspices; and these are principles that must be done “cleverly,” without “disrespect for religion” (Machiavelli 1965: 232).

In the military, “among other auspices” was the “*pullari*,” the divine orders that taught the observation of the eating activities of “the fowls,” or chickens, as a means for advice in battle. If the fowls ate, then the soldiers were to fight, and henceforth, “they fought with augury,” with good signs and with strong faith. When the fowls or chickens did not eat, they would normally stay out of battle. On one occasion, one of the *pullari*, by being impressed with the strong disposition of the army, went against the auspices. Even though the fowls did not eat, he did not tell Papirius, and advised him to go into battle. But other *pullari* warned Papirius by stating that the “fowls had not eaten” (Machiavelli 1965: 232). For Papirius, it was

⁵⁴ “How Important It Is To Take Account of Religion, And How Italy, Having Been Without It Because of The Roman Church, Is Ruined.”

⁵⁵ “The Romans Interpreted the Auspices According To Necessity, And Prudently Made A Show Of Observing Religion Even When They Were Forced Not To Observe It; And If Anyone Rashly Belittled It, They Punished Him.”

difficult condition to assess the proper decision. The chief *pullari* told him one thing the others told him the opposite. With prudence, he decided to go into battle, but with the *pullari* on the front line. The chief *pullari* was accidentally killed by a Roman dart at the start of the battle. Instead of disappointment, “the Consul said everything was going well and with the favour of the gods, because by the death of that *liar* the army was purged of every fault, and of all of the wrath they had conceived against them” (Machiavelli 1965: 232). The liar was ignoble, and Papirius’ doing was considered a wise action.

For the most part, it was a reliance on nature that gave divine ordinance; yet there were also special times, and an *occasione*, when the human, through prudence, in re-fitting the plans with the auspices, could confront the old auspices with a novelty, yet without disrespect for the old, and therefore could succeed. In a chaotic condition, this displays the need of newness, but a particular kind of newness that does not disrespect the ancient. It is an example of the wise use of “newness” by enhancing ancient principles. It is not an easy task. But it is a good lesson in adapting to new conditions, whatever they may be, as far as Machiavelli is concerned. This sense of “newness” is outside common consciousness. Lessons from the old could be used to address the new condition. Machiavelli does this continuously.

In the last chapter of that influential section,⁵⁶ there are two references made to Titus Livius on the Samnites return to religion, even amongst their ongoing defeats and conquests by the Romans. Machiavelli uses a Livius citation to describe the nature of the Samnites: ““nevertheless they did not refrain from war, since they were not weary even of an unsuccessful defence of liberty, and preferred to be conquered rather than not to strive for victory (Livius 10. 31)”” (Machiavelli 1965: 233). Religion was the means of putting strength and determination in their soldiers, and “they decided to repeat an ancient sacrifice of theirs,” as Livius further describes it, that, “all of the leaders of the army had sworn that they would never abandon the combat” (Machiavelli 1965: 234).

⁵⁶ Chapter 15: “The Samnites, As A Last Remedy For Their Distresses, Turned To Religion.”

But this is partially against one aspect of the lesson in the example of Papirius, when, in encouraging his soldiers stated: ““Crests do not cause wounds, and painted or gilded shields can be pierced by Roman pilium” (Livius 10. 39)”” (Machiavelli 1965: 234). Instead of fortitude, he moved them through fear, “because they were said to be at the same time in terror of citizens, gods and enemies” (Machiavelli 1965: 234). Roman valour and fear for the protection of ancient values overcame any other detriment. But “fear” in this example means more honour for the gods. Instead of relying solely on the powers of Heaven that be, it was “by the virtue of their religion and through the oath they had taken,” that had given them so much confidence “by means of religion well used” (Machiavelli, 1965: 234). For Machiavelli, the good use of religion was considered a part of the Roman constitution, as he claims that “religion” is “one of the most important institutions of the republic of Rome” (Machiavelli 1965: 234).

Such a lesson does not contrast the one handed down by Livius. Both agree that at certain distinct times, prudence as well as fortitude is required with religious revelry. Most importantly, we have seen the nearness of Roman religion to noble political and military actions, which were elements so far from being conscribed by the weak spirituality and contemplative escape from reality of Christian preaching in Machiavelli’s present-day. Without those ancient principles, not only religion and politics, but also the military order would decline. Machiavelli shares these views with Livius, and is educated by him.

The Christian focus on peaceful spirituality and contemplation is a limit of the teachings within the Bible itself. The form of Christianity at Machiavelli’s time was hidden away from the actual lessons within the Bible; as such, it was also hidden away from the lessons extending from ancient pagan values and virtues. According to Machiavelli, the Christianity in Italy during his day *was not religious enough*. It only made the tumultuous conditions worse, by sliding away from the necessitated authority for honourable rule. It was growing only in its level of corruption. Machiavelli continues with the disapproval of his present-day version of Christianity.

3.4. The Denunciation of Christianity: Undoing of Politics

Machiavelli quickly returns to his own temporal condition to display the loss of meaningful and necessary ancient religious practices in Christianity. We see in *The Discourses* I, 12,⁵⁷ the level of corruption Christianity had reached on the verge of its own ruin. No clearer estimation can be made then by “those people who are nearest to the Roman Church,” that “the head of our religion, have least religion” (Machiavelli 1965: 228). With the differences in the consideration of its foundations and the “present habits” of the day, they “will conclude that near at hand, beyond a doubt, is its fall or its punishment” (Machiavelli 1965: 228). Italy, a land that has “lost all piety and all religion,” has brought about “countless evils and disorders” (Machiavelli 1965: 228).

Italy’s condition is disastrous. She is not in the same condition as France or Spain, under one republic or one prince with the new formation of nationalism. Machiavelli gives us the reason for this disastrous condition, where the Church has brought “barbarians into Italy”:

The reason why Italy is not in the same condition and why she does not have one republic or one prince to govern her is the Church alone; because, though she has dwelt there and possessed temporal power; she has not been so strong or of such ability that she could grasp sole authority in Italy and make herself ruler of the country [nation] (Machiavelli 1965: 228).

We see that Italy’s misery is directed to temporal power without any authority, and for restoration, authority is required. For all of the powers that easily overtake her due to her “great disunion and the great weakness,” that makes her prey to barbarians, or “whoever assails her,” and for this “we Italians are indebted to the Church and not to any other” (Machiavelli 1965: 229). The Church “has kept and still keeps this region divided” (Machiavelli 1965: 229). The obvious problem is that Christianity, during his day, was completely divided from the ancient paganism of the Roman Republic.

⁵⁷ “How Important It Is To Take Account Of Religion, And How Italy, Having Been Without It Because of The Roman Church, Is Ruined.”

Machiavelli gives an incredibly powerful statement in *Discourses II*, 2⁵⁸ that summarizes the “wickedness” of Christianity through its direction towards the individual, personal salvation of the soul, rather than any form of earthly gratitude that creates public civil loyalty, and love through civic virtue. These are primary factors in the ancient understanding of “freedom,” a civil liberty linked to the obedience of authority.

The subject of Christianity came about after a long discussion on ancient liberty in the Roman Republic that is naturally better to accommodate liberty than kingdoms or principedoms: “What greatness Rome came to,” advocates Machiavelli, “after she freed herself from the kings” (Machiavelli 1965: 329). The differences between ancient religions and Christianity is that the ancients had “a greater love of freedom [liberty]”⁵⁹ than his modern, with more hatred of tyranny: “We need not wonder then, that the ancient peoples with such great hatred strove to overthrow tyrants and that they loved free [*libero*] government and highly esteemed the name of liberty” (Machiavelli 1965: 329-330). His “modern man” does not aspire to freedom as much as in the liberty of ancients, who even had to face more hatred and had more foreseeable knowledge in tyranny. He then displays a comparison of ancient and his current-day modern religion that ties together its use of a weakness with the flaws in politics. Modern Christian religion does not favour liberty, yet it was one of the quintessential elements of ancient paganism:

Pondering, then, why it can be that in those ancient times people were greater lovers of freedom [liberty] than in these, I conclude it came from the same cause that makes men now less hardy. That I believe is the difference between our religion and the ancients (Machiavelli 1965: 331).

⁵⁸ “With What Kinds of People The Romans Had To Fight, And How Stubbornly Those People Defended Their Freedom [*With Discussion Of The Effects Of Christianity*]”

⁵⁹ Again, Gilbert translates through the modern set of values by translating “*liberta*” into the extremely popular word “freedom.” But such a translation detracts the difference of modern freedom and Machiavelli’s sense of liberty. “Liberty” will be bracketed in addition whenever “*liberta*” is used in the Italian version constructed by Gennaro Sasso (Sasso 2000: 299)

The direction towards a humble, contemplative, peace-loving theology, with the sole concern for liberation of sin and an unrealistic beatific vision, or final salvation, turns into weakness and wickedness:

Our religion has glorified humble and contemplative men rather than active ones. It has, then, set up, as the greatest good, humility, abjectness and contempt for human things; the other put it in grandeur of mind [greatness of spirit],⁶⁰ in strength of body, and in all the other things apt to make men exceedingly vigorous [with great fortitude]. Though our religion asks that if you have fortitude within you, it prefers that you be adapted to suffering rather than to doing something vigorous [great].

This way of living, then, has made the world weak and turned it over as prey to wicked men, who can in security control it, since the generality [universality] of men, in order to go to Heaven, think more about enduring their injuries than about avenging them. Though it may appear that the world has grown effeminate, and Heaven has laid aside her arms, this without doubt comes chiefly from the worthlessness of men, who have interpreted our religion according to sloth and not according to vigour [virtue]. For if they were to consider that it allows us the betterment and the defense of our country [homeland], they would see that it intends that we love and honour her and prepare ourselves to be such that we can defend her” (Machiavelli 1965: 331).⁶¹

His use of the word “our” displays his affiliation with Christianity, but it comes from largely a sense of misfortune.

Machiavelli’s “modern men” show little “love for liberty” in an ancient republican fashion. This is derived from a “lack of education”; and they show little “love and honour” to a “*patria*. [homeland].” In this lack of education and “false interpretations,” there are “fewer republics” in modern times, “than in ancient times” (Machiavelli 1965: 331). In the latter section of this chapter, Machiavelli displays the love of liberty in the Roman Republic, “a league of republics well armed and very stubborn in their defense of freedom, [liberty]” so much so, that

⁶⁰ After careful reading of the Italian version, the bracketed additions in this quote entail a more precise translation of these important terms (Sasso 2000: 299).

⁶¹ Machiavelli, 1965: 331. The interjections of different translations at various parts of the quotation was done through a reading of Gennaro Sasso’s Italian version of *The Discourses, I discorsi di Tito Livio*.

“slavery is the worst under a republic” (Machiavelli 1965: 332). In this one chapter, the topics go from the liberty in ancient Rome, to intense criticism of Christianity, to slavery as the worst condition under a republic. As far as Machiavelli is concerned, such a causally-linked historical process needs to be stated.

The choices made for the current Bible were decisions that also gave power to the declining Roman Empire, a power with declining authority. Machiavelli blames the Roman Empire for bringing about his “modern times,” where there are so few republics with liberty compared to the ancients: the cause for the people who “do not have so much a love for freedom [liberty]” is “the Roman Empire with her arms and her greatness wiped out all of the republics and all the self-governing communities” (Machiavelli 1965: 331-332). We see Machiavelli’s favour for republics, which in ancient times were predominant. But in his own time and condition, Christian political power was delegated by princedoms, and the principles of ancient republicanism are almost entirely lost.

The distortions falsely comprised the nature of ancient paganism. Luckily, ancient paganism was not completely “blotted out.” After a stipulation that a new religion can easily “blot out” the old by the use of a different language, luckily, one can surmise, that Christianity did not succeed in blotting out all of the Pagan, since it continued in the use of the Latin language:

It has not, we admit, succeeded in blotting out wholly the knowledge of the things done by excellent men who were of that sect; this has come about because the Christian sect kept the Latin language, which they did not perforce, having to write these new laws in it; if they had been able to write it in a new language, the other persecutions they carried on indicate that we should have no record of things past (Machiavelli 1965: 340).

The use of language is essential in the maintenance of history and religion. In the present-day, many ancient languages are forgotten and are responded to with only a small effort for re-establishment. This is a powerful lesson that the study and use of ancient language is essential for learning of the ancients.

In Book III of *The Discourses*, we get the lesson that we must go “back to the beginning” of great enterprises to re-formulate a religion tied to a just authority

for political order. It is a lesson certainly opposed to the modern belief in progress in history. One can easily see that, with Machiavelli, religion is collaborated with specifically republican order. In the opening paragraph of Book III, Chapter 1,⁶² he makes a link between the things “ordained by Heaven,” and the “mixed bodies” of “republics and religions” (Machiavelli 1965: 419). He also gives lessons on adopting to ways that things “do not change,” or when they take the changes “to their advantage” (Machiavelli 1965: 419). On these “mixed bodies,” Machiavelli states: “I say that those changes are to their advantage that takes them back toward their beginning” (Machiavelli 1965: 419). The institutions of republics and religions “can often renew themselves.” If they are not renewed in one way or the other, “they do not last” (Machiavelli 1965: 419). The sense of renewal obviously comes from a cyclical view of history. The way to renew them “is to carry them back to their beginnings; because all the beginnings of religions and of republics and of kingdoms must possess some goodness by means of which they gain their first reputation and their first growth” (Machiavelli 1965: 419).

Machiavelli also displays that, for republics to live long, not only the republics need to be “brought back toward its beginning,” but religion as well. A historical exemplary archetype is given, of Ancient Rome being born again after being captured by the French, and in doing so: “she had to take on new life and new vigor and take up the observation of religion and justice, which were getting corrupt” (Machiavelli, 1965: 419).⁶³ This observation can be applied today. In renewal, not only the foundations of religion, politics, and justice seems essential, but also elements opposed to what the moderns seek as a high end, that is, comfort:

in order that the city might renew all her basic institutions and the people might learn the necessity not merely of maintaining religion and justice, but also the esteeming good citizens and taking more on account of their ability than those of comforts which, as a result of their deeds, the people themselves might lack (Machiavelli 1965: 420).

⁶² “If A Religion Or A Republic Is To Live Long, It Must Often Be Brought Back Toward Its Beginning”

⁶³ “If A Religion Or A Republic Is To Live Long, It Must Often Be Brought Back Toward Its Beginning.”

With the increasing hardship of politics in the contemporary political realm, the people may favour liberal democratic principles that generate comfort to ease difficulties. But one can surmise that such a valuation will, in time, be inefficient, weak, and under the complete control of destructive powers.

For Machiavelli, the ancient pagan religion was more “religious” than Christianity, to the point where Christianity has contributed to the loss of “all piety and religion.”⁶⁴ From this, one can also see that *Christianity is the root of secularism*. Even Hegel told us this in his depiction of the Church right before his day: “the Church attained the most influential position in secular affairs” (Hegel 1956: 375).⁶⁵ This is re-iterated by Pierre Hassner in his article of Hegel: “Protestantism signifies both the Christianization of the *saeculum* and the secularization of Christianity” (Hassner 1973: 695). Machiavelli seems to have understood this at its beginning. For Machiavelli, religion, in his understanding, that is far more inclusive than the modern, is of primary importance for good political order. There is no separation of good politics and religion. The separation of Church and State can be induced as a break down of both religion and politics.

The lesson that the greatness or errors from the old are to be used to correct the downfall of the new in religion and politics is repeated in his exemplary leader, Moses. Machiavelli’s reliance on Moses in *The Discourses*, III, 30,⁶⁶ becomes doubly essential. Here we have assertions to “God” and the Bible, but from a different interpretation of the Bible, outside of the Church’s preaching. Machiavelli iconoclastically calls for a careful reading of the Bible. If it is not read or interpreted

⁶⁴ Leo Paul S. de Alvarez makes this comment on the question of religion in the “Introduction” to his translation of *The Prince*: “The answer to this question is given by Machiavelli in the *Discourses*. The Romans were religious...The Roman religion is a true religion because it helps to arm and defend the people. The religion represented by the Church, which may not necessarily be the Christian religion, is no religion” (de Alvarez 1980: xx-xxi).

⁶⁵ This is made clearly evident in this comment by Nietzsche on the European identity at a “time of transition”: “As such, we have also outgrown Christianity and are adverse to it - precisely because we have grown out of it, because our ancestors were Christians who in their Christianity were uncompromisingly upright: for their faith they willingly sacrificed possessions and position, blood and fatherland. We – do the same” (Nietzsche 1974: 340).

⁶⁶ “If A Citizen In A Republic Wishes To Make Some Good Use Of His Influence, First He Must Get Rid Of Envy; And How, When The Enemy Are Coming, The Defense Of A City Should Be Organized.”

closely, as it is for most Christians during his day and ours, almost nothing from the Bible is useful knowledge.

3.5. Moses Under ‘New’ Religious Auspices: An Amalgamation Of Paganism and The Bible

Machiavelli’s treatment of the story of Moses tackles the persistent avoidance of significant juridical decisions on the maltreatment, oppression, cruelty, or warfare on the people, especially in chaotic conditions. This productive lesson, even for the current-day, is found in the Bible. In it, the elements in the play of forces of power is evident, and specifically the activities of Moses in the “*Exodus*.” These teachings are similar to Machiavelli’s teachings at chaotic times, where the leaders are forced to kill others in defense of oppressed people: “He who reads the Bible intelligently [*(sensatamente)*] [sensibly] sees that if Moses was to put his laws and regulations into effect, he was forced to kill countless men who, moved by nothing else than envy, were opposed to his plans” (Machiavelli 1965: 496). Machiavelli’s morality recognizes something as legitimate that would not be considered so by Christian or modern morality, that is, the blameless killing of an unjust man. This new morality, of course, does not include all killings as being moral. Another fine-line is drawn between a just killing of another, and an unjust one. The intelligent reading of the Bible, which Machiavelli demands, is opposed to the usual “devout, liturgical, or exegetic manner,” as another leading recent-day scholar, John Geerken, states: “Machiavelli wrote that he himself read [the Bible] in order to learn the reasons for human actions” (Geerken 1999: 580).⁶⁷ In such a reading, there are obvious differences from the ensuing Christianity, including

⁶⁷ John H. Geerken, “Machiavelli’s Moses and Renaissance Politics,” *Journal of History*, Vol. 60, No. 4, October, 1999, p. 580. Geerken also gives a good summary of the Exodus: “The Book of the Exodus records at least forty-three conversations between God and Moses, thirty-three of which were initiated by God in order to instruct, command, announce, predict, threaten, remind, warn, and legislate. It records God’s determination to rescue his conventional people despite Pharaoh’s sustained resistance. It records as well the instructional conversations dealing with the plagues, the sacrifices, the Passover, the plundering of Egypt, the escape routes and encampments. And of course there is the account of the crossing of the Red Sea which no Egyptian pursuer survived.” (Geerken 1999: 580)

revelations of parts within the Bible that are likely not used in weekly mass celebrations.

In the Bible, from the alleged conversations between God and Moses, the reciprocity between the divine and the human becomes significant due to its closeness in the understanding of ancient paganism, one that is far from the limited Christian understanding.⁶⁸ God does not always command Moses; at times, God does what Moses asks: “And the Lord did according to the words of Moses.”⁶⁹ Reciprocity is significant because of the competition between powers of the human and the divine, which is a re-statement of the ancient pagan view that the gods can behave like humans and the great humans can act like gods. Geerken expresses the humane quality of God in this manner:

One impression emerges early from this account: the God who is Moses’ mentor and friend is a formidable force indeed, a vengeful, wrathful deity, jealous of any challenge to his power and glory, not neutral, indifferent or distant, but a very active partisan presence saturating every aspect of Israeli life (Geerken 1999: 581).

Some of the orders stated by God, Moses only grudgingly complied to with humane self-doubt and recognized his personal inadequacies caused by the hardship of the missions. Moses is also significant for Machiavelli because his birth was similar to Romulus’ and Remus’ in being ordered to be killed right after birth, as we see in the Bible where the Pharaoh ordered this for Hebrew children: “Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river.” (Exodus: 1: 22) After hearing this, Moses’ mother, after he was born, “took for him an ark of bulrushes and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river’s brink” (Exodus: 2: 3).⁷⁰ Moses was both the founder of a state and the liberator of enslaved

⁶⁸ To give a related and important note that has not been mentioned by the scholars who studied Machiavelli’s use of religion, is that the story of Moses is in the Old Testament, which is more originally Jewish than the Christian distinctiveness is in the New Testament. There are no references that I know of to The New Testament by Machiavelli, except the few comments on Christ.

⁶⁹ Exodus 8:13 and 31. From *The Holy Bible*, “The Gideons International,” Nashville Tennessee 37214.

⁷⁰ (Exodus: 2, 3). Romulus and Remus were born by Rhea Silvia, the daughter of Numitor, the brother of the tyrant king Amelius, who ordered them to be cast in the river. They were thrown in the Tiber River in a basket of bulrushes; but then were founded on the river banks, at first, by *Lupa*, the she-wolf, and then by Faustulus, a neighbouring peasant whom, with his wife, raised them. Numitor,

people of his own blood, just as Romulus and Remus obtained notary from protecting the peasants of Rome in such a way as to arouse suspicion to the possible nobility in their blood, a suspicion that led to the beginnings of Rome.

The first significant incident in the life of Moses - the killing of an Egyptian who was “smiting a Hebrew” - was addressed, but not out of banishment as a murderer in the typical Christian response, but seen a starting point to becoming a legendary hero, a man risking his life to save one of his people. Moses, in killing the Egyptian and setting out to rescue the oppressed Hebrews, “acted in his own volition and initiative” (Geerken 1999: 582). A miraculous man, with a special occasion (*occasione*), provided by *Fortuna*, becomes potentially god-like, just as the gods in ancient paganism had periodic humane adherence. In the end of the process, Moses, through the command of God, had to face the necessary purgatory “bloodbath” of the oppressing Egyptians:

And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.

And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength and when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, *and* all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them (Exodus: 14, 26-28).⁷¹

Geerken states, that this incident “instances the primacy of national survival,” to which Machiavelli added: “when it is absolutely a question of the safety of one’s country [homeland], there must be no consideration of just and unjust, of merciful or cruel, of praiseworthy or disgraceful; instead, setting aside every scruple, one

due to their noble performances in aiding the peasants, investigated and discovered them as his grandchildren. Amelius was then assassinated by Numitor, which provided the potential of either one of the twins, Romulus or Remus, to become the next king. As is well-known, fratricide continued, as Romulus killed his brother after Remus’ power-ridden act of gathering forces beyond the wall of Rome; nevertheless, Romulus did all he could to correct this act by introducing a Senate, allowing liberty for his people, and therefore generating good authority, building what is argued as the highest form of civilization (Romulus and Remus: <http://www>).

⁷¹ (Exodus: 14, 26-28).

must follow to the utmost any plan that will save her life and keep her liberty” (Geerken: 1999: 582-583)⁷² Geerken further states: “If belief can only be restored by force, then force is justified. As Machiavelli would put it, quoting Livy, ‘when there is no hope in arms, they too become holy’” (Geerken 1999: 583). If we take Machiavelli seriously, the condition in Italy was worse than that of the Hebrews in Egypt, as he states in *The Prince*: “Italy...reduced to her present terms,” is “more enslaved than the Hebrews” (Machiavelli 1965: 151).

Najemy clearly summarizes the relations of Moses, a “founder of state and liberator of enslaved people,” to Rome and its success in political and military power and authority:

the figure of Moses [has]...the central role that Machiavelli attributes to religion among the factors responsible for Rome’s power, unity, and political success; and his provocative critique of Christianity, which leads him, in a number of places, to blame the Christian faith for the relative weakness of both modern states and the modern ethic of citizenship. The authors of these pages agree that religion was no mere metaphor for Machiavelli and that he had no intention of dismissing it or diminishing its importance. John Geerken concludes that, ‘in the end, Machiavelli used Moses not to make fundamentally ironic points about religion to an audience already imbued with anti-clericalism but to personify and dramatize his claim that the military and the prophetic can be effectively co-joined, indeed must be so co-joined if long-term political greatness is to be successfully achieved’ (Najemy 1999: 660-661).⁷³

Such a description is in perfect harmony with the analysis and arguments in this work; religion is to be co-joined with authority, which includes the noble form of the military. There is also an agreement with Najemy when he states, that

⁷² In this article, “Machiavelli’s Moses and Renaissance Politics,” Geerken cites Machiavelli’s *Discourses* III, 41, page 519, from the same Gilbert text used in this work. “*Salute della patria*” (Sasso 2000: 563), is better translated as “health of the homeland,” which somehow gets translated as “safety of one’s country” (Geerken 1999: 582)

⁷³ John M. Najemy, “Papirius and the Chickens, or Machiavelli on the Necessity of Interpreting Religion,” pp. 660-661. The authors clearly include Cary Nederman and Marcia Colish and likely all of the writers in the “Machiavelli and Religion: A Reappraisal” section of the *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Volume 60, No. 4, October, 1999. To add: “Taken together, these papers demonstrate how far we have come from the view that Machiavelli as the irrelevant scoffer at all piety, tradition, and religion” (Najemy 1999: 660-661).

“Machiavelli was clearly aware in the awe of the power of religion as a cultural and social force” (Najemy 1999: 665). His sense of religion’s power was by no means limited to the notion that “religion could be an instrument of the state” (Najemy 1999: 665). Moreover, “there are passages in which he also sees religion as something far more powerful than that, and yet still as a human and historical phenomenon” (Najemy, 1999: 665).

To add to what Najemy implies, “in the end,” Machiavelli’s depiction is one of colossal change in religion and education by incorporating paganism in Moses, which is extremely opposed to the Judaic and Christian religious rhetoric. We see a similarity in Moses to the acts of Romulus, the creator of a great state. Moses is depicted by Machiavelli as the creator of a new view of religion, contrasting the established ones - Judaism, Christianity, and Islam - in order to create a new authority in willing obedience, and not power by command under a monotheistic spectrum. It involves a new profound use of the prophet, Moses, for all three monotheistic religions, from which he is highly valued.

Moses is portrayed as not only a “religious” man in its current understanding, but a man of liberty, who had to “abandon his native land” to conquer the other in order to “find a new seat.” He had to build it anew, “as did Aeneas,” and “in this case...we can observe the wisdom of the builder and the fortune of what he builds” (Machiavelli 1965: 193). With these qualities, the new city is free. In the ancient spectrum, it were these qualities that made him religious: these qualities in this man, found in the Bible, is similar to the other identified political and military heroic leaders: Romulus, Cyrus, and Theseus. In this manner, Moses was more than the shared prophet of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The choice of Moses, by cited scholars, is obvious, since he is one of the most prominent figures of not only the Bible, but also the Koran.

In Machiavelli, the new religious culture would be the renewal of Christianity through pagan virtues. The frequent “ambivalence, ambiguities, and ironies” are part and parcel of the reality of political life for the human, in general. It is one of the reasons for his use of historical imagination in his method of writing. The consistency of these factors encourages the student to always do research,

calling upon a new view of bringing together historical research and productive creativity. It also enforces the actors to think before they act, to be both a good spectator and good actor. Creativity in a 'new' religious and political culture, based on the 'old', are part and parcel of his "core of *educazione*," one "related to *religione*" (Najemy 1999: 667).⁷⁴

Parel as well, argues that Machiavelli uses "religion as a form of political 'education'" (Parel 1992: 52). The "original intent of the Heavens," as Parel tells us, is to inspire "religion in the minds of men" (Parel 1992: 52). Paganism "was perfectly capable of fulfilling his pedagogical functions" (Parel 1992: 52). It "'caused' the well-being of the Roman Republic" (Parel 1992: 52). The pagan religion "saw no difficulty in merging religious virtues and civic virtues" (Parel 1992: 51). Of course, Parel's emphasis is on the cosmological basis of history and religion, which reveals the contradiction between much of the work of Machiavelli and that of modernity:

If we overlook the cosmological roots of his political theology we are likely to make him look something which he is not – a sort of enlightenment *philosophe*, who allegedly believes that religion is only a human invention, and a harmful invention at that. To make him such a modern would be to do violence to the data that he himself provides regarding the nature and function of religion (Parel 1992: 52).

Parel displays that religion is not a human invention, but a part of the natural process. The hierarchic level of religiosity is important, since the subject for heavenly inspiration came from the Senate, which was closer to the "judgement of the heavens" than Numa: "the *Heavens judged* that the laws of Romulus would not be sufficient for so great an empire, they inspired the Roman Senate to choose Numa Pompilius as Romulus' successor."⁷⁵ As the Heavens have the most to do with the cyclical rise, renewal, culmination, decline, and fall of politics, so too, do the Heavens affect religion: "Religions come and go according to the same laws which allegedly govern the celestial bodies" (Parel 1992: 45).

⁷⁴ We will reveal more of this notion of the core of education in religion later on in this chapter.

⁷⁵ Machiavelli, 1965: 223. "Heavens judged" was italicized by me.

A different picture of ‘God’ arises, as he is called upon to take sides in a political struggle, as he was called to liberate Italy from the barbarians in *The Prince*, just as Moses did to liberate his people. This leads Parel “to wonder whether a Christian God is a necessary hypothesis of his political thought” (Parel 1992: 55). The ‘God’ represented in Machiavelli’s works is certainly not an orthodox Christian God. It is one clearly directed to political human affairs in the midst of the Heavens and *Fortuna*. It goes as far as to state that Machiavelli “maintained that the heavens and/or fortune govern both natural and human affairs without any reference to God” (Parel 1992: 58). Parel is stating Machiavelli’s assessment that the powers that be are not under a mono-theological spectrum. But it admits that his use of the word “God” is a imaginary one. In other words, that it is a lie, albeit a noble one.

But there is higher respect for godliness in the powers that be that affect a large part of life. Parel adds: “while he is certain that some extra-terrestrial, extra-human force has a share in the governance of the world, he is equally certain that that force is not the biblical God” (Parel 1992: 58). Any relationship to God, for Machiavelli, is clearly done in pagan terms. The most concrete example is Moses who killed so many Egyptians. Even though this example is one apparently linked to paganism, it is in the Bible. It demonstrates that the Biblical God of Providence, that existed in Christianity, does not even fully represent actual lessons in the Bible itself. Machiavelli strangely at the next point admits that it may be better to be a private man than enter into politics, since being a king “brings such ruin on man.” This tension, on whether to act or not act, may have been the reason for the long ponder of Jesus himself, as well and all others who may have an *occasione* to do something. It brings about the potential for a wholly new interpretation of the Bible with its linkage to ancient political, and therefore, religious leaders.

3.6. Neo-paganism: Religious Worth in Ancient Heroes

We have learned from the educative approach of Machiavelli, and the recent scholars referred to in this chapter, that Moses is closely tied to the other three heroic leaders mentioned simultaneously in *The Prince*, Cyrus, Theseus, and Romulus. Under a clearer picture of Machiavelli’s understanding of the relation of religion to politics, the other three noted heroes in *The Prince* could be claimed as

just as, if not more, religious than Moses. Exposing them reveals expanding insight and strong lessons on Machiavelli's understanding of religion and its importance on the contemporary condition.. Under Machiavelli's re-enactment of ancient pagan religiosity, these political and military leaders become religious leaders, heroic in quality. At times, the greatness within human nature arises through strength in combating the fierce temporal conditions in life.

The strong liberator knows and accepts the nature of human life on earth. These elements recognize the level of hierarchy in his/her spirituality. The coupling of good laws and a just form of military action is an ancient religious contention. In Rome specifically, these were used to generate civil loyalty through oaths of service to foundational principles of authority. These principles could found new effective states, could abolish enemies, and make civilizable growth through the accumulation of foreign lands whose people were gladly re-ordered under the new leader. These are the system of values that measured greatness, and they were clearly with held by Machiavelli. It was a motivational premise for the noble workings, actions, and recognition of Romulus. Not only did he create the Roman Senate and Roman Legions, but also used noble strength in confronting the toil between the Romans and the Sabine tribes, which resulted through the acceptance of the claim for the unjust reason for warfare made the mixture of the Sabines and the Romans into one recognized ethnicity. He became Rome's greatest conqueror along these premises tied closely to ancient religiosity.

Cyrus the Great (580 – 529 BC) as well was known as a great conqueror, but is also remembered more importantly for his unprecedented tolerance in the acceptance of foreign religions, such as those of the Jews and the Hellenistic people, as there was “an alliance between Cyrus and the Yahweh” (Briant 2002: 46). He controlled a great republican empire. He was a noble king who had a magnanimous attitude toward those he defeated. For the Jews in Babylon and the Hellenistic people, he was not a imperial conqueror but a liberator. Cyrus adapted to the “international situation” (Briant 2002: 33) of the beginning of an empire containing “most of Southeast Asia and much of Central Asia, from Egypt and the Hellespont in the west to the Indus River in the east” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrus_the_Great: 1). His actions displayed a forbearance and respect for foreign

states as well, through the magnitude of his insight and tolerance for the formation of international confederations. He is also claimed as a “Law-Giver” in devising the first “Charter of Human Rights” known to mankind (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrus_the_Great: 1). His legitimacy was extended not to the power of conquest, but authority through generosity and benevolence, and through his multi-national and multi-religious acceptance. On these matters, these works were similar to the proceedings of the Roman Republic. Rome learned from Cyrus. As stated by Polybius, the Romans “went back in time” to understand how “the Roman state was able to withhold precedent to extend its dominion over nearly all the inhabited world in less than fifty-years” (Lamb 1960: 13). The ancients more closely fulfilled certain aspirations that have not been fulfilled in modernity. For many of those in power today, such accomplishments by Cyrus the Great are not even considered in their realm of possibility.

The other hero of legendary ancient religiosity was Theseus, “an Ionian founding hero” (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theseus: 1), who became a legendary king of Athens. Theseus both glorified “the highly antidemocratic deeds and attitudes of the heroic kings” (Walker 1995: 3), and was also “standing by democracy and the people as their patron and benefactor” by “protecting their democratic constitution” (Walker 1995: 202). At first, he was the “benevolent dictator,” then revealed “the paradox of this image that had meant so much to Athenians during their century of greatness” (Walker 1995: 202). The historical description of Theseus is mythological itself, and readily displays the ancient pagan belief in the god-like forms of humanity and the human-like activities of the gods. A combination of the divine and the human was recognized in his nature as being a departed son of Aegeus, a primordial king of Athens, and his mother, Aethra, who lived in a city outside of Athens. Theseus returned to Athens to find his father and became the root of the formation of the great Athens (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theseus>: 1).

In this mythical hero, a just form of killing is revealed in abolishing harmful enemies to become the king of Athens. The lesson is repeated here as it was in Romulus, Cyrus, and Moses, that strength, justice, and virtue is formed through a difficult, unjust childhood, filled with vice instead of virtue. Only living through a life of difficulty, can one be strong. This is a lesson formulated by the acceptance of

the nature of life, a primary measuring point in ancient religion, no matter how difficult it will be, and to face it without any fear and certainly without any rejection. Such a rejection is becoming a common element in contemporary life. The ancient religious consciousness is far different from the modern.

We see the great leaders identified by Machiavelli – Moses, Cyrus, Theseus, and even Romulus - have tied religion to political and military affairs. Religion – *re-ligare* – is a tie back to politics, to authority and its cornerstone, and the noble military. The inter-women relations of sameness and difference that we have seen in his use of history, or lessons from the old albeit with adjustments and adaptations to the new, is done again with lessons on religion. A true neo-paganism is formed implying that such a process is open to the changes in the future. But such a newness should not dispense with ancient principles. We will see the results of the use of the modern religious zeal and the forgetting of ancient principles in one of Machiavelli's contemporaries, Friar Girolamo Savonarola. Other recent scholars on Machiavelli's religion display examples that what happened over 500 years ago with political factionalism on the manipulation of religion, can impart lessons on the current-day style of factionalism.

3.7. Anti-Savonarolism in Machiavelli: Lessons on Political Factionalism

There is no clearer evidence of the abuse of power, as far as Machiavelli is concerned, for the performances of Savonarola in his manipulation of the religious impetus under exaggerated premises, unrealistic beatific visions, all done solely for political party factionalism; the similarities arise of such political activity today, which pertains, in reality, only the appearance of public concern that in the long-run truly displays the opposite, only a political lust for private power.

No lesson can be more direct to the political activity of the present-day that manipulates through the abuse of religion and/or ideologies. One can suggest through these clarifications, that it is not a coupling of religion and politics, but only a coupling of an abuse in religion and politics. It is an aim that animates the manipulative propaganda of illusory historical visions used in ideological utterances, similar to the coercion of religion through secular ideologies that, with

simplified illusory concepts, such as freedom, equality and universal brotherhood, or Utopian illusions, easily coerce the modern people. Ideologies can more clearly be seen as secular versions of the modern forms of abused religions. In this analysis of Savonarola, we are displayed the nature of Machiavelli's republicanism and liberty within the coupling of politics and religion, as being utterly opposed to the development of those derogatory processes of modernity, as described above, which continue in the political factionalism of today.

Marcia L. Colish, a reputable contemporary religious and political scholar, clearly states, that after displaying his knowledge of Christianity, "Machiavelli clearly regards Savonarola as a fraud, a hypocrite, and a demagogue" (Colish 1965: 611). Machiavelli's proper use of Christianity would be directed towards "political and military goals" learned from ancient paganism primarily from the Roman Republic; and therefore, the performances of Savonarola present for Machiavelli clear evidence of the need for "anti-Savonarolism" in his criticism of Christianity. There are "direct and indirect criticism of Savonarolism throughout his career" due to its "*governo largo* republicanism with Aristotelianism, apocalypticism, and ascetism" (Colish 1999: 608).

The sense of "apocalypticism" has continued, as is revealed in latter day modern historicism, through the development of modern science and technology in the Enlightenment, the liberalism of John Stuart Mill, through communism in Karl Marx, and Hegel's "Divinity" in "History" which is truly tied to the secular. But ancient cosmology is outside the apocalyptic framework and reveals a limited and unreal sense of the nature of human life. The uni-linear view of history, incorporated from Christian historicism, displays this partial blindness to the true power of nature, the nature of life more readily seen in ancient paganism. There is no more bleak opposition between the ancient and the modern than in the assessment of nature, and therefore within history and religion, since they were composed within nature herself, by the ancients. We see more insights through this close analysis of the performance of Savonarola. We see that the Christian view of "the end of history" is used to manipulate the people's consciousness.

Savonarola preached that he was the "angel pope, which masked his opposition to Pope Alexander VI; and he depicted himself as the new "Moses of

Florence,” motivating popular support. For Savonarola, the apocalyptic end of the world was imminent and fuelled by passages in the Book of Revelations, where as St. John the Divine states, “in the Spirit of the Lord’s Day”(Ch. 1: 10), God stated he was the “Alpha and Omega, the first and the last” (Ch. 1: 11), and being so, St. John claims, “*I am* he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for ever more” (Ch. 1: 18), wherefrom he adds, “*I know* the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* the synagogue of Satan” (Ch. 2: 9). Savonarola used these sentiments to acquire popular support, claiming that the “end of history” was near at hand; the end of history, where the Satans would be exterminated and the pinnacle of civilization would arise for ever and ever. The use of such preaching can easily be contrived to the anti-Judaism in the Nazi regime.⁷⁶ Under these premises, Savonarola claimed as being the “reformer of the Church,” that identifies Satan as the enemies of Italy, the Anti-Christ. Savonarola depicted himself as the “Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing” (Ch. 5: 12). The Anti-Christ, the blasphemers of God, “worship the beast” (Ch. 12, 4), “to make war with the saints” (Ch. 12: 7) yet “he that killeth with sword must be killed with sword.” All nations who “drink of wine of the wrath of fornication” they will “drink the wine of the wrath of God” (Ch. 14: 8), and the “wrath of God liveth forever and ever” (Ch. 14: 10). All of this rhetoric was used to strengthen Savonarola’s party, an abuse of religion to create the “*bete noire*, factionalism,” the black beast of factionalism, used at a time and place where Machiavelli wanted to direct the religious impetus to undercut the *bete noire*.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ If the Book of Revelations is read carefully, this is not really anti-Judaism. The satanic ones are those who “say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie.” I know a lot of inferences can be made in identifying the Satanic people referred to in such statements. Many priests or preachers can say that it is not directed to the Jews, yet there can be those vile ones who, as product of the spiritual crisis, wrongfully identify themselves for the sake of degenerate evil. But one can see that with an uneducated simplistic mind, it can easily be abused to justify the killings of innocent people with abusive interpretations, as occurred in Nazi Germany, which is similar to the abuse of Islam by murderous terrorists. This also ironically shows, that terrorists, who conceive themselves as utterly opposed to the west, think and act in similar ways of depraved ‘western’ behaviour, activities at times of spiritual crisis.

⁷⁷ Black beast.

Marcia Colish further expresses the apocalyptic millenarianism in Savonarola. It is a Savonarolian version of “progress in history” to the phantasm of a glorious “end.” It is generally similar to the apocalyptic eschatology of a Utopian direction in Hegelian views of the “end of history.” Savonarola stated often to the public that he had received “prophetic inspiration enabling him to foresee the future” that “God grants to Florence’s leaders” (Colish 1999: 610). This also was used to justify “the self-understanding of explorers like Christopher Columbus, who saw in the Spanish mission to the New World the evangelization of the nations that must precede in the last days” (Colish 1999: 610). Christianity is used to engender false illusions of grandeur. We see through these examples where false illusions as primary principles in this reduced religious consciousness, is similar to ideological preaching used to manipulate the people for the private pursuit of power.

Colish then draws our attention to a political play of forces of Savonarola with Pope Alexander VI: “Savonarola knew the anti-Christ would reign before the end of time” (Colish 1999: 610). Yet the anti-Christ “was none other than Pope Alexander VI,” the illegitimate father of many illegitimate children, of which Cesare Borgia was one. Alexander attempted to silence him, since he “excommunicated Savonarola in 1497” (Colish 1999: 611). In a letter written to Ricardo Becchi on March 9, 1498, Machiavelli interpreted the proceedings of Savonarola, that his “self-presentation as Moses,” is just a power-play game of limited, *bete noire*, political factionalism.

It was clear for him that the sermon preaching of Savonarola coincided with the “Signoria elections,” and “were designed to strengthen Savonarola’s party” (Colish 1999: 611). Like our current day politics, he continuously shifted his approach; for example, after the potential silence from Alexander was not as threatening, “he changed his tune, shifting to an attack on Alexander” (Colish 1999: 611). This is proof for Machiavelli of Savonarola being a fraudulent, hypocritical, demagogue. “Thus, according to my judgment,” Machiavelli concludes, “he keeps on working with the time and making his lies plausible” (Colish 1999: 611). Savonarola was full of lies for deceit, or they were ignoble lies. With this “wrong-headedness,” “we find that the hostility displayed in the Becchi letter was a constant in Machiavelli’s thought” (Colish 1999: 612). It is not audacious to state, that some

political actors today would take pride in similar to the fraudulent proceedings of Savonarola. The abuse of religion is the abuse of politics.

Savonarola inverted what Machiavelli claimed to be the correct relation of religion and politics. Not only does it apply to religious friars, but also to “secular leaders who govern badly or who misapply Christianity are all means of prosecuting his anti-Savonarolean brief” (Colish 1999: 612). From the “fraud and false prophecy that he ascribes to Savonarola,” it led Machiavelli to bitter terms in describing his city: “In this city of ours, which is a magnet for all the impostors of the world, there is a brother of Saint Francis who...claims to be a prophet” (Colish, 1999: 612). Generally, this political factionalism is similar to the one today. Perhaps the topics are marginally different in ideology rather than religion, but with the growing frequency of the activity of fraudulence and demagoguery, religion and ideology are similar.

Machiavelli speaks negatively about the abuse of public voting procedures by false images, portrayed in order to acquire victory by the partisan factionalism of political parties. It is an activity that one can easily see is closely related to democratic elections of the present-day. Marcia Colish acclaims that the ending of the *Florentine Histories* in 1492 was deliberate, owing to “the calamities that befell Florence after 1492” (Colish 1999: 613). Machiavelli states in the *Decennale* I, a poetic work, that, “the most distressing event in Florentine history was in 1494,” the year Savonarola acquired power, “which plunged the city into a new round of factionalism” (Colish 1999: 613).⁷⁸

Savonarola shows his incorrectness in the case where he did not allow five citizens to appeal their death penalty, even though there was a law to the contrary, “that was not observed” (Machiavelli 1965: 289). “This took away,” Machiavelli claims, “more of the Frate’s influence than any other event” (Machiavelli 1965: 289). “This conduct,” he adds, “by revealing his ambitious and partisan spirit, took

⁷⁸ “But that which, too many was far more distressing and brought on disunion, was that sect under whose command your city lay. I speak of that great Savonarola who, inspired with heavenly vigour, kept you closely bound with his words. But many feared to see their country ruined, little by little, under his prophetic teaching; hence no ground for your tension could be discovered, unless his light divine continued to increase, or unless by a great fire it was extinguished” (Colish, 1999: 613). According to Machiavelli, Savonarola had to be more religious for good politics, but, of course, from the ancient pagan variety of religion.

influence away from him and brought him much censure [contemptibility]" (Machiavelli 1965: 289). It displays an abuse of power in finding ways to escape persecution and punishment. It is the use of political power with no justice. The "evils of factionalism" was carried out in the abuse of ancient republicanism in his *governo largo*. Machiavelli's colleague and friend, Francesco Guicciardini, had the same judgment on Savonarola, as a "hypocrite and demagogue" (Colish 1999: 612), who coerced the Florentines by religious propaganda.

Even though Machiavelli knew of these undignified conditions, his criticism is not compelled by aggression or an identity of an enemy in the black-and-white simplified consciousness. His courageous criticism of Christianity also displays that he was not diametrically-opposed to Christianity as a whole. For de Alvarez, the ironies in "Ecclesiastical Principates" display an ultimate criticism of Christianity: "The Roman religion is a true religion because it helps to arm and defend the people. The religion represented by the Church, which may not necessarily be the Christian religion, is no religion" (de Alvarez 1980: xxi). In one way, one can add that Machiavelli was more religious and Christian than the ones who called themselves so. A redeemer is needed, and certainly one more great than Savonarola. For de Alvarez, this is the third meaning of *virtu* related to religion:

the religion which binds men together in a city, and which will, in adversity, with faith, defend it. *Virtu* here denotes the civic religion, [a foundational principle in the constitutional authority of the Roman Republic] which makes people obstinate in the defense of their city...Machiavelli considers such *virtu* to be peculiarly republican (de Alvarez 1980: xxi).⁷⁹

Machiavelli gave some lenience to other Christian figures, like Pope Julius II and Cesare Borgia that fosters much confusion, which quickly interprets him as being a "teacher of evil" (Fontana 1999: 641).⁸⁰ He was, at least, sympathetic to

⁷⁹ The addition in the square brackets is my own.

⁸⁰ Benetto Fontana states that the "ecclesiastical principate" in *The Prince* (ch. 11) "is an exception" to the principle that "all states, all the dominions are either republics or principalities." In some ways, it is untouchable, and cannot be clearly defined. Being as such, it is useless politically, only engendering confusion. It revolves through a controversy from medieval times "between the temporal and spiritual power between the emperor and the pope. The power and temporality of the pope is being in a sphere separate and independent of the temporal. As long as this legitimacy

them, both in their lack of sound political and historical education and the situation in which *Fortuna* placed them. He did not persecute them as most would have done within the modern framework. But in his framework of values, he also outlined their positive side, in amongst the difficulties and easy likelihood of failure. It is the modern framework that encompasses the harsh black- and-white exaggerated opposition. With ancient strength, Machiavelli more easily accepts ‘opposition’ as an unavoidable condition in life. It comes from the *non-acceptance* of the nature of life, which generates the weakness that easily condemns fiercely an opposition.

Even though the focus we have just had is on the negative side of Christianity, Machiavelli even displayed a positive side. In Marcia Colish’s conclusion, she emphasizes an opposition to those who either find Machiavelli’s criticism of Christianity as “jarring” and “inconsistent” (or, one can add, are pleased with his apparent atheism.) The perplexity and complexity makes a jarring inconsistency possible, as it does for a quick limited interpretation of atheism. But a careful reading can see that Machiavelli wished to make Christianity more religious and more publicly political, with honourable military affairs, by infusing it with values of ancient paganism. Colish finishes in this statement:

Machiavelli, the ironist, [was] seeking to discredit a detested figure and movement that competed with his own advocacy of Christianity well used and well integrated with the civic and military institutions that promote free and broadly participatory republics (Colish 1999: 616).

Vengeance and resentment became more common in Machiavelli’s time, as they have in ours. Savonarola, as a “fraud, hypocrite, and demagogue,” is similar to the present-day “cunning man” required for ‘success’ in politics; that is, one who must engage in acquiring power through an appearance that is false in reality. Vengeance and resentment are the goals and psychological predestination of those constructed solely for the lust for power. In reality, Savonarola soon displays

endures the pope will remain secure from the assaults of the secular power.” It is in a middle ground between religion and politics, between power and authority: “papal authority is undefended, but it can never be taken; and its subjects, though not kept in order,” ironically, “cannot imagine an order without a pope.” See, Benedetto Fontana, “Love of Country and Love of God: The Political Uses of Religion in Machiavelli,” page 641.

himself in his lack of capability, as one empty of fortitude and insight, and as an ignoble liar engaged in the destructive use of power in political factionalism. For Machiavelli, this is an abuse of religion. This is common political behavior of the present-day.

Machiavelli's view of Savonarola, even after using 'Frate' in titling him, is an example of a harmful "irreligious" man. A redeemer is needed at a time of crisis, and certainly one more great than Savonarola. For de Alvarez, this claimed third meaning, according to the standards of Machiavelli's neo-paganism and its religiosity, meant to subjugate Christianity or to change its direction towards civic virtue, as was the case in the building of ancient republican politics closely linked to religion.

This irony that the weak, pacifist sentiment can easily turn into violence was a real factor that had to be confronted. For Machiavelli, this sentiment is a limited and harmful view. From its opposition to the ancients, to the contexts that it was in, it only deprecated the real nature of Christianity. His depictions of the religious contexts must display the conflicting notions of appreciation and rejection:

The *Discourses* makes clear that conventional Christianity saps from human beings the vigor required for active life. And *The Prince* speaks with equal disdain and admiration about the contemporary condition of the Church and its Pope (Nederman 1999: 618).

He favours religion, and reveals "a coherent conception of a divinely-centered and ordered cosmos in which other forces ("the heavens," "fortune," and the like) are subsumed under a divine will and plan" (Nederman 1999: 618). Only in this rather ironic manner can one "properly hope for the improvement of the present conditions" (Nederman 1999: 637). Ironically real, "Machiavelli encourages a sense of uncertainty, and an optimism for future betterment on the part of human beings" (Nederman, 1999: 637). And the "divine" element must incorporate within it, aspects that the modern would foresee as secular and profane: "The whole thrust of Machiavelli's political theory is the promotion of preparation for divine ordination - albeit readiness is better accomplished by the study of secular histories rather than

of the Holy Book” (Nederman 1999: 637).⁸¹ The use of “secular” here can be re-interpreted as the sacred elements of ancient paganism. The use of “secular” implies the traditional division of sacred and profane, where only praise for the Holy Book is sacred. Yet the actual “secular” facts of history for the ancients are a part of the sacred element.

The apocalyptic “end of history,” in the Book of Revelations can be summarized as such: that, through the “wrath of God,” a “new heaven and a new earth,” was seen “for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no sea” (Ch. 21: 1), and “God will wipe away all tears from there eyes; and there shall be no more death, nor more crying, neither shall be any more pain; for the former things have passed away” (Ch. 21: 4). These sentiments are similar to the secular uni-linear progress in history of modernity, to an end where both nature and history would be controlled by the human manufacture of modern science and technology.⁸²

3.8. Machiavelli’s ‘Religion’ In Relations to Modern Secularism

There are many lessons to be taken from this analysis of religion in Machiavelli. We have brought about the combination of essential themes, religion, history, and politics, and the reliance on the ancients to deal with the modern problems newly envisioned by Machiavelli himself. For Machiavelli, history, with much of the beliefs foreseen in the powers of Heavens and *Fortuna*, is tied to religion, and his use of religion is tied to politics. Machiavelli’s religion was more

⁸¹ Cary J. Nederman, “Amazing Grace: Fortune, God, and Free Will in Machiavelli’s Thought,” p. 637. Nederman’s notion of the concentration on “secular histories” in Machiavelli should be partially discarded. Even though I rely on Nederman, a current-day scholar, to show this point, I do not agree that “the arbiter of political success and failure is God, not humanity” (Nederman 1999: 637). Essential aspects of the influence of ancient paganism is forgotten by such a statement, that there are ties between the gods and the human, each intermittently venturing into the other, or in the mixture of the eternal and the temporal realms. Also, “free will” is a very modern concept of individualism that both Machiavelli and this work rejects as being limited, harmful, and unreal.

⁸² The irony of technology is that it undermines itself. By providing more ability to analyze history and religion, displays that the Enlightenment secular view of progress in history was an error. Under these premises, technology can be valued, and its criticism can be productive. We live in a technological age, the one lesson we learn from history, especially the ancient, is that religious quality can be measured by the acceptance of the more real nature of life, and only through that acceptance, can life achieve a strong vitality. Machiavelli could be seen as a precursor to this contemporary view.

attuned to the education of sacred political and military customs, cosmic mythical values, judgements, and actions that repeatedly distinguish his use, which is opposed to the modern limitation of these educative factors: “The assertion that the difference between modern and ancient *educazione* is founded, or based, on the difference between modern and ancient *religione* must mean that *religione* is the core of *educazione*” (Najemy 1999: 667).

Machiavelli’s good governance obviously has nothing to do with the typical Christian morality and conceptions of humility, timidity, pacification, contemplation, and avoidance of action. At times, the good becomes evil into which man has to enter. There is no need for subservience to God, the Creator, nor to the metaphysical contemplative establishment of the Platonic Good or Aristotelian Mind, or even a divine view of progress in history, standing above and guiding all human activity. They are not constructive in politics, as far as Machiavelli is concerned. Parel states this, in a final analysis:

In the final analysis, then, there is no room in Machiavelli’s political philosophy for a typically Christian conception of good governance (Parel 1992: 59).

This comment re-enforces the claim that Machiavelli’s “political philosophy” disrupts the classical understanding of religion in its relation to politics. Therefore, it is disruptive also upon the related metaphysical conceptualization that begins with Plato, “the substance of Western thought,” and moves on down to “modern metaphysics,” the “Western view of the world.” Such an admission brings into question the Western common understanding of “religion” and its relation to metaphysics, as being a limited conceptualization in comparison to its origin.

Machiavelli’s study of religion is certainly unique and original. No other political thinker has treated religion as he did. Such profundity in uniqueness and originality is required on probably the most contentious realm of thought of the present-day, religion and its relation to politics. The discord of religion and politics was a product of modernity. The Protestant Reformation of Christianity further separated the sacred from the profane. It extended even further in the latter modern period of the Enlightenment, where the belief in modern science and technology

overtook the former beliefs in religion, and were administered to not only control the public sphere of politics, but, now, only the private sphere of religion. From this pretext, religion has been cast aside from the political, constitutional, institutional, and social framework. But, it now may be argued, that this separation and isolation is from a reductive view of both religion and politics, which gets further reduced as time goes on.

In such a situation, the dividing line between the just and unjust action is not on the themes of political approach itself, but on the division of public and private direction of political activities. Political party factionalism was a private direction that Machiavelli could easily describe as “evil,” even though, at chaotic times, the distinction between “good” and “evil” is clouded. In the present-day, not only the manipulation to coerce the popular vote in an election is privately directed and therefore a bad political activity, but, in a more internationalized world, a focus on nationalism can easily become ‘evil’, a private activity for private advantage, not a public one for the well-being of the people in a more internationalized world. Just as Machiavelli used the nature of the condition of these ancient which were different from his own, the general principles of virtuous goals were similar and therefore useful for educational means on his present-day. They point to the lesson on the maintenance of authority even in a power-ridden condition. The difficult fine-line that must be drawn in confronting a tumultuous condition should always be used in various conditions, in various times, and places. Acceptable or not, Machiavelli’s indirect plea here, is that lessons from ancient paganism should be used to form those judgments in the treacherous decision-making process, of just or unjust manipulation, oppression, and warfare, in whatever time in history.

Under the common opinion of secularism, Machiavelli’s lessons on religion can easily be rendered as being out of context with the ‘politics’ of the contemporary period. But there are arguments made to the contrary. If the previous argument continues, then it only displays its reduction in applicability to on-going essential religious and political questions. The realm of contemporary thought both recognizes the decline of modernity, to the point of nihilism, and therefore generates an attempt at a productive critique of those modern values, extended from Christianity, that brought about the condition of the meaninglessness of nihilism,

under modern pretexts. The recognition of modernity in decline brings about the questioning of the reliance on solely secularism in politics, under the increased separation and diminishment of the sacred from the profane. In the process of productive criticism of modernity, the “the value of devaluing” (Nietzsche 1967: 356) it, naturally are inclusive of transforming Christian values, with all other related valuations. Machiavelli transforms Christianity, and subsequent valuations, by a return to ancient paganism. His religious spirituality is not separated from the temporality of life on earth.

CHAPTER IV

POWER

“The struggle of man against power
is the struggle of memory against forgetting”

Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter
and Forgetting*

“The power elite is composed of men whose positions
enable them to transcend the ordinary environments
of ordinary men and women; they are in positions to
make decisions having major consequences. They rule
the big corporations. They run the machinery of the
state. They direct the military establishment.”

C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite*

“Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

Lord Acton

4.1 Preface: Degeneration of Politics

Machiavelli has displayed his foresight - from a good hindsight - to not only identify modern forms of political power, but to criticize them in such a manner, as to address the current recognizable decline in modern politics, which makes his work more important for contemporary times in providing a basis to surpass the modern decline. The explication on his treatment of power is crucial, since in the latter-modern period, power is almost synonymous with politics; we are still in a “time of transition,” a time of the crisis of modernity, where, continuously, the “project of modernity,” is “intrinsicly bound up with elements of domination and power” (Schwarzmantel 1998: 152).

In the present time, at the “end of modernity,” one can see a general sameness in the political activities that Machiavelli faced, where ‘politics’ can easily degenerate into unprincipled struggle for power, and power only, without any foundational principles or purposes other than power for its own sake. On this platform, a close reading of the political situation that Machiavelli faced becomes important as an educational source to understand the present-day.

The decline of modernity recognizes the harm done by modern politics in the undermining of the civic virtue required for a healthy political system. Through

his focus on his condition in Italy, those in power, whether it be the prince, power elite, or the people, have manipulated the consciousness of the others through flawed Christian principles, similar to the now-known manipulation and coercion of consciousness by modern ideologies.

Under the unity of the Western conception, modern secularism is not only linked to Christianity, but also to classical philosophy and metaphysics. The Platonic elevation of Reason that is brought about through dialectics is replaced by modern reason, the modern metaphysical rationale, where science and technology, and the proposals of superiority in the Age of Enlightenment, concocted a “new” belief in the powers of human agency and action. In contemporary thought-consciousness, these are no longer believable.

In the present-day, the rational dialectic in Kant, the heralded Enlightenment thinker, is with “unresolved contradictions,” since his “concepts are ambiguous” (Horkheimer and Adorno 1996: 243). The assumed ascension with progress to a superiority in acquiring knowledge, is really a “subsumption” of knowledge, in the rationale of the Enlightenment: “Reason is the organ of calculation, of planning: it is neutral in regards to ends” (Horkheimer and Adorno 1996: 255). Its “pure reason becomes unreason” (Horkheimer and Adorno 1996: 255). The Enlightenment “abrogates itself” (Horkheimer and Adorno 1996: 257). The reduction of its epistemology is equalled by the reduction of its ontology: “Being is apprehended under the aspect of manufacture and administration” (Horkheimer and Adorno 1996: 250). Its ‘moral’ teachings “bear witness to a hopeless attempt to replace enfeebling religion with some reason for persisting in society when interest is absent” (Horkheimer and Adorno 1996: 251).

One can infer that Machiavelli shares with contemporary thinkers the contempt for such a new ‘reality’ in the latter-day modern rationale framework, since its epistemology and ontology has been narrowed and simplified in comparison to the ancients. It is the latter-day modern rational framework that misinterprets the nature of the “modern- state.” It is also the seed for misinterpretations of Machiavelli, which hides his inherent criticism of what later became established in modern politics, under the flawed modern rationale. Machiavelli, with maintaining a variation of an ancient cosmological world view, is

a precursor to these intense criticisms of modernity, from its beginning, and onto its end. He identified the new beginning of modern politics, yet his lessons were directed to correcting its limitations. This is the manner to which he formed the foundation of his “modern political theory” (Matthew and Platt 1995: 235). Let us begin with the ingrained criticism of the “modern-state.”

4.2 The ‘Personality’ of *The Prince* in Relation to the Modern State

A good introduction on the use of power under the concept of *lo stato* - the state - is in Harvey Mansfield’s article, in *The American Political Science Review* (1983), entitled, “On the Impersonality of the Modern State: A Comment on Machiavelli’s Use of *Stato*.” Mansfield, a renowned contemporary Machiavellian scholar, indicates that, with Machiavelli, there is a distinction in the use of power under the concept of *lo stato*. His *stato* is outside the reduced modern conception of the state; and this becomes significant for today since, as we will see later, there is much scholarly debate identifying that the on-going version of the “modern-state” is directed towards tyranny.

The worthiness of the study and importance of this distinction is that Machiavelli foresaw, only at its beginnings, the implications and extent to which modern “impersonal power” could affect the nature of rule. In the modern understanding of the state, it is removed from human quality; i.e., the state is an impersonal mechanical enterprise, a thing. The changes imply that the state was conceived as being already there before the new leaders win power. Conceived as a thing, *lo stato* existed in, “wanting with equanimity and imperial regard for the next claimant” (Mansfield 1983: 849). “The modern state is an abstraction,” states Mansfield, and “the ideal or standard of abstraction from personality is retained, or even heightened,” in the denunciations of the latter modern period in the works of Hegel, Marx, and Max Weber. “Our modern notion of legitimate power,” states Mansfield, “seems bound up with the impersonality of the modern state” (Mansfield 1983: 849).

Mansfield concurs, that the ancient constitution is “in a fuller sense than the constitution of a modern state; it refers to the form or structure of the whole society and to its way of life as embodied in the structure” (Mansfield 1983: 850). A

modern democratic regime “applies its principle of rule with partisan disregard for the neutrality of the ‘state’ and the autonomy of ‘society’” (Mansfield 1983: 850). This form of the modern state, no matter how democratic it is, has absolute power by being “the only true conceivable political unit” (Mansfield 1983: 850). This formulates a contrast with the ancient classical period: “Whatever may have been the causes that established the modern state, it had to be conceived against the authority of classical political science” (Mansfield 1983: 850).⁸³

Mansfield argues that Machiavelli couples both the ancient relations of the personality of *lo stato* and the modern impersonal one, yet Machiavelli’s impersonality in the state is very distinct from the one of the modern state. This attachment does not imply that after Machiavelli, “the modern state is under way,” because “such an impression would be misleading” (Mansfield 1983: 852). In reference to Machiavelli’s “majesty, authority, and change of Florence’s state,” Mansfield claims, that this “does not make Florence’s state any less personal than Aristotle’s *status populares*, which is a regime belonging to the people” (Mansfield 1983: 853). Any impersonality of the state: “occurs rarely in Machiavelli” (Mansfield 1983: 853). Mansfield then firmly states: “Without prolonging the discussion, I cannot say that I have found in any of Machiavelli’s writings any instance of the impersonal modern state among his uses of *stato*” (Mansfield 1983: 853). But “this does not mean, however, that Machiavelli’s *stato* is a regime in the traditional or classical sense” (Mansfield 1983: 853). In other words, Machiavelli’s view of *lo stato* is distinct from modernity in such a way that it reveals the modern flaw in politics, and it is also outside of the traditional or classical identity.

The state, whether in theory or practice, has human participation. The “state” is one element that distinguishes the human. Machiavelli’s distinction is the recognition of the separation of acquisition and the maintenance of *lo stato* in this

⁸³ This is partially controversial to the claim made by Leo Strauss in his “Machiavelli’s Intention: *The Prince*,” who states, that *The Prince* is “scientific because it conveys a general teaching that is based on reasoning from experience and that sets forth that reasoning” (Strauss 1957: 13). Yet further on, Strauss states, “at the same time the book is the opposite of a scientific or detached work” (Strauss 1957: 14). It will be further displayed that any recourse to science within even *The Prince* means the loss of the key elements of interpretation and education in the works of Machiavelli. Nevertheless, there is the agreement that the lessons learned even for the prince requires the influences from the lessons of the great past, in great events and heroic leaders, and the recognition of the struggle for power and maintenance of authority that is quintessential in the political world.

human participation. Acquisition is not completely impersonal, yet it can be inhumane. It is always in the state of advantage of one over another, or many others. For the need of security, men must focus on the acquisition of something new. And, as Mansfield states: “in both *the Prince* and the *Discourses*... acquisition comes first” (Mansfield 1983: 854). This is in contrast to Aristotle’s view that does not make the distinction between acquisition and maintenance.

Machiavelli more clearly deals with the amount of changes, the recognition of distinctive use of power, and the conspiracies and chaotic turmoil that one has to confront in the acquisition time period of political rule. When the focus of Machiavelli is in adjustment to change and reaction to conspiracies behind the scenes, it is not based on the character of impersonal power, but on the nature of the person who may be great and strong, or may be weak or ignorant, without regard of *virtu*. This lack of knowledge, and therefore loss of *virtu*, proceeds in cruel ruling.

There is still the lesson in *The Prince*, that “in any case Machiavelli sees quite clearly that *stato* won by collective selfishness has no moral superiority over that acquired by individual selfishness” (Mansfield 1983: 855). For Machiavelli, any reference to the impersonality of the state in the modern sense was only in the “effectual acquisition” of it. In the maintenance of *lo stato*, it is almost as if the opposing tendencies must be regarded and protected against the tendencies prominent in modernity. The conception of the impersonality of the modern state is an illusion, generated by the weak and corrupt in order to justify the use and abuse of power.

Mansfield neglects half of Machiavelli’s lesson with the little consideration he made of maintenance. He then, mistakenly links Machiavelli with Hobbes. These are the features that do not make Machiavelli accept the impersonality of the state. Mansfield too easily steers Machiavelli as close to the impartiality of the modern state given by Hobbes’ conception. It may be true that his “decision shift” shows the impersonality of the state, but Machiavelli is nowhere near acceding only to this factor of acquisition of the state in *The Prince*. Simply because Machiavelli had a glimpse of the “impartiality of the state,” does not make him close to Hobbes, who, as a father of modern liberalism, ironically conceived the state as a technological machine.

Machiavelli would be nowhere near the modern liberal belief in individualism, championed by Hobbes and Locke.⁸⁴ The “acquisitive personal state of Machiavelli” is not a close step to “a state that might acquire for all and facilitate the acquisition of impartiality” (Mansfield 1983: 855). The modern claim of the impartiality or impersonal state can be seen as a method in which the absolute power of sovereignty is solidified to oppress the people. It is indirectly revealed that the conception of the “impersonality” of the modern-state is unreal, and this lack of reality can do more harm than good. These are the actual distinctions of the modern state lacking a dignified human spirit: one that impedes upon matters of justice required by human performance of noble dignity; and it impedes upon one of the most quintessential aspects for Machiavelli that the modern state does not have, that is, authority.

Machiavelli’s sense of power is significantly different than that of the modern. The latter-day modern rationale, which still has effects on the present-day, comes from the admonition of power through the perceived ‘neutral’ calculation to form a system of “manufacture and administration,” from the now recognized unreason of the ‘reason’ of the Enlightenment. For Machiavelli, power resided in the “powers that be” in the natural powers of the Heavens, coupled with the religious powers of the goddess *Fortuna*. This part of power amounts to the natural cosmological order of things. Human power arises first from the recognition of *occasione*, the occasion that comes about by fortune. The knowledge of history conceived with an ancient lineage can influence the human; first, to realize the fortunate occasion, and, second, to act upon it.

The true advice is to recognize that in the struggle solely for power, anything can happen, and, in the end, “they could never have anything in harmony with the name of freedom [liberty]” (Machiavelli 1965: 302). At times, a recurrent lesson is made, taken from the acknowledgement of the power of nature, since “by no means is Fortune satisfied, she has not put an end to Italian wars, nor is the cause

⁸⁴ Isaiah Berlin states in a footnote from his article “Pluralism”: “Machiavelli’s writings were, the fortunate irony of history [which some call dialectic] the bases of the very liberalism that Machiavelli would surely have condoned as feeble and characterless, lacking in single-minded pursuit of power, in splendour, in organization, in *virtu*, in power to discipline unruly men against huge odds into one energetic whole.” Here we see a Machiavellian criticism of Hegel, Hobbes, and Locke (Berlin 1998:1).

of so many ills wiped out; and the kingdoms and the powers are not united and cannot be” (Machiavelli 1965: 1456). When there is little authority, and all is in the competition for power, very little is in human control. These introductory contentions will be more clearly revealed in a “new” analysis of *The Prince*.

4.3. An Analysis of Power in *The Prince*

4.3.1. Introduction: From Epistle Dedicatory to Chapter III

As mentioned time and again, there are various interpretations of *The Prince* from one of the identified times period to another. Some are reduced to being dishonest by focusing solely for the consciousness of the time. There are statements taken discreetly from *The Prince* that, if taken without ponder, can display a reduced interpretation or misinterpretation. But there are many elements and many perceived intentions in Machiavelli that such pronouncements are statements taken from a power-ridden consciousness, particularly those more enhanced in modernity, from whichever of its distinct periods, than in past times. The latter-day modern reality, where politics is almost synonymous with power, is something to which Machiavelli perceived before its dominance. But even in *The Prince*, which is focused on power, there are ways of acquiring power that are appropriate and inappropriate, ways that are ‘good’, or ‘evil’.

One of the first captivating enterprises is the play of identities of the high and the low positions of power, and of the upper and lower virtuous stature of authority that we see in the “Epistle Dedicatory.” In the times of chaotic turmoil, often the high positions of power are filled with the people of low stature in virtue, with little ability for authority; and the low positions of power contain those of higher stature in virtue, able to fulfill the needs of authority, but without opportunity. The ones who have power have little authority; the ones who have authority have little power. The movements of the high and low, the up and down, ascent and descent, is repeated in this work, as the play with such features occurs primarily in the prefaces of *The Discourses*. The obvious lesson in such a chaotic situation is the taking on of the power-play games in order to be victorious in it.

In the first sentence we see a change from the second-person direct speech in the first-half of the sentence, to the indirect third-person plural in the second-half:⁸⁵

Usually, in most cases, those who desire to acquire grace before a Prince, make themselves come up to meet him with those things that among them are held most dear or that they see delight him most; whence one sees them many times being presented with horses, arms, gold cloths, precious stones, and similar ornaments worthy of their greatness (Machiavelli 1980: 1).

This “error” indicates that, at times, a statement is directly aimed to a particular singular prince, and then reverts to an indirect general audience of the many, including any prince or interested reader. The hidden comment made is that the presentation of most Epistle Dedications are image-laden, dishonest and useless, and the proceedings directed to “delight” the prince are now valueless. After stating his “long experience of modern things and the continuous readings of ancient [things],” (Machiavelli 1980: 1)⁸⁶ he states indirectly, that the new prince, the new Lorenzo de Medici, the grandson of the true Lorenzo the Magnificent, must “in a very short time” be able “to understand,” what “I, in so many years and in so many of my hardships and dangers, have come to know and come to understand” (Machiavelli 1980: 1-2). This is not a typical Epistle Dedication with “pompous and magnificent words.” It is a real one, and certainly not a dedication to his current prince. It indirectly displays the prince’s ignorance. It is Machiavelli who should be the prince.

He continues on to state that it is not presumptuous for a “low man” to regulate the government of princes. With comparative reference to mountains and valleys, the low in power can know the high, just as the high can know the low. This indication of the play of the high and low are evident in various scholarly

⁸⁵ The personal address with the second person familiar tense is used in eighteen of the twenty-six chapters. Twelve of those are considered to be an abrupt shift from the third to the second person, as we have seen in the opening sentence of the first chapter. Machiavelli, a great writer, seems without concern for proper grammar on the personal address to the prince. This implies something on the character of the prince which will be clarified later on in this chapter.

⁸⁶ The square brackets are de Alvarez’s insertions, not mine.

works, albeit with somewhat divergent interpretations. But Machiavelli is breaking open any of the traditional applications of high and low positions. It is the current-day situation where the 'low' can often be high, and the 'high' are often low. Machiavelli recognized what for him were revolutionary insights that require completely new principles; yet his "newness" is not detached from the past. With these aspects, Machiavelli displays his complexity and his originality.

Leo Strauss interprets *The Prince* as an array of "ascent and descent," which generally, for him, starts as a "scientific book," and ends in "patriotic poetry" (Strauss 1957: 13).⁸⁷ The ascent and descent in this article will be followed differently. One gets the sense of various appeals and repeals that Machiavelli makes to the prince to which the book is given - Lorenzo II - and to any other prince. There is an attempt to teach his current prince or any prince; but then that is undermined by a descent into satire, to a point of mockery, of the prince, the principalities, and the republics of Italy.

In such a desperate situation, life and politics is in the worst condition. Machiavelli experienced both; as such, he knows more about it than others. In the last sentence of the 'dedicatory', he again refers to the great harms and "hardships" done against him: "how undeservedly I bear great and continuous malignity of fortune" (Machiavelli 1980: 2). Machiavelli is referring to the uncle of Prince Lorenzo, Giuliano de Medici, who, shortly beforehand, with the use of Spanish mercenary troops, overtook the Florentine Republic, and falsely accused him of conspiracy, tried him, convicted him, tortured him within an inch of his life, imprisoned him and ostracized him from the city he loved. The heritage of

⁸⁷ Strauss uses many intricacies in his study with four parts of ascent and descent, saying that the ascent of the first part reaches its peak in Chapter XI, and afterwards comes the descent moving up to another ascent in part II from chapters VII to XI, and then another ascent in Chapter XII to Chapter XIV. The third part contains Chapters XV to XXIII, where Chapter XIX is "the peak of *The Prince* as a whole" (Strauss 1957: 18). Strauss then claims that "thereafter the descent begins" (Strauss 1957: 18). And then, of course, Chapters XXIV to XXVI resembles the second part, with a "return to the new prince" (Strauss 1957: 21). Within Strauss' interpretations, one may be able to understand this ordering, but wherever there are interpretations that one sees as unfit, such an ordering of the book no longer complies, and different peaks and descents are derived. Yet generally speaking, Machiavelli purposely plays hierarchical games with the recognition of the high and low positions in various conditions, alternating with the focus on power or authority that may be repeated in the structure of the book itself. The ordering in this work is almost a reverse of Strauss': the descent is on the focus on the "all new" or "completely new" prince.

republicanism in Florence was lost, and Machiavelli seemed to be the only one who knew it so sharply. This is the matter of his solitude.⁸⁸

In Chapter I, “Of Principates,” he uses “imperium” and “dominions” to describe all principedoms and republics. In the *Discourses*, we clearly see Machiavelli’s opposition to the “imperial dominion” of the many proceedings of the Roman Empire. One can surmise that he is opposed to all principedoms and republics in Italy, since they are more aligned to dictatorial, imperial rule. He makes the distinction of hereditary principates⁸⁹ to the new ones and especially the “all new.” The “all new” or “wholly new” are even more difficult than the ordinary new to acquire, let alone maintain. He gives a repeated lesson that acquisition is “either by fortune or virtue” (Machiavelli 1980: 5).⁹⁰ The *virtu* alluded to means having “one’s own arms,” instead of “the arms of others,” as the mercenary use of armies was a common activity in the Italy of his day (Machiavelli 1980: 5). The “wholly new” states are problematic; and an incredible prince is required.

Lorenzo II achieved his position by fortune. He was mostly a hereditary prince. Guiliano de Medici was elevated to a “French ducal title, Nemours.” The incumbent successor, Giovanni de Medici, was appointed as Pope Leo X, and therefore he posted, in February, 1513, his nephew Lorenzo, the son of Piero and

⁸⁸ Any interpretation of *The Prince* would not be correct unless one considers the professional, physical, and psychological effects of such an event on him. Machiavelli lived through a chaotic period of incessant turmoil, characterized solely by lust for power, a private power made by rulers, who used mercenary states to acquire it without any consent to the love of the *patria*. With the loss of almost every remnant of authority, such practices mitigated the inhumane proceedings of cruel power. Machiavelli lived on the brink of nihilism. Almost all previous values that at one time created greatness, were lost, and very little in his current-day re-established an essential reevaluation. He had to face a power-ridden condition with the abolishment of authority. To do right from wrong, he had to return to lessons from the past.

⁸⁹ De Alvarez indicates in footnote 1 of the first chapter on page 6 that the translation from Machiavelli’s title, *De Principatibus*, his use of the word “principate” appears in his translation. De Alvarez wants to maintain the ancient Roman influence on Machiavelli, as he continues by stating: “What Machiavelli is concerned with is not a regime and certainly not a territory, but the virtue of the ‘first man’, whose virtue is such that he is able to make a state for himself almost anywhere or anytime” (de Alvarez, 1980: 6). What this implies, whether de Alvarez knows it or not, is that the performance of the virtue that he implies here is farther removed from most of the capabilities of Machiavelli’s modern-day leadership, and ours as well.

⁹⁰ Of course, this is the pre-eminent concept of *virtu* as an essential component of Machiavelli’s works. The number of meanings and uses used are numerous, but let us reduce it to the fact that its intent has an ancient derivation, and one influential meaning is of the greatness of mind and body as the primary elements of his *virtu*.

grandson of Lorenzo the Magnificent, as the new prince of Florence, and later, “in 1516,” as de Alvarez tells us, he “was subsequently named the Duke of Urbino” (de Alvarez 1980: 4). He is both a hereditary prince and somewhat a new prince, since the overtaking of power of the de’Medicis occurred less than half-a-year earlier. As de Alvarez summarizes: “In sum, he was a perfect example of someone who has become a prince not by virtue but by fortune. That is, Lorenzo was in a situation similar to that of Cesare Borgia” (de Alvarez 1980: 4).

The people did not see the abrupt changes in the performance of the new de’Medicis as divergent from their elder, Lorenzo the Magnificent. As Garret Mattingly states: “most Florentines, particularly the *popolo minuto*, the ‘little people,’ still thought as the Medici as the guardians of their liberties both against foreign domination and against the selfish designs of the oligarchs” (Mattingly 1957-1958: 484). At first, the new de’Medicis used power without republican care: “the young Medici did not mask their power with the same care their grandfather had used” (Mattingly 1957-1958: 484). It was only afterwards, with the father of Lorenzo II, Peiro de’Medici, that “the Florentines began to realize the attrition of their freedom. When Niccolo was twenty-five they rebelled and Piero de Medici rode out of the city gates, never to return” (Mattingly 1957-1958: 484). Yet later, another de Medici comes to power, and is not likely to comply to the people.

In Chapter II, “Of Hereditary Principates,” Machiavelli refers not only to the acquisition of new states, but also to maintenance as an essential requirement: “I say, then, that in maintaining hereditary states accustomed to the blood of their prince, the difficulties are very minor compared to those who are to be found in the new state” (Machiavelli 1980: 8). It is a quick lesson on how to be “able to govern and to maintain” these principates (Machiavelli 1980: 8). It is not stated as concretely as in *The Discourses* but the lesson is repeated, although briefly, on the requirement of different approaches for acquisition and maintenance. The chapter ends with a lesson, that too much newness can only continue the political and social disarray: “And in the antiquity and continuity of the dominion the memories and causes for innovations are extinguished; because one change always leaves the tooting for the building of another” (Machiavelli 1980: 9). In too much newness,

the memories and causes of essential practices are forgotten, and with the new change based upon this forgetfulness, it breeds further discord.

The simplistic interpretations arise from concentrating on *The Prince* as solely being directed to acquisition. The focus may be on acquisition, but repeatedly the requirements for maintenance are stated. Not only in acquisition but also in maintenance, new states are more difficult in both processes than the hereditary ones. One must know when and how to act, yet that is not easy for a prince, and is more difficult for the “all new” princes.

As mentioned earlier, Strauss aligns “ascents and descents” within *The Prince*, and it was noted that not all interpretations agree with his assessments. For this interpretation, the “peak of *The Prince* as a whole,” is not in what Strauss claims in Chapter XIX, but rather in Chapter III, “Of Mixed Principates.” This chapter is so essential on the major themes of this work: of power and authority, on internationalization, on his teachings through his literary style, and the issues of controversy in interpretations. Its importance is due to the fact that we are going through a similar “time of transition” in our politics as that which Machiavelli faced, being on the brink of nihilism. Let us now examine this part of *The Prince*.

4.3.2. Complexities in Mixed Principates”

The importance of this chapter is due to the consideration of the focal point in this work, the relevance of Machiavelli in the present-day political condition. Machiavelli often indicates the manufacturing of a false belief in “betterment,” which actually is a worsening of the condition. Under the ‘rationale’ view of “progress in history,” almost any form of “newness” assumes betterment. But this is not the case for Machiavelli; the assumption of “betterment,” under a false world view, actually displays that a worsening condition comes about, that is not foreseen due to this reduced sense of “newness.” Such a deception is prominent in political practices of the present-day. When such deception is involved, it only makes matters worse:

men willingly change masters believing [they will]
better [themselves], and this belief makes them take
up arms against them; whereby they deceive

themselves for they then experience that they have the worse (Machiavelli 1980: 11).⁹¹

This is “another natural and ordinary necessity.” The necessity is the focus on power, to hurt the inhabitants and to favour the masters. But done through the choice of “men at arms” where there are “infinite other injuries that the new acquisition drags along with it” (Machiavelli 1980: 11). We have the repeated claim of the need for internal armistice, and the complete condemning of auxiliary or mercenary arms. With the focus only on power, and more so if it is “lust for power,” an infinite number of “injuries” of the new principate arises.

In the following line, Machiavelli uses a personal address, which is other than addressing the princes equally: “In this mode *you* have as enemies all those whom you have hurt in seizing that principate” (Machiavelli 1980: 11). Personal address is done to display the nature of the condition he lives in; yet, it appears that Machiavelli is partially hiding away from a clear direction to the current prince, where it seems the prince has no knowledge of the indication of his limitedness on these features, that is, on the bad use of military that only harms inhabitants, and the general nature of princeliness in Italy. Machiavelli is wiser on princeliness than the prince.

Later, a stylistic change occurs, and in de Alvarez’s footnote number 19, he states that, “Strauss suggests that this is because he no longer addresses the prince but the reader whose interests is primarily theoretical” (de Alvarez 1980: 23). This is partially correct. There is a disagreement with Strauss, in the “strange suggestion” that Machiavelli possesses only one-half of political wisdom, “namely knowledge and the nature of princes” and “the prince has the other half, namely, knowledge of the nature of the peoples” (Strauss 1958: 77). If read correctly by the students of politics, one can easily see the irony, which can even be addressed to these notions of Strauss, in these statements mentioned in the “Epistle Dedicatory” of *The Prince*. The prince knows almost nothing compared to Machiavelli. Ironically, the acquisition gained by the prince is so harmful that the prince has power over him,

⁹¹ The square brackets are de Alvarez’s insertions.

and that power was achieved by foreign mercenary arms. This is an example of one of the worst conditions under a principate.

Machiavelli also has better knowledge of the people as well, since he is now amongst the people, experiencing both a political position of Secondary Chancellor, and now is even less than the ordinary citizen, or peasant. As Strauss correctly claims: “he knows much that is relevant of which the prince is ignorant” (Strauss 1958: 77). But his address to an individual in the second person is used, I would argue, to mockingly denounce the lack of knowledge of the prince in an ironic, therefore, unidentifiable literary mode. Strauss mentions that the use of the term “you” is “primarily theoretical,” as he says it is similar to the use of “the young” in the *Discourses*. But, as close readings say, the intermingling of words and deeds, or compositions and experiences, is not theoretical, it is *real*; and therefore, *it is not theoretical at all, it is theatrical*. Here, we see a real theatrical scene, where a former Second Chancellor of Florence is submitting an Epistle Dedicatory to a prince who acquired his power, after the author was expelled from his beloved city by a member of his family.

Machiavelli then states “*i fastidii del nuovo principe*,” the annoyances of the new principate. They are numerous. De Alvarez states in a footnote: “The beginning of violent changes which threw out not only Italy but all of Europe into disorder was the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII, King of France, in 1494” (de Alvarez 1980: 20). Furthermore, “the chronology of contemporary events that Machiavelli comments upon in *The Prince* begins with the invasion of Charles VIII,” and “*The History of Florence* ends with the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent in 1492,” that is, “they end immediately before the entrance of Charles VIII into Italy” (de Alvarez 1980: 20). It was then followed by a beautiful description of life in Florence by historian colleague and friend, Francesco Guicciardini, in and around the year 1490, under the rule of Lorenzo the Magnificent, who combined princely virtue with republican liberty.⁹² It seems to have collapsed suddenly and brutally.

⁹² “The calamities of Italy began (and I say this so that I may make known what her condition was before, and the causes from which so many evils arose), to the greater sorrow and terror of all men, at a time when circumstance seemed universally more propitious and fortunate. It is indisputable that since the Roman Empire, weakened largely by the decay of her ancient customs, began to decline more than a thousand years ago from that greatness to which it had risen with marvellous virtue and

Machiavelli continues in displaying further difficulties in the “acquisition” of new principates: the difficulty is on the second assault on a province (*provincia*),⁹³ the hardships of acquiring different provinces with different languages and customs, the almost impossibility of extinguishing “the blood of their ancient prince,” and, “in a short time,” to form “one body with the ancient principate” (Machiavelli 1980: 13). With increasing difficulties in acquisition, great “fortune” and great “industry” “is needed to hold them” (Machiavelli 1980: 13). In foreign provinces, the prince must “go there to live,” to please the people and to protect against “external powers.” Another remedy is “to send colonies” to the “shackles of the state” (Machiavelli 1980: 13).⁹⁴ Either this, or “to have men-at-arms and infantry there” (Machiavelli 1980: 13). The new prince should have incredible wisdom or prudence. With the enhanced newness of the state, the people, or the province, the more prudence is required. He should not use too much power or too much authority, since it amounts to tyranny.

At times of chaos, success requires elements more directed to power, but as we will see, if power is used without the consideration of the factors of authority, the downfall will just continue into further tyranny. It points to the satirical interpretation of this section, where the brutality of princeships is indirectly displayed for the learned. For the prince, especially the new one, “one has either to caress men or to extinguish them, for if they can take offence for light offences, they cannot do so for grave ones; if one has to hurt men it should be in such a mode

good fortune, Italy had never known such prosperity or such a desirable condition as that which it enjoyed in all tranquility in the year of our Lord 1490 and the years immediately before and after.” Francesco Guicciardini, *The History of Italy*, trans. by Sidney Alexander, [The Macmillan Company: New York, 1969], pp. 3-4. (de Alvarez 1980: 20-21).

⁹³ Machiavelli uses the term “*provincia*” which can be the closest replica of the modern concept of “country.” But for Machiavelli, and similar to his notion of the “state,” *provincia* has a personal element involved in it; it is closely related to a province of a homeland (*patria*) to which people will devote their civic loyalty.

⁹⁴ The translation “shackles of the state” is strange and inappropriate. In the actual *Prince*, *Il principe*, the word “*compedes*” is used: “*che sieno compedes di quello stato.*” “*Compedes*” is translated as “*incantare*” in the Italian version: “*la funzione di incantare quello Stato*” (Melograni 1990: 52-53). *Incantare* means to “enchant, or bewitch,” “to be spellbound,” or “to daze.” To reduce this to “shackles of the state” seems inappropriate, as well as the definition in de Alvarez’s footnote: “That is, the key point which, being held, would keep the people in subjection” (de Alvarez 1980: 20).

that there is no fear for vengeance” (Machiavelli 1980: 14). But in saying this, a new prince is very close to the fear of vengeance by the people. It is even worse if men-at-arms is used to colonize. There is no reference to authority here by Machiavelli. He only discusses on the topic of predominant importance in his prince, or other princes in Italy and outside Italy; that is, on the dominance of power.

If Machiavelli was interpreted as seriously teaching such brutal harshness, it could have been one reason for the people turning against him in the last few months of his life when the attempt at republicanism returned.⁹⁵ The weak overpower the strong to the detriment of civilization.

The fear of power games of other princes, as Machiavelli sights in the Aetolians, brought the Romans into Greece; this is an example of the “neighbouring lesser *powers* to contrive to weaken the powerful,” and a lesson on a worse condition, that is, if the foreigner has “more power than he.” The focus is on power brought about by “too much ambition (*ambizione*) or from fear” (Machiavelli 1980: 14). Machiavelli continues with the frequent use of the word “power” to describe the difficult situations. In a 22-line paragraph, he uses “power” or “powerful” 11 times. The power-ridden ruler should think that they “should not have too much force and too much authority” (Machiavelli 1980: 15). Blind authority can impede upon the power-ridden. If all of these things are not managed well, he “will quickly lose that which he has acquired” (Machiavelli 1980: 15). The prince, when focusing solely only power, may acquire new territory but cannot maintain it.

The main lesson, outside of the satirical irony of addressing princes, is that the princely quality of power must be coupled with republican virtue. The four legendary heroes in *The Prince* all use force in tumultuous and unjust conditions, but all are motivated by republican virtue. Again, the example referred to is the Romans: “The Romans, in the provinces they took, observed well these matters; they sent colonies, kept and provided for the less powerful without increasing their power, put down the powers, and never to let powerful foreigners gain a reputation”

⁹⁵ In 1527, the year that Machiavelli died, the measure of Italy’s growth in importance, through some reviving of republican virtue, was shorn by the sack of Rome by mutant imperial troops. It may have contributed to his death. Italy fell under the domination of Spain. It held Milan, Naples, and Sicily, and had protection over Florence, controlling most of the peninsula (Skinner 1981: 17).

(Machiavelli 1980:15). This was done by use of authority, which is the maintenance of the state done by the forming and continual enhancing of foundational principles from which virtue, civic loyalty, and civil religion are derived.

These principles had regard for all the present princes of what they “ought to do”; “to have regard not only for present disorders, but also future ones” (Machiavelli 1980: 15). Machiavelli’s lessons are not only for his present condition, but future conditions. If the future is not foreseen, it will likely bring about failure. The indication of giving this advice is the lack of foresight in his current principates. One must foresee disorders from afar. Simply focusing on just the present will ensure failure: “if you wait until they (the disorders) are near, the medicine is not in time for the malady has become incurable” (Machiavelli 1980: 15).⁹⁶

For Machiavelli, Italy is in a state where the malady is almost incurable. Knowledge is required in advance, for the consideration of all political stances, whether the acquisition of power or maintaining authority, is necessary. Such knowledge comes from studying similar historical events mediated into the present time and to the future, as he states explicitly: “Nor did that which is ordinarily in the mouth of the wise (ironically stated) in our times ‘to enjoy the benefit of time, ever please them (the Romans), but [they chose] rather [to take] such benefit from their virtue and prudence” (Machiavelli 1980: 16). This statement is furthered by an appeal to the determining nature of time and the nature of human life: “for time drives forward everything; and can bring along with it the good as well as the bad, and the bad as well as the good” (Machiavelli 1980: 16).

More lessons on his central themes are directed while still being in Chapter III. We turn to the necessity of virtue and prudence, and the desire to correct them. He has displayed the bad effects of “*ambizione*,”⁹⁷ and also his current-day

⁹⁶ Machiavelli’s reliance on the ancient is displayed in his “pre-modern science of medicine” (Parel) used to create a completely new understanding of humour, “*umore*,” that is so divergent from the modern meaning of humour. A more detailed description is displayed on the footnote on page 135.

⁹⁷ “*Ambizione*” is a feature condemned and blamed by Machiavelli that grew under modernity within the new concepts of individualism and voluntarism. The ambition of the private individual will was praised, rather than blamed for its subjugation and minimization of political public concern, something that, for Machiavelli, was a clear sign of political downfall.

problems that are similar to ours, the forgetting of the past for the present; yet these are the things that brings lessons to our contemporary times. The response is with virtue and prudence to challenge the undeniable sustenance of the good as well as the bad in the nature of life. This type of virtue and prudence never made the Romans “avoid a war, because they knew that war was not to be avoided, but is only deferred to the advantage of others.” And by “seeing from afar the inconveniences,” always remedied the illness of the “fever” of the “things of the state” (Machiavelli 1980: 16). Virtue and prudence require the knowledge of just forms of warfare, and a knowledgeable ability to foresee the future.

Machiavelli often stated his denial of the use of mercenaries. The French were also involved in wars with Naples and, at times in contention with the Spaniards, to overtake that part of Italy. The French King became “lord of a third of Italy,” by being helped by the weakness and fear of Italian states. One gross example of weakness and fear is that all of the major principalities or republics “came to meet him in order to be his friend” (Machiavelli 1980: 17). Further on, de Alvarez states in a related footnote in this chapter: “All of these little *signori* (10 rulers in Italy) were despoiled of their possessions or killed by Cesare Borgia between 1500 and 1502” (de Alvarez 1980: 23). This indicates that even the brutality of Cesare Borgia could be partially accepted in a sympathetic fashion due to the gross errors the ten *signori* made: “Because they were *weak and therefore fearful*, some fearful of the Church and others of the Venetians, they were necessitated always to support him” (Machiavelli 1980: 17). Weakness, according to Machiavelli, is fearful; fearful for those attempting to rule the people, and fearful in the difficulty in dealing with fearful people. The weak-fearfulness is generated by “the Church,” and by the Venetians in supporting the foreign king.

King Louis XII of France gave aid to Pope Alexander VI, the illegitimate father of Cesare Borgia. For Machiavelli, the performance of Pope Alexander VI, born Rodrigo Borgia of Spanish descent, displayed on the one hand that the Church has never been more corrupt. But his warlike character and lust for power, handed down to his son Cesare, made the “ambition of Alexander” almost take over all of Italy. King Louis could not know that he weakened himself “by giving aid to Pope Alexander so that the latter might seize Romagna” (Machiavelli 1980: 17). He

weakened himself by “removing his own friends and those who have been thrown into his lap,” and unfortunately, “made the Church great, adding to the spiritual, which already gives to her so much authority” (Machiavelli 1980: 17).⁹⁸ He did not realize that he was against those who gave him power. In wanting the Kingdom of Naples, he divided the Kingdom of Naples with the King of Spain, and therefore, “put someone there who could chase him out” (Machiavelli 1980: 17).

Machiavelli further gives the lesson that it is not only acquisition that creates good order, and not only response to necessity, since “disorder will follow”: “It is a thing truly very natural and ordinary to desire to acquire; and when men who are able to do so do it, they are always praised or not blamed; but when they are not able and yet want to do so in every mode, here is the error and the blame” (Machiavelli 1980: 17-18).

Machiavelli lists the five errors of King Louis of France, leaving the most important sixth, later, for further explanation. They are errors of power with public ignorance: “he extinguished the weaker powers; he increased the powers of someone already powerful in Italy; he brought in an extremely powerful foreigner; he did not go to live there; he did not plant colonies” (Machiavelli 1980: 18). The sixth was “taking the state away from the Venetians” (Machiavelli 1980: 18). Therefore, he could not keep his conquered area of Lombardy, and lacked the knowledge of comradeship with Venice to be strong enough to uphold their territories without any contention. He made wars and avoided other wars when he should not have. Machiavelli refers to his latter Chapter XVIII on the faith of the princes for further explanation: the princes have “little account of faith,” only the “cunning” use of events with other princes “to round the brains of men” (Machiavelli 1980: 107). A prince has to be both a man and a beast: a faithful man of laws, and a forceful beast-like one at times of turmoil. One has to “keep faith.” Even the princes do. Again, this shows the importance of the religious impetus: one of course, founded on the principles of ancient paganism, not on Christianity; and there is also the lesson of the importance of directing it in such a way that it is proper for the leader, because, if misdirected, the potential better condition could

⁹⁸ The irony in the use of “great” to describe the Church will be explained later in this chapter.

easily become the worst. The cause of the fall of King Louis would eventually be praised by a Christian Florentine or Italian, but he finishes the chapter by displaying the dismay King Louis suffered for losing power, and for Italy to temporarily revive it through the power of the Church:

because if they did understand them, they would not have let the Church come into such greatness. And experience has shown that the greatness of the Church and that of Spain in Italy has been caused by France, and his ruin caused by them (Machiavelli 1980: 19).

Using satirical irony, the “greatness of the Church” is a cause of the ruin of Italy. Finally, a never or rarely-failing general rule comes about: “that he who is the cause of another’s becoming powerful ruins himself, for that power is caused either by industry or by force, and the one and the other are suspect to him who has become powerful” (Machiavelli 1980: 19). The last rule by Machiavelli is against the focus solely on power without any authority, an authority that is generated by ancient republican virtue derived from the concern for public liberty, and from the activity of virtue and prudence being spread from the leader to the people.

A pivotal fine-line is drawn between the lust for power and the power of necessity. Lust for power breeds failure. Power of necessity should be directed to the preservation of the people mistreated by others in power. Lust for power is a private pursuit. Power of necessity must eventually be of public concern. In its most extreme moments, one must act beyond the usual morals of good and evil. But after acquisition, authority must be created for the maintenance of leadership. Some of the alterations of ‘good’ and ‘evil’ are a part of Machiavelli’s “cynical immorality” that horrified those who could not perceive it as cynical or satirical. It is a power directed by “virtue and prudence,” directed by factors that produce authority. Nevertheless, power can easily be harmed either by the “wickedness” of leaders, or by the people.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ This notion makes Machiavelli important for the current-day with the decline in the belief in democracy under the recognition that often the people, either under their cause or the cause of power beyond theirs, leads to further the destructive tendencies in present-day social and political affairs. In times when democracy was firmly believed, such suggestions of the flaws in many versions of the “power of the people” would not be easily accepted.

There is a lesson on the special judgement of worth on the “wholly new.” It is similar to the judgement on the good or negative use of history: both can have advantages, or disadvantages. The strong virtuous leader should have the knowledge from which to make a good decision. The blind praise for anything “wholly new” is motivating for those who have the latter-day modern view of “progress in history,” that mistakenly believes anything “new” is better.

For a proper interpretation, it is evident that one must be outside the modern elements that extend from its beginning to the latter-day modern framework. He is not exactly “the father of modern political theory” (Matthew and Platt 1995: 235), unless it includes being the father of modern political criticism. His productive and critical educational direction is valuable for the present-day. We will see this on the cosmological use of the interrelations of *virtu* and *Fortuna*, which is applied not only to his day, but can be applied to ours as well.

4.3.3. Power Coupled With Authority: Interrelations of *Virtu* and *Fortuna*

The Prince continues on topics that contribute in some way to the intentions of this work: his lessons on power do not hide away lessons on authority. *The Prince* is not a “handbook on how to win power and keep it” (Matthew and Platt 1995: 235). For those who believe that it was, *The Prince* forms, as far as Mattingly is concerned, “a diabolical burlesque of all of them, like a political Black Mass” (Mattingly 1957-1958: 486). The maintenance of the state, and therefore authority, is more important than power politics.

In Chapter IV, “Kingdom of Darius Which Alexander Had Seized,” the topic shifts more directly to the difficulties in “holding on to a state newly acquired,” and some knowledge needed in the process of conquest (Machiavelli 1980: 25). The conquering leader must adapt to the differences in provinces or states. Machiavelli displays two kinds of principdoms; one by “servants,” the other by “barons.” The two different kinds are shown in the comparison of the “state of the Turk” and that of the “King of France” (Machiavelli 1980: 25). To acquire the “state of the Turk” is much harder than the state of France. But to maintain the state after acquisition is easier in the “state of the Turk” than in France. A similarity is

raised between Darius' government, in the fourth century BC, and the kingdom the Turk that began in the fifteenth century AD. Here, we are introduced to simple lessons by concrete examples of the various "modes and orders" of differentiation in both acquisition and maintenance of different states in different times and place.

The lesson in Chapter V, "Administration of Cities," is that acquisition in princedoms is easier than republics. But maintaining authority is more difficult in princedoms or kingdoms rather than a republic. In Chapter VI, "New Principates," which Strauss claims is an "ascent," returns to "wholly new principates," "those on which princes and states are new alike" (Machiavelli 1980: 32). But there are also lessons on *imitation of the ancients* within that first paragraph: "to keep wholly to the ways of others and unable to measure up to the virtue of those whom you imitate" (Machiavelli 1980: 32).

First of all, we have another shift from the third to the second person referral. The lesson is in imitation, a main lesson in *The Discourses*, and the focus, as we will see later, is on *virtu*, virtue. The following clause alludes to the "most excellent," great men, who are represented by the legendary four heroes: Moses, Romulus, Cyrus, and Theseus: "a prudent man ought always enter into the ways beaten by great men and imitate those who have been most excellent" (Machiavelli 1980: 32).¹⁰⁰ The next clause has a peculiar description on *virtu*: "so that, if virtue does not reach up to there, at least it gives some odor of it" (Machiavelli 1980: 32).¹⁰¹ One can interpret the use of "odor" to describe virtue in various ways, but it also shows that, at least in appearance, the princes can give an "odor" of virtue, yet one that is not real. It may be one that stinks.

One can also surmise that *imitation* should be adhered not only to the four excellent men, but one can feel that, with the personal direction of grammar, Prince Lorenzo could also follow his grandfather, Lorenzo the Magnificent, and measure

¹⁰⁰ It is not only on those acquiring power that are required to imitate the great past, but more so the wholly new must imitate the great and the excellent, since most leaders are "unable to keep wholly to the ways of the others." Also another matter: "*battute*" is the word translated as "beaten," but it can also mean "won." The sentence can be re-stated as "the ways won by great men."

¹⁰¹ In the original version, "*se la tua virtu non vi arriva, almeno ne renda qualche odore.*" The use of "up to there" in de Alvarez's translation, seems strange, when it should simply be "that if virtue doesn't come to you."

himself up to his virtue. We have been returned to the hierarchical power play of the upper and the lower in times of turmoil. The worst situation is if that hierarchical play game is based solely on power and no authority. Machiavelli follows with the image of the archer and gives the lesson of aiming higher than your own personal goal to the formation of a higher goal of *virtu*, so as to be assured of obtaining it. Lorenzo attained this through fortune, not virtue. Since the formation of a higher goal for republican authority was not fostered in him, he could not arise to the required virtuous strength. He does not deserve to be the new prince. Any method, mode or order with a sole focus either on *Fortuna* or *virtu*, would bring about many difficulties:

in wholly new principates where there is a new prince, one finds them more or less difficult to keep according to whether the one who has acquired them is more or less virtuous. And because this event of a private man becoming a prince presupposes either virtue or fortune, it seems that the one or the other of these things mitigates, in part, many difficulties; nevertheless, he who stands less on fortune better maintains himself. Things are also facilitated if the prince is constrained, by his lack of other states, to live there personally.

But in order to come to those who have become princes by their own virtue and not by fortune, I say that the most excellent are Moses, Romulus, Cyrus, and Theseus (Machiavelli 1980: 32-33).

To “keep” or maintain it, some *virtu* is needed. The virtuous, “he who stands less on fortune,” better maintains himself. If it is easier for one who stands “less on fortune,” implies that maintenance is not easy for Lorenzo II, who has depended fully on fortune. He is neither entirely old through the hereditary venue, nor is he “wholly” or “completely” new, since he is from a hereditary family; but this occurred not long after their overtaking of the republic, which would be the grounds for “wholly new principates.”

Coupled with the need of virtue is the introduction of the famous four heroes, which are to be imitated in their “founded kingdoms.” To re-iterate with Machiavelli’s own words: “fortune provided them with nothing other than the *occasione*” (Machiavelli 1980: 33). The importance of such an *occasione* is clearly

displayed: “without that occasion the virtue of their mind would have been extinguished and without that virtue the occasion would have come in vain” (Machiavelli 1980: 33). The four great men, Romulus, Moses, Cyrus, and Theseus, had “excellent virtue.” With it, their “fatherland [homeland] was ennobled.”¹⁰² Still, with virtue, acquisition comes with difficulty, but holds it with facility. The difficulties come about “from the new orders and modes that they are forced to introduce to found their state and security” (Machiavelli 1980: 34). Here, we have a partial criticism of “new modes and orders” not a praise for them that can be found in many scholarly interpretations. With *virtu*, acquisition of “new orders and modes” is difficult. One must comply to the focus on power, the partial detachment from moral principles of authority. Yet maintenance is easier, since *virtu* is required to maintain the state through authority. If lust for power is dominant, then authority will not be achieved.

He repeatedly states difficulties with “new orders.” People do not respond well to new orders. At best, they are “luke-warm.” There is very little belief in new things. It is very easy for them to recoil, to establish partisanship to rebel against the new leader “in such a mode [that] all who are associated with him are endangered” (Machiavelli 1980: 34). Getting back to Lorenzo, he had power, and he had no need of acquiring the territory of his principedom. He could only use this information if he was directed to becoming the prince of Italy, and to rid such an action of all the war tactics used by ignorant princes through the help of militaries, which is what his uncle Giuliano did. Machiavelli leads onto the criticism of the use of mercenary troops, which gave Lorenzo II the fortune to acquire power.

Next, the use of “begging” by these princely-ridden “innovators” “always come to evil and leads to nothing,” but when they have an established army, “then there is rarely a time when they are endangered” (Machiavelli 1980: 34). The following passage brings up much insight and dispute: “Whence it comes to pass

¹⁰² The place of this footnote is similar to that cited by the author, de Alvarez. But I will counter his translation of *patria* as “fatherland.” The frequent references to Italy and Rome have always been feminine, and the word *patria* is also feminine. If anything, *patria* seems closer to motherland, but from its inferences to the father, *padre*, the better translation would be “homeland,” combining both the feminine and masculine elements.

that all armed prophets conquer and the unarmed ones are ruined” (Machiavelli 1980: 34).¹⁰³

Naturally, at the beginning of new orders, force is required, a plea to accept authoritarianism at the beginning: “Therefore, it is needful to order [affairs] in such a mode that when the people do not believe any more, one is able to make them believe by force” (Machiavelli 1980: 34). The fault of Frate Savonarola is identified as being unarmed, in stark comparison to Moses, Cyrus, Theseus and Romulus. By being unarmed, he could not make the people believe in him, “and he had no way to hold firm those who had believed nor to make the unbelievers believe” (Machiavelli 1980: 35). Reference is then made to *virtu* beyond the reliance of *Fortuna* for success. With “great difficulty,” Machiavelli claims, “they must with their virtue surmount them” (Machiavelli 1980: 35). But after this success, more is required pertaining to maintenance and establishing authority: “commencing to be held in veneration” and “having extinguished those who were envious of their qualities” (Machiavelli 1980: 35).

It ends with reference to Hiero of Syracuse, a “man, from a private [station],” who became prince because he “had so much virtue” (Machiavelli 1980: 35). With not having “anything from fortune other than *occasione*,” he “extinguished the old militia,” and “ordered the new,” and with alliances to allies and the forming of his own soldiers “was able to build an edifice on such a

¹⁰³ Jesus was praised indirectly in *The Discourses*, but the common understanding of him was one of an “unarmed prophet.” Machiavelli may argue in this apparent distortion that Jesus was contrived that way by the weakness of Christianity, in their selection of the New Testament. He also does give advice that reverting to form an army without the adequate means would also be unwise. Strauss makes the division of Jesus and Mohammed on this notion; one prophet being “unarmed,” and the other being the “armed prophet.” It is almost similar to the opposition of Christianity and Islam based on simplistic views. We can never entirely and clearly know of the thoughts and acts of Jesus and Mohammed, but if Machiavelli wishes to keep a renewed form of Christianity, including lessons based on ancient paganism, then there should be no animosity to the Muslim people that Christianity has established in its horrible history of warfare with the Crusades. Ironically, pacification and humility turned into catastrophic warfare. Weakness makes for easy false beliefs in simplistic views of a complicated world. An enemy is easily identified, and those people easily perceive themselves as right since they can, in abusive ways, justify whatever action they decide upon by wordings in the Bible or the Koran. Violence and terror comes from a weakness generated by the non-acceptance of the nature of the life, with the false belief that it can be controlled by man, rather than having the strength in accepting that man is a part of the nature of earth. This is the primary factor which identifies the controversy between ancient paganism and western monotheistic religions, and the opposition between the ancient and the modern. Machiavelli indirectly provides the means to ponder on such matters.

foundation; so that he endured much toil in acquiring and little maintaining it” (Machiavelli 1980: 35). It is a lesson of the need of authoritative features for a republic to grow, the foundational feature to be established, and the making of new alliances as helpful for maintenance.

Even though Machiavelli states, that this is a “lesser example” it is one of the most essential aspects in his works on the nature of leaders. The most excellent high are derived from experiences in the low. We see this in the stories of Theseus, Romulus, and Moses. One can even add Michele Di Landi, that barefoot boy, who became a noble princely republican ruler. Furthermore, one can even add Machiavelli himself.

Machiavelli re-iterates the lessons interpreted from the “Epistle Dedicatory” of the features for the needed hero to conquer the oppressed situation. It is a lesson that states that the new leader must come from both the high and low in blood, experience, or knowledge. This opposes the institutional framework of power, and the modern educational framework of the class structure of society. The excellent high seems to come from the low, even the peasants, those who contrive noble, virtuous features that form excellence.¹⁰⁴ On this feature, Machiavelli is closer to the contemporary that delimits many modern conceptions. Machiavelli’s understanding of excellence is far above the goals of modern politics.

His uniqueness and originality becomes more evident in considering his literary tactics. For a proper understanding of the inconsistencies and ambiguities evident in *The Prince*, one must have a contemporary understanding of the satirical element of literary discourse. The drive to excellence, prudence, virtue, and honour mockingly criticizes the practices of the princes and republican leaders of his day.

¹⁰⁴ This is a recognition made by Nietzsche as well, as he states in his *Beyond Good and Evil: Preludes to a Philosophy of the Future*, Aphorism 263: “it is possible that even among the common people, among the less educated, especially among peasants, one finds today more *relative* nobility of taste and tactful reverence than among the newspaper-reading *demi-monde* of the spirit, the educated” (Nietzsche 1966: 213).

4.3.4. Inconsistency and Ambiguity: Effects on the Understanding of *The Prince*

There are innumerate different interpretations, positions, and understandings of *The Prince* that is repeated in every article on the matter. Even in contemporary scholars, the “duality” interpreted from Machiavelli’s works is difficult to comprehend. There are glimpses of foundational principles and political, historical, and religious favourableness that seem clear, but are confounded at times in a clear reading of *The Prince*. It leads to the question: why? It appears that the satirical use in literariness can lead to a feasible answer.

There are consistencies in the “modes and orders” of doing things properly to eradicate the political chaos. Chapters IX and X, “Civil Principates,” and “Strengths of Principates,” speaks out that a prince must arm himself with his own arms, and the chapters display clearly the uselessness and destructiveness of employing mercenary troops. Chapter XI, “Ecclesiastical Principates,” is the one outside of the formation of any orderly pattern, and its attributes have been discussed in the previous chapter of this work. Chapter XII, “Kinds of Militia,” attempts to form foundations upon which all regimes, according to him, must rely. These foundations are “good laws and good arms,” and this is clearly linked to the study of the “Kinds of Militia There Are And About Mercenary Soldiers,” as the title indicates. Further on, in Chapters XIII and XIV, “Of Soldiers: Auxiliaries, Mixed and One’s Own,” and “What A Prince Should Do About the Militia,” he displays the general methods and linkage of the militia and good laws for good ruling that seem to be proven by useful examples in all circumstances. In Chapter XIII, he identifies his faith in virtue with the security of a *patria* “having its own arms,” and despoiling the mercenaries (Machiavelli 1980: 84). In Chapter XIV, he states the fact that one can easily lose the states without having its own arms; and we see that, for Machiavelli, it is a loss in a form of art, the art of war: “the cause that makes you lose it is to neglect this art, and the cause that makes you acquire it is to be professed in this art” (Machiavelli 1980: 88). But in Chapter XV, “On

Praise and Blame,”¹⁰⁵ onwards, we return again to the “strange” inconsistencies, and at the same time, as Wisser states, this last section of the work “has contributed to his image as a ruthless and immoral practitioner of power politics” (Wisser 1982: 137). One can find many quotations to indicate this immoral ruthlessness:

Hence, it is for a prince, if he wishes to maintain himself, to learn to be able to be not good, and to use it and not to use it according to the necessity (Machiavelli 1980: 93).

it is wholly necessary not to care about the name cruelty. Without that name, one cannot keep his army united or disposed to any deed (Machiavelli 1980: 102).

Let a prince then win and maintain the state – the means will always be judged honourable and will be praised by everyone, for the vulgar are always taken in by the appearance and the outcome of a thing, and in this world there is no one but the vulgar (Machiavelli 1980: 109).¹⁰⁶

How does immoral ruthlessness come about by someone who claims the need of civic loyalty, civic virtue, and civil religion as key elements to establish a good republican authority? With the acknowledgement of his literary artistry, a satire of the prince can be perceived. In doing so, he revealed the cruel mentality of the next distinct period in history, the modern.

The inconsistency, ambiguity and strange confusion comes about most prominently in Chapters VII and VIII, “Of New Principates Which By the Arms of Others and Fortune Are Acquired,” and “Of Those Who Through Wickedness Attain To The Principates,” which are tied to the others. In Chapter VII, the obverse situation of Hiero’s is mentioned: princes, who have acquired so by fortune, have “little toil,” but with “much [toil] do they maintain it” (Machiavelli 1980: 41). A man who acquires it so easily, “cannot know how to command” it. The chapter is a repetition of the previous but is one with obverse details and arguments. The comparison is made of Francesco Sforza and Cesare Borgia. Sforza, with his “own great virtue,” acquired power with a “thousand pains,” yet “he with little toil

¹⁰⁵ This is a common shortened version of the chapter title, which is “Of Those Things for Which Men And Especially Princes are Praised or Blamed.”

¹⁰⁶ The title of Chapter XVII is “Of Cruelty and Pity: And If It Is Better To Be Loved Than Feared, Or The Contrary.” The title of Chapter XVIII is “In What Mode Princes Ought To Keep Faith.”

maintained” (Machiavelli 1980: 42).¹⁰⁷ But ironically, Borgia had no success in maintenance. Yet the lesson continued that if foundations of virtuous authority have not been laid down, only great virtue can replace that lack; and this led Machiavelli to write, in relative length, on Borgia, who had no success in maintaining authority.

Cesare Borgia, “whom the vulgar called the Duke of Valentino,” acquired the state with his illegitimate father’s fortune, “and with the same lost it” (Machiavelli VII, 1980: 42). He lost his potential for “great foundations for future powers” by the “malignity of fortune” (Machiavelli 1980: 42). As mentioned earlier, Machiavelli had partial sympathy for Cesare Borgia, since he knew the character of his father, and without virtue he tried to acquire power over all of Italy by the spread of Papal States.¹⁰⁸ Sympathy was made for him because this was an aim that most princes in Italy should have had, but none of them did. Others were interested in private power over their own territory. Yet the aim of the Church had little *virtu*. The malignity of fortune ended Borgia’s process that Machiavelli also partially shared. But the other use of sympathy implies the acceptance of the lack of human dignity in those harmed by others, and by the viciousness of the times. We are confusingly displayed the ‘greatness’ in the activities of Borgia, representing the Church in amongst the power politics of Italy, when it is clearly established that Machiavelli was against the spread of Italy by the Church. The disorder of the princedoms, the competition and animosity among republics, and the power of the Papal States created the chaotic divisions in Italy.

Machiavelli continues in this long story of Cesare Borgia in Chapter VII. At first, we see Cesare as being used by his father, Pope Alexander VI, in the attempt at acquisition: “in wishing to make the Duke, his son, to become great” (Machiavelli 1980: 42). He states the opposition of the Borgias against the Orsini’s and Collonna’s, two of the greater families of Roman nobility, who also struggled

¹⁰⁷ The success of Francesco Sforza, to not only acquire, but also maintain the state of Milan, is ironically just barely mentioned in Chapter VII, while he spends the next almost seven pages on Borgia, who could not maintain his success.

¹⁰⁸ Being in charge of foreign affairs, Machiavelli actually had personal meetings with Cesare Borgia. It was done at the same time that Leonardo Da Vinci laboured for Borgia. Friendship was established between Da Vinci and Machiavelli (See Sydney Anglo, *Machiavelli-The First Century: Studies in Enthusiasm, Hostility, and Irrelevance*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005).

with each other over centuries for the control of Rome and the Papacy. Then, the story proceeded by including King Louis of France, and relations with the Venetians and Milan. The complexities expanded, including the activities in Urbino, Perugia, and Romagna:

Having thus extinguished these chieftains, and reduced their partisans into his friends, the Duke sufficiently had in range good foundation for his power, having all Romagna with the Duchy of Urbino;¹⁰⁹ but principally he appeared to have acquired the friendship of the Romagna, gaining to himself all its people as they began to taste the good that was to be theirs (Machiavelli 1980: 44).

He had success in power; and in the next paragraph, Machiavelli calls this particular activity “worthy of notice and of imitation” (Machiavelli 1980: 44). Romagna was “full of robberies and factional quarrels” so he appointed Remirro de Orco, “a cruel and expeditious man, to whom he gave the fullest power” (Machiavelli 1980: 45). Then, a series of bizarre confusing situations with literary artistry arrives.

Remirro de Orco, the cruel man, “reduced” Romagna to “peace and unity.” The Duke then judged that “such excessive authority was not necessary” (Machiavelli 1980: 45). Machiavelli states that the Duke manipulated the minds of the people and did some arrangements to break up the unity and peace, knowing that hatred would easily be generated, since the cruel times in this region of Romagna were not that long before, and that hatred would be directed to the new minister. The mentality of the people could be easily coerced to the benefit of the leader. All this happened since Borgia found it suitable to have de Orco “placed...in the piazza in Cesena in two pieces, with a piece of wood and a bloody knife alongside. The ferocity of that spectacle left the people at the same time satisfied and stupified” (Machiavelli 1980: 45). The next line was: “But let us return to where we left off.”

¹⁰⁹ The potential for confusion of identity should be repeated. “Lorenzo the Magnificent,” or “Lorenzo II,” or Lorenzo di Piero de’Medici, the main prince to whom *The Prince* is addressed, was proclaimed the Duke of Urbino in 1516. His uncle Giovanni became Pope Leo X in 1513, and an uncle, who was an adopted son of the real *Lorenzo the Magnificent*, the grandfather of Lorenzo II, became Pope Clement VII. The generation of the de’Medici family after *Lorenzo the Magnificent* had close ties with the Papal States.

Here we have a description of a brutal execution of de Orco followed by a quick change in the subject. Machiavelli reveals the brute beast-like trickery of Borgia to acquire power and the coercion of the satisfaction of the people for negative ends. This is similar to the cruel conspiracy to which Machiavelli spends so much time describing in *The Discourses* III, 6.¹¹⁰ And in Chapter XVII, “Of Cruelty and Pity,” he states the cruelty of Cesare Borgia and compares him to the needed cruelty for the success of the acquisition of power by Hannibal. But Hannibal was conquered by the Romans. Hannibal proceeded “with acquisition” and, with power-play trickery, established relations, but only by fortune he luckily acted at the right moment in the proper situation to acquire power. But that luck did not last long. With activities motivated by brutal lust for power, he was finally defeated by the Romans.

There are similar general occurrences in his description of Agathocles of Sicily, and Liverotto (or “Oliverotto”) of Fermo, in Chapter VIII. But the final decision of Machiavelli seems in contrast to the decision on Borgia. The lesson seems to be, as the title of chapter indicates, that “Those Through Wickedness Attain to the Principate.” “Neither of which is wholly attributable to fortune or virtue,” but a comparison is made to them, as “one ancient, the other modern” (Machiavelli 1980: 51). Agathocles, the ancient Sicilian, “led a wicked life at every stage; nevertheless, he accompanied his wickedness with such virtue of mind and body” (Machiavelli 1980: 51). Liverotto, the modern, where “it seemed to him a servile thing to be under others,” in his power-play game even committed parricide on his uncle, Giovanni Fogliani. Liverotto, in his concern for “future wickedness,” believed he was all-powerful, yet was murdered due to being “deceived by Cesare Borgia,” who played a similar murderous power-play game, and through similar trickery of an appearance of an essential meeting with other leaders, “strangled” Liverotto, and his follower Vitellozo (Machiavelli 1980: 54).¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ The title of *The Discourses* III, 6 is “Conspiracies” and it is the longest chapter in all of his works.

¹¹¹ Machiavelli describes Vitellozo as one “who had been his teacher in virtue and wickedness.” The term “wickedness” is acknowledged, but he also uses virtue, that was at least taught to Liverotto. Also, de Alvarez stated this in his introduction: “Nowhere is this ambiguity of virtue made more emphatic than at the conclusion of the story of Oliverotto da Fermo in Chapter VIII” (de Alvarez, xxii). (For some reason, de Alvarez writes “Liverotto” in the translation of the text, and “Oliverotto”

The judgement on these two examples: “comes to pass from cruelty badly used, and well used” (Machiavelli 1980: 54). The well-used are the cruelties committed “once and for all,” and “converted to the greatest possible utility of the subjects” (Machiavelli 1980: 54). This was done by the ancient Agathocles. The badly used “are those [cruelties] which even though they are at the beginning few, soon increase with time, rather than become extinguished,” which was done by Oliverotto (Machiavelli 1980: 54). For Agathocles, with “the first mode,” he was “able to have some remedy for their state with God and with men” (Machiavelli 1980: 54-55). For “the others,” like Oliverotto: “it is impossible that they maintain themselves” (Machiavelli, 1980: 55). Machiavelli displayed, in these two examples, that the ancient is better than his modern. He also indicated the numerous complexities in assessing a judgement of ‘good’ or ‘evil’ upon matters on the extent of either *virtu* or *Fortuna* on appropriate or destructive cruelties; and that there is more to learn from the ancient than the modern. The “newness” in the use of power by his “modern” example, only created the continuance of vicious wickedness.

An identity of the many complexities is important. Both Borgia and Agathocles do not come close to the religious virtue displayed in Moses. But “for necessity coming from adverse times,” “you cannot be in time with the bad, nor will the good that you do help you” (Machiavelli 1980: 55). Machiavelli couples virtue with wickedness, when the typical conception sees them as opposing tendencies. As one can see, simplistic interpretations through reliance on the dependence on traditional religious interpretations, classical metaphysical views, or on modern rationale, has obviously led to conflicting and destructive errors.

We have an ironic play with the incentive meanings of “greatness” in the description of the Church, and Cesare Borgia. Machiavelli’s use of “praise” to describe him is ironic. Borgia, in Machiavelli’s other writings, is far differently acclaimed than he is in *The Prince*: “But in the *Legazione*, Machiavelli never once refers to the military capacity of the duke or praises the courage or discipline of his army” (Mattingly 1957-1958: 488). Mattingly also cites a comment from the work of Gabriele Pepe, *La Politica di Borgia*, where she states that, “the duke did nothing

in his “Introduction”). For me, the killing of de Orco was even more emphatic and did not make virtue “ambiguous,” but made viciousness clear.

to end factional strife and anarchy in Romagna; he merely superimposed the brutal rule of his Spanish captains on top of it” (Mattingly 1957-1958: 487). And here is Machiavelli’s own honest description of the condition under Borgia’s command, in a letter of December 14, 1502:

They have devoured everything here except the stones...here in the Romagna they are behaving just as they did in Tuscany last year, and they show no more discipline and no less confusion than they did then...[Landucci, another political analyst, stated in his diary, that ‘none of the foreign armies that had crossed Tuscany in the past seven years had behaved so abominably as these Italians under the papal banner’] (Mattingly 1957-1958: 488).

There is no denying that one of Machiavelli’s lessons is that in a time of chaotic turmoil, there is a *temporal* need for actions that are opposed to the general morality of good and evil, largely established - even in today’s secular times - from Christianity. But this is only a temporal and minimal goal within all of the advocates of Machiavelli.

Skinner tells us that it was Machiavelli’s “first political lesson” that led to this summary of his political writings: “His mature political writings are full of warnings about the folly of procrastinating, the danger of appearing irresolute, the need for bold and rapid action in war and politics alike” (Skinner 1981: 7).¹¹² A

¹¹² Quentin Skinner, in his book, *Machiavelli*, shows Machiavelli’s full picture of Borgia from citations taken from Machiavelli’s *Legazione* (*The Legations* or “Official Missions for the Florentine Government”). It displays the limit in the common interpretation aligned to praise by Machiavelli for Borgia, and severely reduces it to a small, reserved scale. In both Borgia and Julius II, we see some success in the use of power, but through *hubris*, no success in authority. Through his official task of not only being a minister of foreign affairs but also the head of military affairs in the Ten of War of Florence, Machiavelli was perturbed about the rise of the new and threatening military power of Borgia within Italy’s own borders. Machiavelli was sent to meet Borgia after he acquired the title of Duke of Romagna, and he had “*tete-a-tete*,” head-to-head, discussions with him. In *Legazione*, he states that Borgia was “super-human in courage,” “a man of great designs,” one “capable of attaining anything he wants,” he “controls everything by himself,” “governs with extreme secrecy,” and “deciding and executing his plans with disastrous suddenness.” Machiavelli at the start was uneasy about Borgia’s hubristic self-confidence, and that the “duke’s government was formed on nothing more than Fortune” (Skinner 1981: 10). He later made a decision “not to speak with him.” (*Legazione*, II. 36) He watched the “two masters of duplicity,” Borgia and his illegitimate father, Pope Alexander VI, and “saw that his initial doubts about the duke’s abilities had been thoroughly justified” (Skinner 1981: 10). Skinner states, “Borgia continued to place an altogether hubristic reliance on his uninterrupted run of good luck” (Skinner 1981: 11). Machiavelli states further in the *Legazione* (L631) that the duke “has been stupefied” by the “blows of Fortune, which he is not accustomed to taste” (Skinner 1981: 11). His Ten of War in Florence “can henceforth act without

fine-line is also drawn through his political writings that potential success can easily be turned into continual ruin. The final verdict on Borgia, according to Skinner, was “an adverse one”: “he gained his position through his father’s Fortune and he lost it as soon as Fortune deserted him” (Skinner 1981: 12). A seemingly strong courageous man easily collapsed through “a malicious stroke of Fortune.” Borgia lacked the foresight and failed to see the dangers inherent in supporting Rouen, who was a cardinal under the power of Borgia’s father who, after the Pope’s death, had become “a well-known enemy” (Skinner 1981: 11). In Machiavelli’s *Legazione*, “Legations,” he was arrested by Pope Julius II in 1503: “Since the Duke did not wish to agree to give up those cities, the Pope has had him arrested” (Machiavelli 1965: 156). At first, Machiavelli actually asserted that Borgia may have been “thrown into the Tiber as the Pope commanded” (Machiavelli 1965: 157).¹¹³ It was not true, but “little by little,” as Machiavelli states, “this Duke...is slipping into his grave” (Machiavelli 1965: 160). Borgia was seen as more of a problem for Italy than a potential solution.

To begin to answer these difficulties in interpretation in *The Prince*, one start - but only a start - is to identify what is not a direct lesson but a “cynical immorality,” even on some of his own proposals, to ironically display the extent of immorality in the leaders and some of the people - those who are ‘praised’, but really ought to be blamed. Some of the addresses, in one literary style or another, is a mockery of those leaders. *The Prince* is “cunningly planned” (de Alvarez 1980: xxi) by Machiavelli, thus revealing the cunning, degenerating features of political leaders. Later on we will see that this is only a stem of Machiavelli’s contradictory notions. Machiavelli finishes Chapter VIII with personal address to the prince by stating that “you,” cannot know good or evil anymore, reminiscent of another comment, that “bad fortune and good fortune do not always find lodging in just one place” (Machiavelli 1965: 50). One can easily be deceived in the chaos of Italian power politics, and other chaotic conditions that can particularly harm a prince.

having to think of him anymore.” From both Borgia and Julius II, a lesson can be learned that the appearance of strength easily turns to weakness.

¹¹³ He further states that “I do not confirm it and I do not deny it” (*Legazione*, 13, 61) (Skinner 1981: 12)

Literary play games are also made with the terms “power” and “greatness,” and “power” and “authority.” One can say that when Machiavelli writes the activities of Borgia in support of his illegitimate father, that “made the Church great” (Machiavelli 1980: 17), it should have been “made the Church powerful.” Instead of “adding to the spiritual,” it should have been “adding to the temporal,” which is a spiritual crisis (Machiavelli 1980: 17). In another clause within the same Chapter III, “Mixed Principates,” Machiavelli writes, “it gives to her so much authority,” which is later explained as “so much of the temporal,” intermixing the usual lesson of temporality being linked to acquisition of power, and authority being linked to its long-standing maintenance.¹¹⁴

Machiavelli ironically displays the cunning and brutal play-games of political power, where either the leaders or the people can be so easily coerced into immoral, inhuman activities, giving praise for things that should be blamed, and they easily believe in aspects that are unbelievable on the level of human dignity. We can say that Machiavelli is clear in the fore-mentioned simple but intricate assertion, that acquisition itself is only marginally proper, and is hinted at being improper. The value of authority maintained through ancient virtuous republicanism overrides the complete focus on acquisition by power (Machiavelli 1980: 17-18).¹¹⁵ An intricate understanding of virtue is required.

De Alvarez, in his “Introduction,” identifies three different meanings for that most essential word *virtu*: “Why does he use the same word?” he asks. To this point, “we are left with a doubt as to whether men like Cesare Borgia are virtuous or vicious” (de Alvarez, 1980: xxi). It can be extended to the use of the same word for alternate meanings such as Machiavelli’s intertwining use, at times, of “greatness,” the “spiritual,” and “authority.” De Alvarez returns to *The Discourses*

¹¹⁴ De Alvarez mentions this important recognition in footnote 23 of Chapter III: “One should note that he never uses the word power, which is otherwise very much in evidence in this chapter, whenever he mentions the Church.” (de Alvarez 1980: 23) But power is not in the building of arms for Machiavelli, as de Alvarez later asserts in the same footnote. The building of arms in an appropriate manner is more directed towards the principles of authority than directly to power.

¹¹⁵ As previously noted and a good reminder in Chapter III of *The Prince*, that it is “very natural and ordinary to desire to acquire” and “they,” the princes, “are always praised or not blamed,” but “to do so in every mode,” or in any manner whatsoever of acquiring power, “here is the error and the blame” (Machiavelli 1980: 17-18). This extricate claim is opposed to many scholarly interpretations of *The Prince*, of giving practical advice on being a ruthless political leader.

and the section entitled the “Roman Religion.” Chapter XI of each of these books, *The Discourses* and *The Prince*, have the similar topic – religion – as the title in *The Prince* is “Ecclesiastical Principates.” As we have seen in the previous chapter, the virtuous civil religion is brought to the forefront to address the political and historical contentions of the modern *Prince* and the ancient *Discourses*.

Under these contexts, Cesare Borgia was nowhere near the level of this meaning of *virtu* that is required to be the founder of a new homeland. The prince has “less need of religion than a republic” (de Alvarez, 3, xxii). In other words, a prince could not achieve the re-establishment of an ordered state at the level of ancient republicanism. Faith in a religion is required that is closely linked to civic loyalty, civic *virtu* - a civil religion - where principles are maintained as they are in the constitutional authority of the Roman Republic.

With de Alvarez, in the attempt to answer the confusion, ambiguity, and inconsistency of important principles, we have arrived at this standpoint: that a good interpretation of *The Prince* requires the placing of lessons derived from, mostly, but not entirely, *The Discourses*. But de Alvarez does not go much further than this. He reveals the intricacy in an intensive studious manner and supportive examples of the contrasting meanings of *virtu*, as many Straussian scholars do, but the answer for such a disturbing and disrupting confusion does not take in all of its implications. To “make the reader more attentive” and that the author wants us “to think of what the reason might be” (de Alvarez 1980: xxii), even though it may be true, it does not measure up to the previous studious integrity. Saying the reader should be more attentive is not ground-breaking news. If read carefully, *Machiavelli's works can be ground-breaking*.

In being led to consider the implications of these somewhat limited summaries and answers, let us go back to his notion of being on a “path not yet trodden by anyone.” One begins to see that this cyclical process newly reveals breaking the grounds of classical and modern political theory, including Platonic to modern metaphysics, and monotheistic religions. Let us take a further look at this “ground-breaking” process, as a part of his “path not yet trodden by anyone.” We may see other “patterns in the weave of his thought” (de Alvarez 1980: xxii).

4.3.5. The Blending of Satire and Seriousness

This amalgamation can be claimed as another feature of Machiavelli's path not yet trodden, a unique literary style that includes effectual teaching methods with literary greatness. We have been introduced to the literary style of ambiguity and confusion through an ironic display that engenders satire on different levels, from criticism, to mockery, to complete cynicism. Within the play of ironic humour, one must assess the seriousness in his exemplary lessons. Part of that path appears to be a literary one. It enhances strength in creativity in order to deal with the cold-blooded facts of historical occurrences. The implications from this line of study are monumental in the historical sense of Western identity, and can provide creative means to address the ineptitude and incapability of current standardized conditions. We are only starting to tread the path to a fuller understanding of Machiavelli.

It has been clearly stated by Croce that the teachings of Machiavelli's literary style are opposed to the rationale of modern science. The behaviour of history, the nature of religion, and the power games of politics cannot be understood under the rubric of the modern version of "science," the rational ordered analysis that comes to an agreeable answer:

The notion that this little book was meant as a serious, scientific treatise on government contradicts everything we know about Machiavelli's life, about his writings, and about the history of his times...this proposition asks us to believe that Niccolo Machiavelli deliberately wrote a handbook meant to help a tyrant rule the once free people of Florence (Mattingly 1957-1958: 484).

In the end, we have returned to incorporating the factors of authority to properly understand *The Prince*. In an overarching sense, there is no harsh opposition between *The Prince* and *The Discourses* or any of his other writings. He never left his favouring of an ancient republican form of government. In *The Prince*, he knew the contrast he was revealing. But what certain thinkers and actors took as serious doctrine could easily have been just an element in a serio-comical satire, a cynical joke. It reminds one of Nietzsche's description of Machiavelli and *The Prince*, in its "allegriissimo" style of boisterous and capricious humour:

But how could the German language, even in the prose of Lessing, imitate the *tempo* of Machiavelli, who in his

Principe lets us breathe the dry refined air of Florence and cannot help presenting the most serious matters in a boisterous *allegriissimo*,¹¹⁶ perhaps not without a malicious artistic sense of the contrast he risks – long, difficult, hard, dangerous thoughts and the *tempo* of the gallop and the very best, most capricious humour? (Nietzsche 1966: 40-41).

We have indicated the strong tendencies of ambiguities and confusing inconsistencies. Such strange factors are vestiges of satirical mockery, a very capricious humour. Through the recognition of contrasting inconsistencies and ambiguous confusion a satire is made directly of the prince and indirectly to other princes, and is identified through the change to the second person familiar tense. It can be argued that a boisterous satire is cohesively used in these changes. Satire can be attributed to paragraphs or sections of chapters that contain the personal address to the prince. Seriousness calls for a good interpretation through a good knowledge of history, and an understanding of the present condition. The task of a studious reader, that merits good interpretation, is on the decision of satire or seriousness in the readings of certain sentences, paragraphs, sections, and chapters.

Chapters XII to XXIV have elements of satire within them.¹¹⁷ In Chapters IX and X there is little satirical evidence, since the topics Machiavelli takes seriously, that is, “Civil Principates,” and “Strength of Principates.” In Chapters XIV and XV we have a mixture of seriousness and satire. In Chapter XIV we are introduced to “the art of war” that is combined with the goal of both “war and peace,” which requires knowledge of the “works and intellect,” or thoughts on war and the excellence of man. The prince should read and know the histories of such practices. This is the point where personal contact is made. Chapter XV starts seriously with the distinction made by “effectual truth” implying that there is an ineffectual use of ‘truth’. Effectual truth has an effect and is put into practice. The lesson is that good practice is not without good theory. Bad theory makes bad practice and vice versa. But then we are introduced to the “infamy of vices” of the people that ruins the state, providing for the conflicting use of ‘good’ and ‘evil’.

¹¹⁶ Extremely merry and cheerful manner.

¹¹⁷ Eighteen chapters of the twenty-six, I would argue, have satirical elements within them.

The satirical element reveals the inability of the prince to harbour the intricacies and complexities of 'good' and 'evil', asking for an abrupt change in human nature, that it seems is impossible for most princes.

Confusion arises when the topic switches back to Cesare Borgia in Chapter XVII, "Of Cruelty and Pity: And If It Is Better to Be Loved or Feared, Or The Contrary." Machiavelli combines cruelty with pity. But there is another fine-line being drawn, not clearly noticeable, between "cruel pity" and "cruelty well-used" just as there is between "lust for power" and the "power of necessity." A clear lesson is hinted at in this way: "I say that every prince ought to desire to be reputed to be full of pity and not to be cruel; nevertheless, he ought to take heed that he not use this pity badly" (Machiavelli 1980: 100). The next sentence appears to show praise of Cesare Borgia: "Cesare Borgia was held to be cruel; nevertheless, that cruelty of his repaired the Romagna, united it." But in the wording of the last clause, his 'success' becomes ambiguous: "*ridottola in pace e in fede*": "reduced it to peace and faith" (Machiavelli 1980: 100).

Success is ambiguously attributed to Borgia, with his "infamy of cruelty," which is done to manipulate the people into corruption. In the personally addressed section, we see the advice that it is "safer to be feared, than loved" (Machiavelli 1980: 101). What the new prince had to contend with - the people - are "ungrateful, fickle, hypocrites, and dissemblers, evaders of dangers, lovers of gain" (Machiavelli 1980: 101). In such a situation, the cruelty of the people can easily manipulate the love of a prince: "love is maintained by a chain of obligation which, because of men's wickedness, is broken on every occasion of their own utility" (Machiavelli 1980: 101). It seems the people have manipulative power over the prince. The weak and manipulative ones can be controlled by fear of punishment: "but fear is maintained by a dread of punishment which never abandons you" (Machiavelli 1980:101). But can this fear "never abandon you"? It can but only in a state of political and societal chaos. He repeats the need of "inhuman cruelty," but the distinct conclusion is not the same as the aforementioned advice: "he ought only to avoid hatred" (Machiavelli 1980: 103), and paints a picture that the requirements of the new prince are more or less impossible, especially for his current prince with the

play of relations between the prince and the people. Love or fear, through weakness, can be a detriment to either the prince or the people.

Satire in the following chapter, “In What Mode Princes Ought To Keep Faith,” is given through the “cunning” need to “keep faith.” With personal address the need for the new prince to be both a man and a beast, who quickly changes his human nature within a sharp abrupt adjustment. The beast-like lessons of fox and the lion are adhered to. Not only should the prince have beast-like qualities, but also “to appear to have them” (Machiavelli 1980: 108). Therefore, he must be “a great hypocrite and deceiver.” It should not be forgotten that on some level, there is seriousness within the advice he gives, but the contrasting notions are purposely exaggerated, where, with the ambiguities and contrasting confusion, indirectly display that his personal prince is nowhere near the necessities needed to be successful. However, there is evidence of such beast-like behaviour in Machiavelli’s own modern princes. One can also read under this, of the impossibility of the continuation of princedoms as a key argument within Machiavelli.

Yet there is some advice even on these proceedings: “not to depart from good, if he is able, but to know how to enter the bad, when necessitated to do so” (Machiavelli 1980: 109). Here we see again the drawing line, that shifts under the nature of conditions, of ‘good’ and ‘bad’, or between power used for necessity leading to authority, and simply “lust for power.”¹¹⁸ It involves the interchange of moral values in different conditions. All of such qualities have, or appear to have, “all pity, all faith, all integrity, all humanity, and all religion” (Machiavelli 1980: 109). These difficulties and hard to comprehend qualities have to at least appear to justify all of the most difficult decisions regarding the risks and threats on human life. And then the commonly known statement comes about, “one looks to the

¹¹⁸ It appears that Machiavelli’s distinction among power of necessity and lust for power with their relation to authority has provided this insight by Michael Ignatieff in his chapter, “Democracy and the Lesser Evil,” on the limitation of democracy to respond to terrorism: “the best way to minimize harm is to maintain a clear distinction in our minds between what necessity can justify and what the morality of dignity can justify, and never to allow the justification of necessity – risk, threat, imminent danger – to dissolve the morally problematic character of necessary measures.” These measures “must be strictly...kept under the adversarial scrutiny of an open democratic system” (Ignatieff 2004: 8).

end,”¹¹⁹ usually mistranslated by the latter-modern framework as “the end justifies the means.” It is almost entirely true, that in chaotic times, “in this world there is no one but the vulgar” (Machiavelli 1980: 109).

For most of Chapter XIX, “Avoiding Contempt and Hatred,” there are serious matters with no personal address until later on in the chapter. Being what we have called serious, it is important that one is “called to think.” For the prince, there is hatred in “rapaciousness, usurpation of goods and women of his subjects” (Machiavelli 1980: 111), that he must protect himself against. He must portray his judgements as “irrevocable,” so that “no one thinks of deceiving him or getting around him” (Machiavelli 1980: 111). He must acquire the “good will of the people,” even though they can easily deceive him, even if he is good. The indication is made of the “living times of imperium,” and the problems with the Roman Empire, outside of the Roman Republic, are quickly mentioned.¹²⁰ The problems, however, were with the “avarice and cruelty of the people.” They wanted “modest princes,” but ironically the modest prince could not do the job. The new prince has to “contend with the ambition [*ambizione*] of the great and the insolence of the people” (Machiavelli 1980: 114). The conditions of the empire created an opposition of the wants and desires of the soldiers and those of the people. The *imperium* condition is one where great virtuous men can also be murdered: “they find someone who has always lived excellently and shown great virtue of mind and who, nevertheless, lost the imperium, or was even murdered by his own who conspired against him” (Machiavelli 1980: 114). Irony is contained in the

¹¹⁹ Reading over the original version, it appears that de Alvarez is correct in changing the usual common interpretation of this as “the ends justify the means.” It seems that the typical modern translation shows its own understanding of the inhuman tendencies of fierceness in acquiring ends at any means. Machiavelli is close, but he does not advocate such fierceness. A fine line is drawn between influential concepts that the good and the bad, and other opposing ends, can be changed through simple means.

¹²⁰ This brings up the point of a recent change in historical views of the cause of the decline of the Roman Republic. Through the intense belief in democracy, the flaws were usually assessed in the nobility. But in contemporary reference, instead of the flaws in nobility, the opposite has been argued, that the fault is with the democratic Tribunes of the People, with which Machiavelli obviously complies. As we see in the historian Charles Freeman’s chapter, “From Gracchi to Caesar, 133-55 BC,” the Gracchi revolt or revolution was generated through the lust for power of the people. This is the new historical view that is similar to Machiavelli’s assessment of the Gracchi (Freeman 1996: 337-357).

mentioning that this may be “contrary to my opinion” (Machiavelli 1980: 114). He obviously mentions it for the reason of calling those to think, and enlightening those in the situations of the foul elements of the Roman Empire and the similarities to his present condition. The imperial condition led also to the conspiracy of the people, something upon which Machiavelli spends so much study.

The mixture of good and evil continues: “Hatred is acquired by good works as well as evil ones” (Machiavelli 1980: 114). The prince is forced “to be not good” (Machiavelli 1980: 114). The personal address arises on page 116. A confusing treacherous situation is involved, where the new prince must accept the corrupt people, or “must follow their humour to satisfy them” (Machiavelli 1980: 116). But this is disrupted by a dash with the following statement of satirical intent: “- and then good works are your enemies” (Machiavelli 1980: 116). He ironically uses the word “humour”¹²¹ to which we all must comply.

In Chapter XXII, “Of Those Who Princes Have As Secretaries,” advice is given on choosing assigning ministers. A prince must be careful of those who seek their own private interests. The prince must give an appearance of goodness to the ministers in providing honourable things, but the honours acquired may make him “desire more honours.” He may deceive the prince with his “invention” of personal interests. Again, Machiavelli seems to conceive of activities that become even more popular in modern times, but his advice is a warning on such procedures.

The following chapter, XXIII, “In What Mode Flatterers Are To Be Avoided,” involves much of the critical satire of flattery: “the flatterers of whom courts are full,” he states, “deceive themselves that they with difficulty defend

¹²¹ *Umore* is the Italian word translated as “humour.” But the meaning is not the same. *Umore* refers more to mood and temper rather than a necessarily laughing one. Parel reveals the scholarly interpretation of Machiavelli’s use of “*umore*” in his “Introduction” to *The Machiavellian Cosmos*. It is a basic concept “of the naturalism of Machiavelli’s political philosophy” (Parel 1992: 6). *Umore* “clarifies the idea of parallelism between the natural of the human body and the political organism of the state. Each follows the cycle of birth, growth decline, and death”...“Malignant humours must be purged and good ones constantly satisfied” (Parel 1992: 6). He identifies Gennaro Sasso as stating his “doctrine of humours” in *The Prince* and *The Discourses* “are fundamental to Machiavelli’s political philosophy,” that “exists in every society, as if by the law of nature” (Parel 1992: 6). Quentin Skinner considers that it is an “axiom” of “two opposed factions,” that is “the people and the rich” (Parel 1992: 6). One can generally say that *umore* is an ancient concept that envisages the personal element as one that is closely tied to politics. Further on, Parel distinguishes *umori* (humours) as a major theme in *The Discourses*, a “pre-modern science of medicine.” This is one element that contradicts the notion that Machiavelli conceived the modern state, or any state, as impersonal.

themselves from this pestilence; and the wish to defend oneself from it carries the danger of becoming contemptible” (Machiavelli 1980: 140). He then adds that the “wise men,” who one assumes truly flatter people, do “only those things about which he,” the prince, “asks and nothing else” (Machiavelli 1980: 140). His apparent “wise men” are truly not wise. Even though he gives believable advice on flattery, Machiavelli is certainly not doing what the prince usually asks in this book of advice, this “mirror of the prince.” He is doing quite the contrary. Instead of flattery for the prince, he is indirectly condemning him.

In Chapter XXIV, “Why The Princes of Italy Have Lost Their Kingdom,” the second person familiar is used only in the last paragraph. Satire is lessened. But he describes the indolence for those princes who have been in their principate for many years, and then have lost it. This is what happened to the de’Medici. There is a change to the second person tense, but satire is minimal. The chapter is a statement of what is necessary for a prince to gain authority and keep it. It relies on concrete examples, and then refers directly to Lorenzo II. He turns to a mixture of satire and seriousness in addressing Lorenzo II, for he calls for him to do things that he is likely incapable of doing.

And also, in Chapter XXIV, a direct appeal to the prince is used, since the one who “picks you up” is of no security: “one should never fall believing that someone will be found to pick you up” (Machiavelli 1980: 144). It is a depiction of chaotic nihilistic conditions of the contemporary situation to which “you,” dear prince, must “depend on you yourself and your own virtue” (Machiavelli 1980: 144). The blend of satire and seriousness displays the crazy chaotic condition that the new prince had to face. It both reveals the necessities involved, and that the new prince is useless in facing them, let alone the requirements for spreading virtuous authority beyond the confines of the city. This finishes the long stand of the last nine chapters that have some element of satire within it. The last two are on matters more easily derived from concern for authority in revealing the seriousness of the specific conditions of Italy.

The literary play of inconsistencies and ambiguities display the chaotic relations between the prince and the people. In such a set-up, the power of the

prince manipulates the people or vice versa. This 'political' organization easily sets up disorder. The disorder is revealed in Machiavelli's literary style.

4.3.6. Concluding Chapters of *The Prince*

The common topic from the more famous Chapter XXV, "How Much Fortune Is Able To Do In Human Things And In What Mode One May Oppose Her," that the cosmological element arrives in the focus on temporal conditions in Florence and Italy. We must deal with powers of nature, which is described in "the Flood," where she with "violent rivers, which when they become angry, flood the plain, destroy trees and buildings, remove earth from one place to another," and must "surrender to their impetus" (Machiavelli 1980: 146). However, men can, "in quiet times," meaning times of established authority, "make provisions with defenses and embankments," so that the rivers may "go through a canal, or their impetus would not be so licentious or so harmful" (Machiavelli 1980: 147). In turbulent times, with the powers that be, the human has little control. It can only come about if, during quiet times, could learn from history in order to make "embankments and defense" to defend against the harm of nature that is even contained within man. If not, *Fortuna* will "demonstrate her power where there is no virtue to resist her; and she turns her impetus where she knows embankments and defense to hold her have not been built" (Machiavelli 1980: 147). Whole dependence is not productive. "The prince who depends wholly on fortune," he says, "falls when she changes" (Machiavelli 1980: 147). This lesson can be clearly applied to Cesare Borgia. Adjustment to the times is made, from lessons of the past to use embankments and defense over the power of *Fortuna*. "Embankments and defense" is needed, but not only should this advice be directed solely for the modern view of nature separated from the human, but to the magnitude of ancient sacred cosmology, which includes the human nature of man.

Machiavelli goes on to show maltreatment of *Fortuna*: "for it is better to be impetuous," therefore "to beat her and knock her down" (Machiavelli 1980: 149). There are divergent from the previous good treatment requested of the prince for women subjects. Machiavelli lived through impetuous times, yet previously he stated that with the impetuous character of Julius II, he would likely fall to ruin in

the conduct required for the maintenance of authority. This appears as a partial satire, since it is only partially true. Such behaviours towards the goddess *Fortuna* may truly harm.

In the famous last chapter, “Exhortation To Liberate Italy From Barbarians,” Machiavelli did not give up the wild hope in facing the conditions of Italy: “reduced to her present terms, and that she be more enslaved than the Hebrews, more servile than the Persians, more dispersed than the Athenians, without head, without order, beaten, despoiled, torn asunder, overrun, and having borne every sort of ruin” (Machiavelli 1980: 151). Whether or not this is solely a nationalist drive for temporary concern is at least debateable. Machiavelli’s lessons are obviously beyond specific time and place. In the end, another of Machiavelli’s literary purposes was to inspire not only his present-day, but his future readers, to embark upon noble actions, even amidst times of chaos.

Primarily a key lesson in *The Prince* indirectly foresees the need of a new and unique sense of justice to confront the complexities in chaotic political situations. In a power-ridden condition, there are many complexities involved in judging upon the ‘good’ or ‘bad’. A high amount of knowledge and prudence is required to form judicial decisions in being a significant leader. They are decisions outside of the common grounds in adaptation to the condition. It leads once again to the pathway of forming a divergent consciousness in order to analyze the condition and to act upon it. The key lesson indirectly reveals that to confront the chaotic conditions, one must form a framework of thought that is “ground-breaking” on the classical philosophical, metaphysical, and religious conceptualizations, and even their modern derivations. Ground-breaking derivations outside of the classical Western view are necessary in dealing with the modern period, whether it be at its beginning, or at its end. As we will see in “Authority,” for Machiavelli, it involves a return to the ancients to “renew” for betterment in conceptualization of the condition of the modern-state, which is a necessity for significant human action and appraisal. The main lesson in *auctoritas* – authority – is the goal of forming a foundation upon which to inspire and augment civic loyalty and civil virtue, in a manner that must be unique and original, beyond the classical conceptualization and derivations of Western forms of philosophy, metaphysics, and religion.

CHAPTER V

AUTHORITY

Of authority, it may be said in the most general way that it is an attempt to interpret the conditions of power, to give the conditions of control or influence a meaning by defining an image of strength. The quest is for strength that is solid, guaranteed, and stable.

Richard Sennett, *Authority*, 1993.

Thus can the demigod, Authority
Make us pay down our offence, by weight,
The words of heaven: on whom it will, it will;
On whom it will not, so; yet still 'tis just'.
Shakespeare, *Measure to Measure* Act 1, sec. 2.

Authority requests power.

Power without authority is tyranny.

Jacques Maritain, *The Democratic Charter: Man and the State*, 1951.

5.1. Preface: Misuse of the Term 'Authority'

Authority is one of many terms in the present-day that is misused and therefore, misunderstood. The extent of its misuse measures the lack of authority today. It is that element in politics that formed the distinctiveness of the Roman Republic,¹²² which is prominent in Machiavelli's exemplary educational method. Machiavelli could sense its diminishment, since most of the examples he used for his political lessons were from the period of the decline in the Roman Republic. The lack of authority during his day is comparable to its forgetfulness today. Lessons based upon its diminishment are relevant. The pursuit of authority under these premises, again, makes Machiavelli unique in political thought. This uniqueness has a strong effect for addressing the contemporary conditions.

The term "authority" is of Roman Republican descent. Authority – *auctoritas* – was used in Roman law to designate the Senate's authority as being the key element in the mixed constitution that provided the balance between the magistrates (or Consuls) and the people. It is opposed to *potestas* (power), or empire (*imperium*), where both elements can be emancipated by either the

¹²² "Roman Republic (509 – 27 BC)" (http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic).

magistrates or the people to harm the balanced constitution of the state and its public laws. Such an argument is coherent with Machiavelli, who criticizes both the Roman Empire and the activities of the people, since they have broken up the mixed constitution of the Roman Republic (http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic).¹²³

There are confusing interrelations amongst authority and power. Both are “mutually exclusive notions” (Heywood 1994: 87). Yet, they “are often difficult in practice to disentangle” (Heywood 1994: 87). Authority, as far as Heywood is concerned, involves the willingness to obey: “When government exercises authority, its citizens obey the law peacefully and willingly; when obedience is not willingly offered, government is forced to compel it” (Heywood 1994: 87). Heywood tells us, that even “persuasion,” a minor form of power, “strictly speaking, does not involve the exercise of authority” (Heywood 1994: 87). As Arendt further contends, authority, “is commonly mistaken for some form of power or violence” (Arendt 1954: 92-93). Power involves the “widely used means of influencing the behaviour of another” (Heywood 1994: 87). Heywood indicates Max Weber’s understanding of these two notions. For Weber, power is “pressure, intimidation, coercion or violence” (Heywood 1994: 87). Authority, for Weber, is distinguished from power, because “it involves the right to influence others” (Heywood 1994: 87). The more forceful elements of power contrast more boldly with authority: “threat or exercise of force, coercion can be regarded as the antithesis of authority” (Heywood 1994: 88). Authority overlaps with power. But when elements of power increase, from the minor persuasive use of force to the major brutal display of violence, authority is abandoned.

For Machiavelli, authority generates more than just willingness to obey; it also forms a foundation of society where the people willingly perform civic loyalty, with a vocation to “love of humanity and goodness,” where they will give up their lives to support their homeland. As Max Weber states, in the “Politics as Vocation” chapter of his *Essays in Sociology* (1958): “Machiavelli in a beautiful passage...has

¹²³ The historical information given in the paragraph was a summary of the “Legislative Assemblies” section of the web-site file.

one of his heroes praise those citizens who deemed the greatness of their native city higher than the salvation of their souls” (Weber 1958: 126).

Machiavelli focuses on authority in the Roman Republic, which is claimed to be the strongest form of political order in human history. The main distinction of the Roman Republic that merits its up keeping of authority is its form of a mixed constitution that employs the participation of the three levels of governance formed under foundational principles that generate its own augmented self-growth. It continuously demonstrates, through its actions, the reason for the willingness of the people not only to obey the public laws laid down by such a confederation, but also for all men to acquire a civic loyalty where they can willingly give their lives for the preservation of a virtuous civilization, enacted by its authority.

The foundation of the Roman Republic was the cornerstone by which to measure the greatness and inauguration of authority. As far as Arendt is concerned, in modernity, we have “a loss of authority” that tinges towards a loss of an essential element in “the political realm” (Arendt 1954: 93). It is stated the “the notion of founding [of authority] is decisive” in “the revolutions of the modern age” (Arendt 1954: 136). But if that founding is not well-understood or easily forgotten, the “modern” revolution may only be a reaction that in truth involves a severing of any previous foundation.¹²⁴ This contention will be investigated throughout this analysis. There will be a constant comparison given through events recorded by Machiavelli, at least 2100 years ago, with the contemporary day.

¹²⁴ In the article “A Note on the Meaning of ‘Republic’,” by Harry Evans, he cites Professor George Winterton in his book *Monarchy to Republic*, who states that there is an obvious “shift in the meaning of the word,” republic. He observes that it was the product of the Roman Republic: “it had an association with the concept of a mixed or balanced regime which could include monarchic elements” (Evans 1992: 1). He further states, that, “this meaning was abandoned as a result of the work of the American founders, resulting in the modern dictionary meaning which denotes much the same as ‘democracy’, and refers to a regime constituted wholly on a popular basis by election of key officials.” The original interpretation comes from Cicero’s *De Republica*: “Cicero finds that none of the three classical forms of government, monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, especially in their degenerate forms of tyranny, oligarchy, and mob-rule, can properly described as republics, because each of those forms allows one element (in a democracy, a faction) to rule others” (Evans 1992: 2). The modern ‘republic’ would be discarded by Cicero and Machiavelli. They do not match the real form of the Roman Republic.

5.2. Machiavelli's Analysis of the Mixed Constitution

The foundational cornerstone that made the grounds towards which the people willingly offer themselves, lies in the concrete formulation of another factor extensively distinct in the Roman Republic: the mixed constitution. For Machiavelli, the constitution of the Roman Republic is almost synonymous with authority. The success of the mixed regime includes the balance of three government bodies, “aristocracy, the Senate, the popular assembly,” that distinct feature that made the argument that the Roman Republic was the best constitution in human history (Machiavelli 1965: 196). Authority involves the formulation of the political constitution, and its merit was in its continuous augmentation.

One of Machiavelli's tasks was “to consider the nature of the institutions of the city of Rome, and what events brought them to their perfection” (Machiavelli 1965: 196). The six types of government, the three good and the three bad, are generally similar to Plato and Aristotle's description.¹²⁵ The good can easily be corrupted to the “very bad” that are evolved from the good. The distinctions of those that are good are the ones towards public concern; and the evolving downfall of the bad is due to personal ambition, a private concern against the public. As Machiavelli states: “they all easily jump from one form to the other, for the principedom easily becomes tyrannical; the aristocracy with ease becomes a government by the few; the popular form without difficulty, changes into one that abuses liberty” (Machiavelli 1965: 197). The cyclical view of history, similar to the “grand historical cycle” generated by Polybius, displays for Machiavelli that “the founder of a state” organizes it “for a short time only,” since “no precaution can be used to make certain that it will not slip into its contrary” (Machiavelli 1965: 197).

Machiavelli displays explicit examples of the government cycle, with its decline, fall, renewal, and rise to a pinnacle; that is, its “degeneration,” its “destruction,” or “decay” and “corruption,” and the “strength” gathered through the established “endurance,” towards the “liberation” from tyranny, where the people

¹²⁵ As Polybius tells us in his *Histories*, “these pristines and corruptions are to be found in Plato and Aristotle” (Polybius 1970: 635). But Rome has escaped this dominant cyclical trend by founding a political constitution that entails all three productive elements in balance. This balance is a key element stressed by Polybius, as one that “must be maintained” (Polybius 1970: 635).

“conducted themselves according to the laws they have laid down” for “the common good” (Machiavelli 1965: 198). Machiavelli re-iterates Polybius’ *anacyclosis*:

this is the circle in which all states revolve as they are governed and govern themselves, but only a few times do they return to the same forms of government, for almost no state can have so much life that it can pass many times through these shifts and continue on its feet (Machiavelli 1965: 199).

With this, we are displayed Machiavelli’s cosmological use of eternal sameness in “the circle” occurring simultaneously with the “shifts” of temporal distinctions. And even though great civilizations rise, they also fall. In this argument mentioned in *The Discourses*, political states, of some variances of these general forms of rule, are also sanctified by the notion of eternal recurrence within cyclical history that was developed in ancient pagan religions. But the infinite nature is not in a sustenance of one form of a rise to greatness, which the modern uni-linear progress in history assumes, but a circular return after a fall; they generally will occur and recur, albeit with temporal differences.

The human greatness required to postpone the circular pattern occurs infrequently and within long periods of time of disruption. It constitutes human action, which as yet, even in contemporary times, has not been clearly pondered. There is general eternal (infinite) sameness with particular temporal differences, to which activity must be alluded and amended. If not alluded, the human will not succeed in true action to re-establish or sustain good order. If this is not done, and if they are not defeated by a “neighbouring power,” a “state may circle [turn itself] about for an infinite time in these forms of government” (Machiavelli 1965: 199).¹²⁶

Only relatively few times does human action largely impede upon the natural cycle of events. And hence, he argues, similar to Polybius, for the superiority of a mixed forms of government in their display of merited human

¹²⁶ It is the word “*rigirarsi*” in the Italian version of *The Discourses* that is translated as “circle” in this sentence (Sasso 2000: 67), yet it is more directly translated as “to turn around” “to keep turning itself” or “returns itself.” In the previous citation, “circle” is a chosen from the word “*cerchio*” (Sasso 2000: 67), which is a more direct translation of “circle.” But, again, its return is not identical. It is a general sameness with temporal distinctions (Machiavelli 1965: 199).

action, which “have been prudent in establishing laws that have recognized this defect, they have avoided each one of these kinds by itself alone and chosen one who partakes of them all,” since it “keeps watch over the others, it is more solid and stable” (Machiavelli 1965: 199). If there is any form of precaution that partially impedes the natural cosmological cycle of rise, renewal, decline and fall, it is with the mixed constitution as performed by the Roman Republic. Therefore, in “return to the beginning of our discussion,” the “*Roman method is the best*”: (Machiavelli 1965: 211):

I believe the Roman method must be followed, and not that of the other states, because to find a course half way between one and the other I believe not possible. Those enmities rising between the people and the Senate must be born, being taken as an evil necessary to the attainment of Roman greatness...I showed the authority of the Senate necessary as a guard for liberty, I easily observe the benefit a republic gains from the right to make changes (Machiavelli 1965: 211).

Liberty involves the strength to handle the incessant debates and dissensions within political arguments. It is a realization by nature of constant dissensions and recognition of decline, but facing such difficulties is done in a courageous, productive manner of judicial debate. As Machiavelli in particular dictates, part of the political and authoritative activity is to “confront the necessary evils”; that even these “dissensions” are still a part of the “perfection” of political order in the Roman Republic. The similarities that exist in application of lessons Platonic-Aristotelian is in Machiavelli’s distinction between correct and perverted forms of governance, which is focused on public concern over private concern:

rule with a view to the common good, those constitutions must be correct, but if they are to look at private advantage, be it the few or the masses, they are deviations (Machiavelli 1965: 198).

Machiavelli tells us, that the success of the “perfect” form of politics are the ones who “subordinated all of their own advantage to the common good, and with the greatest diligence cared for and preserved things private and public” (Machiavelli

1965: 198).¹²⁷ The six forms of government are almost similar to both Plato and Aristotle, but there is one essential difference:

wiser men hold that there are six kinds of government, of which three are very bad; the three others are good in themselves, but so easily corrupted that even they come to be pernicious (Machiavelli 1965: 197).

The common lesson is repeated, that the three good can “easily jump” to the three perverted:

for the principedom easily becomes tyrannical; the aristocracy with ease becomes a government of the few; the popular form without difficulty changes itself into one that abuses liberty (Machiavelli 1965: 197).

But the structure of the mixed constitution in the Roman Republic, that formed an authority sustaining the balance of political power, was not even theorized by Plato and Aristotle.

For Machiavelli, as in Polybius and Livius, the most superlative form of governance in human history was done by such a balance, in the taking of “all authority away from the kingly element,” and not entirely removing “the authority of the aristocrats to give to the people” (Machiavelli 1965: 200). According to Machiavelli, in “continuing her mixed government, she was a perfect state” (Machiavelli 1965: 200). The Roman Republic suspended the natural cyclical downfall, postponing it with her political and spiritual success. Here, human action, combined with the Heavens and *Fortuna*, interrupted the natural and historical cyclical dominance. Her ways of authority placed her in favour of *Fortuna*, not subject to the powers that be or neighbouring power, but in enacting a neighbouring enhancement with her sustained growth by her captivating grandeur to a point of perfection.

By the balanced mixture of typically confronting forms of political rule, it was possible to extend the attainment of good order. It appears Machiavelli clearly accepted Polybius’s characteristic political teaching, that the “Roman Republic was successful because it had achieved that constitutional mixture best designed to

¹²⁷ “How Many Kinds Of Republics There Are, and The Kind Of The Roman Republic” (Machiavelli 1965:198).

postpone the inevitable changes in history” (Wiser 1982: 66). It recognizes the primacy of the powers that be in politics and history, yet the interference upon these powerful realms made by virtuous authority. The authority of the mixed constitution in the Roman Republic is the basis for maintenance of good order, and true human action involves disrupting the dominant cyclical changes in history. The dominant role of power in the natural historical cycle could partially be challenged by the *virtu* of Roman authority.

The relation of ancient cosmology with history is utterly distinct in Rome. The study of history was not developed in the Platonic influence. Justice was not a metaphysical entity above and beyond human contact, but it was made concrete in Roman practice. Philosophy was not contemplative, but active in performing judiciary decisions. Polybius, like Machiavelli, also renews the ancient cosmology through eliminating any recourse to illusive views by more scientific historical details that surpassed the Stoic pessimism of his time. According to Polybius, Cicero, Livius, and Machiavelli, the Roman Republic displays a distinctive historical importance that even changes, to a significant degree, the influence of the cyclical view of history administered by ancient Stoic cosmology. One particular condition in Polybius that interrupts the ancient Stoic cosmological cycle is the “primitive monarchy” that arose at the pivotal turning point, a chaotic time when a rise would just begin after a fall. This factor obviously influenced Machiavelli. The condition in *The Prince* was obviously one of turmoil, where one had to contend with the “primitive” form of pryncedom or monarchy. Even though there are similarities with Machiavelli amongst these great ancient thinkers, there are certainly elements these new elements reveal an importance for today. They reveal more of his “path not yet trodden.” In concentrating on the fall of the Roman Republic, and the loss of balance in its mixed constitution, the focus of his study is on dictatorship, a necessity at times of dissolving order.

5.3. ‘Dictatorship’ at Times of Crisis: Necessity in the Beginning or Sustenance of Authority

Machiavelli indirectly displays that in the condition of turmoil, the primitive, unrefined form of authority is in a distinct form of dictatorship. The title

of Chapter 9 Book I, “A Man Must Be Alone If He is To Organize A Republic Afresh or Remodel Her With Complete Annulment of Her Old Laws,” is significant because the relations between principedom and the republic are introduced, as are, at the same time, relations of religion and military affairs. “A man must be alone” in organizing “a republic afresh, ” a new republic (Machiavelli 1965: 217). We have been revealed the necessity for one man alone during tumultuous times, when the republic must be started “afresh.” But this need for a “new state,” or the need for a “primitive monarchy,” is only temporary; and the new state will not succeed without the republic fervour for the relations of the mixed constitutional authority. The temporary condition at a time of immense turmoil, the standardized morality is overturned. A different principle beyond the standard good and evil must be attained.

In this process, Machiavelli returns to the beginnings of Rome with the foundational story of Romulus, the person to which the city is named. There is a need to carefully regard the event where Romulus killed his brother Remus. If this historical story was not well-known, it could therefore become disastrous, since someone “might follow the prince’s example in attacking those who opposed their authority” (Machiavelli 1965: 218). On these beginnings, only “one man alone” with strong public concern is to form the republic:

Therefore a prudent organizer of a republic and one whose intention is to advance not his own interests but the general good, not his own posterity but the fatherland [homeland], ought to strive to have authority all to himself (Machiavelli 1965: 218).

And there will be no censure on an unlawful action if it is done “to restore” rather than “to destroy” the “organization of a kingdom or setting up a republic” (Machiavelli 1965: 218). Romulus was among these who did an unlawful act not for a principedom, but for the purpose of republican virtue. In doing so, the usual penalty for such an act was excused.

Here, we see the fine-line of what is just and unjust being re-drawn and dependent on the nature of the circumstances. It is truly a fine-line, since so much political activities that have been witnessed are conspiratorial, where the judgement for the annihilation of not only one but many people even to the point of genocide

have been utterly abhorrent, and instead of being the beginnings of a new formation of justice, they are examples of the worst forms of injustice.

Romulus seemed to realize this notion, since justice obviously motivated his activities as the new leader of Rome. This is shown by his organization of the Senate and, at least the start, of a democratic spirit: “This testifies that all the first arrangements for the city were in conformity with a constitution free and according to law rather than one that was absolute and tyrannical” (Machiavelli 1965: 219).

The wise new ruler learns from the past, and prepares for the future in setting up the basis of an authority; one that could continuously augment itself. This means making new laws, not harming but reaffirming the foundational principles. Good judgement is necessary for making good laws. A profound sense of justice is required. It continues through the historical examples, of Moses, Lycurgus, and Solon, of a prince-like beginning of a formation of a republic, with the lesson that tyranny and absolute sovereignty is “to be censured” (Machiavelli 1965: 218), as much as those who are to be praised “in organizing a kingdom or setting up a republic” (Machiavelli 1965: 218). There is a need of a prince with republican virtue for authority, together with the forming of new laws even against common opinion, an initiated view related to a profounder sense of justice.

In regard to the maintenance of authority, Machiavelli meets head on with the necessity of power in Romulus’ killing of his brother Remus. One man, “alone” Machiavelli asserts again, either “a prince or king,” is needed to start a republic or a kingdom. The necessity of power comes before authority at times of turmoil. But the new temporary prince or king must always be beyond his own interests and directed to the common good:

it is necessary that one man alone give the method and that from his mind proceed all such organizations. Therefore a prudent organizer of a republic and one whose intention is to advance not his own interests but the general good, not his own posterity but the common fatherland [homeland] ought to strive to have authority all to himself. Nor will a prudent intellect ever censure [reprimand] anyone for any unlawful action used in setting up a kingdom or setting up a republic (Machiavelli 1965: 218).

Particularly during chaotic times, the set-up of a virtuous republican authority requires a distinct form of dictatorship. This is followed by a distinction made of destructive and restorative violence: “like that of Romulus, it will always excuse him, because he who is violent to destroy, not he who is violent to restore, ought to be censured [reprimanded]” (Machiavelli 1965: 218). We can see another fine-line between the potential best, to the potential worst political order. We then see repeatedly the criticism of *ambizione*, and the decline of nobility easily done in hereditary authority:

He ought, moreover, to be so prudent and high-minded that he will not leave to another as a heritage the authority he has seized, because, since men are more prone to evil than to good, his successor might use ambitiously what he had used nobly (Machiavelli 1965: 218).

But this singular direction should not last long: “the government organized is not going to last long if resting on the shoulders of only one; but it is instead lasted when it is left to the care of the many” (Machiavelli 1965: 218). The dictatorial government should change to one of republican virtue after power has been acquired. Examples given by Machiavelli at times of crisis during the period of the Roman Republic, emphasized that the ‘dictator’ was not to have the power to disrupt the framework of the mixed constitution.

A change is necessary, even during dictatorship, of a princely power that does not overturn authority. In a way, Machiavelli was advocating the bringing together of two elements that seem opposed as a necessity during a time of crisis. The concern for the common good and the beginning of the Roman mixed constitution gave Romulus an acceptance from his people for the killing of his brother: “And that Romulus was among those, that he deserved excuse for the death of his brother and his companion, and that what he did was done for the common good and not for his own ambition, is shown by his immediate organization of the Senate” (Machiavelli 1965: 218-219). Arrangements were made to constitutionalize freedom rather than being “absolute and tyrannical.”

We hear of another lesson of the need of “sole power” to “form laws adapted to the common good” (Machiavelli 1965: 219). In conclusion, Machiavelli states, “I conclude that to found a state it is necessary to be alone; and Romulus deserves excuse and not blame for the death of Remus and of Titus Tatius” (Machiavelli 1965: 219). Here we have an historical example that can be educative when being drawn towards a contemporary leader, who alone had to save his homeland and his people through warfare, or the use of power to handle the abrupt change in the constitution, which later, to succeed, had to be transferred to virtuous republican authority. It is still a question today, whether that change from the necessity of power to a virtuous republican authority, to move away from singular or enhanced military authority, has been done for a successful republic. This displays the importance of Machiavelli’s intricacies in the relations of power and authority.

Machiavelli focuses on particular conditions related to power and authority and the nature of Dictatorial rule in *The Discourses* I, 33, and it lasts to more or less the end of Book I. He displays an almost inevitable decline after the collapse of the Roman constitution during the rise of Caesar. Even though he states that “it is difficult to recognize these ills,” he suggests “it is a wiser decision to give them time when they are recognized rather than oppose them” (Machiavelli 1965: 266). The “them” referred to is the concrete example of abrupt change, from support to opposition for Caesar by both Pompey and Cicero, since “a little later that support turned into fear” (Machiavelli 1965: 266). Opposition is generated and produces fear. And that fear they had, turned into opposition for remedies, “and the remedies they used hastened the ruin of their republic” (Machiavelli 1965: 266).

Rome learned through her previous failure of not realizing that a new republic, like hers, could be under quick attack from her neighbours. This led her to set up a Dictator for fast remedies when needed: “Hence the Romans determined to use their chief remedy against urgent perils: they set up a Dictator, that is, they gave power to one man to make decisions without any consultation, and without an appeal to carry out what he decided” (Machiavelli 1965: 264). Such a remedy seemed to work well and protected against the ruin of the Republic. Dictatorship

was “always very useful” during times that “endangered the Republic” (Machiavelli 1965: 264). Chapter 34¹²⁸ deals with the “Authority of the Dictator,” that “did good and not harm to the Republic” (Machiavelli 1965: 267). It was often misinterpreted, as it is today, by being quickly linked to tyranny. Some historians produce misinterpretations.

Machiavelli quickly addresses the perceived condemnation of the Romans by some historians, due to the fact that “them” - the Romans - were doing what he was doing, arguing for the productive use of dictatorship. Many significant lessons arise from this comment. A dictator can be a liberator, or enforce slavery:

for they allege that the first tyrant in that city ruled under the title of Dictator, and that without that office Caesar could not with any lawful title have given good standing to his tyranny. Nevertheless anyone who holds this belief has not examined the matter well, but accepts it contrary to all reason. Because not the name or rank of Dictator made Rome a slave, but the power citizens gained through prolonged military command” (Machiavelli 1965: 267).

Caesar was a harmful Dictator that made Rome a slave by engendering lust for power in the power of the people. As such, she abandoned her liberty. Machiavelli also had to contend with the simplistic reaction that any use of the name “Dictator” only meant an unlawful and tyrannical form of politics. With it, comes his realization that the term Dictator can be misused for tyranny. But the use of Dictator directed for authority, as done in the beginnings of the Roman Republic’s constitution, is entirely different from dictatorial rule in the way that it is usually assessed. At times, power is needed to acquire authority, but that power should only be temporary and is not a form of sovereignty over the Senate, and therefore neither over the other two bodies, the magistrates (or Consuls) and the people of the mixed constitution. The Senate is a guardian against the absolute sovereignty, a conception of sovereignty that has become popular today in totalitarian regimes, or in the increasing use of temporary totalitarian practices within democracies.

¹²⁸ “The Authority of the Dictator Did Good Not Harm To The Roman Republic; And The Power Citizens Take For Themselves, Not Those Given Them By Free Votes, Destroy Civil Government”

Another example is given of the fine-line drawn between the use of power of necessity, a temporary dictatorial rule, and the lust for power, a tyrannical rule. It was “the power citizens gained through prolonged military command” that made Rome a slave. Even though Machiavelli composed a book entitled *On The Art of War*, the prolonged military command was a source of the decline of the republic. This was done through Caesar with his appeal to the *populares*, a popular political body that disrupted the former mixed constitution and was more closely related to the power of the citizens, which blindly hailed in the lust for power displayed by military force. Such a use of the military was nowhere near the noble ancient principles in *On The Art of War*:

But if they consider the ancient institutions, they would not find matter more united, more in conformity, and which, of necessity, should be like to each other as these (civilian and military) (*Art of War*: 1).¹²⁹

The unlawful use of power disrupts order in republics: “To republics, indeed, harm is done by magistrates that set themselves up and by power obtained in unlawful ways, not power that comes in lawful ways” (Machiavelli 1965: 267). The lawful use of power in the formation of a temporary Dictator is only to be used at a time of crisis. If not done in this manner, it is unlawful, and it does to the republic “anything but good” (Machiavelli 1965: 267) The Dictator was a title given under the republic “set up for a limited term” and “not for life” (Machiavelli 1965: 268). “His authority,” Machiavelli claims, “included the power to decide for himself about the remedies for that urgent peril and to do everything without consultation and to punish anybody without appeal” (Machiavelli 1965: 268). But this use of power was below the consideration of authority:

he was not empowered to do things that might weaken the state, such as taking authority away from the Senate or the people, or doing away with the old institutions of the city and making new ones (Machiavelli 1965: 268).

¹²⁹ For Machiavelli, “authority,” “justice and arms,” and the workings of the state are “works of art.” Good laws presuppose good arms: “good and holy laws organized for the administration of justice,” with “well provided arms” makes a republic well-founded. A part of the “art of the state” is the “art of war.” This sentiment has implications towards proper judgments and actions. Politics was a work of art where thoughts and actions were combined.

He then goes on to say that this form of temporal Dictatorship at chaotic times is necessary in all republics: “Republics should therefore have among their laws one like this of the Romans.” Otherwise, the response to “strange and unexpected afflictions” is too slow: “Because of this delay, their provisions are very dangerous when they must prove against something that does not permit the loss of time” (Machiavelli 1965: 268). Without this law, “such authority will in serious emergencies always be ruined” (Machiavelli 1965: 268). For Rome, it was from the potential aggression from neighbours who “tried to crush her,” which “forced her to organize it in such a way that she could not merely defend herself but could with great force, better planning, and more show of justice attack them” (Machiavelli 1965: 269).

There are many implicit lessons that can be derived from such an analysis. Under certain conditions, dictatorial rule can be just. Military force is needed, but one that is based on a form of justice that changes and takes into account the nature of the condition. There is no belief in Machiavelli for perpetual peace. Coercion to warfare is a part of the nature of man that cannot be completely relinquished. He mentions the word democracy only once, and it was for the most part a critical assessment.¹³⁰ We today have numerous examples of the inability of any power of necessity integrated and adjusted into the international military body of the UN, whose leaders, with great harm, could do nothing to stop even genocidal activities. Often in anarchic states, the military is given too much power, without any authority, or no military power at all. Often today, as was the case in the fall of the authority of the Roman Republic, very little is done on the tyrannical abuse of

¹³⁰ In *Discourses* Book I, Chapter 3, he speaks about a period after the Tarquin kingly rule over Rome, which is said to be the beginning of the Roman Republic, he identifies the rise of the “democratic spirit” and speaks of its shortcomings: “It seems that in Rome after the Tarquins were driven out, the people and the Senate were very closely united, and that the nobles had put away that pride of theirs and become democratic in spirit and could be tolerated by anyone however humble. This falsity was concealed and its cause was not seen as long as the Tarquins lived...but as soon as the Tarquins were dead and the fear the nobles felt had departed, they began to spit out against the people the poison they had kept in their breasts, and injured them in any way they could” (Machiavelli 1965: 201). The lesson is that with the loss of the nobles, democracy can appear good, but can easily turn to being undemocratic demagoguery with injurious use of power over the people. In other words, democratic rule can easily turn into a version of tyrannical rule.

power by the power elite. Machiavelli's concept of liberty was used to fight off tyranny.

5.4. Liberty versus Tyrannical Abuse of Hierarchy

Machiavelli goes on to display more intricacies and valuable lessons in the on-going chapters. He reveals the injurious creation of the Decemvirate in Rome, immediately saying it was "seeming contradictory to what has been set forth above," yet the election of the "Ten Citizens chosen by the Roman people to make laws in Rome," as Machiavelli reports, "in time became tyrants and without any scruple usurped her liberty" (Machiavelli 1965: 270). These were the activities from the Tribune of the People that produced tyranny. "As to this," Machiavelli adds, "one should consider the methods of giving authority and the time for which it is given" (Machiavelli 1965: 270). To this, Machiavelli clearly explains the worth of the former set up of a Dictator under good authority:

When the Dictator was set up, there remained the Tribunes, the Consuls, the Senate with their authority, which the Dictator was not empowered to take from them. And even though he could exclude one man from the consulate, and another from the Senate, he could not blot out the senatorial order and make new laws. Hence the Senate, the Consuls, the Tribunes, remaining in their authority, were like a guard over him, to block away turn from the right way (Machiavelli 1965: 270).

It is a clear lesson on the required balance of the three bodies of the mixed constitution. But,

in the setting up of the Ten, everything ran contrary. The Consuls and the Tribunes were abolished; the Ten received authority to make laws and to do everything else, as though they were the Roman people" (Machiavelli 1965: 270).

This "influenced Appius'," a Decemvirate, "desire for power," and he "easily became arrogant" (Machiavelli 1965: 270). The Romans, in their temporary, limited form of the Dictatorship, made "good," but the use of absolute authority

“made the Ten wicked” (Machiavelli 1965: 270). Absolute authority breeds corruption: “an absolute authority in a very short time corrupts the matter” (Machiavelli 1965: 270). Absolute authority, or authoritarianism, is similar to the extreme use of power. Another form of corruption, for Machiavelli, is the taking advantage of power to make one rich with the nepotism of hiring other positions of power to friends, partisans, or family members: “It is not harmed by being poor or not having relatives [which includes the support of partisans], because riches and every other advantage quickly follow it,” as has occurred in the “setting up of the said Ten” (Machiavelli 1965: 270-271). This form of corruption is common today in forms of absolute authoritarian power. The inevitable hierarchy can easily become imbalanced to favour the power elite.

In any organization, some form of hierarchy is a necessity. As Arendt tell us: “Against the egalitarian order of persuasion stands the authoritarian order, which is always hierarchical” (Arendt 1954: 93). Here is another term that the limited modern mentality looks down upon; yet, it is the nature of the reality. If not faced, then the abuse of hierarchy will continue, which reveals the avoidance of action in much of the common man. Sometime the ‘low’ should actually be ‘high’. It is an indispensable aspect in his choice of heroic figures: the four common ones in *The Prince*, and the ones added, like Solon, Lycurgus, Xenophon etc. It is also a satirical-serious contention to the prince, or any prince. Good authority is based on the hierarchic recognition of the nobility of character represented in a republican mixed constitution, with the ancient understanding of glory:

Here we may observe how well the institutions of that city were adapted to making it great, and how much other republics, which are far different in their ways, deceive themselves. Because, though the Romans were great lovers of glory, yet they did not think it a dishonourable thing to obey at one time a man whom at another time they had commanded, and to serve in an army of which they had been leaders (Machiavelli 1965: 271).

The abuse of power is a public detriment. It is quite similar to the practice today, an abuse of hierarchy that is not even commonly known or realized. The people who have more power than the ordinary citizen have some form of hierarchic power over

them. The reality of democratic governments must admit that its base is on hierarchic grounds. Hierarchy is inevitable as the necessity for political success of judging and identifying the level of good or bad means for order extends from a recognition of hierarchy.¹³¹ This brings back the quintessential question that Plato and Aristotle mentioned, a challenge that the Romans contended with successfully, and one that Machiavelli repeated: the vital difference between the public concern of those in power, or the direction for private concern through personal advantage, either monetarily or psychologically, is the judicial fine-line that must be known between the best or the worst forms of governance. If those in power are directed by the private “lust for power,” then politics would be tyrannous; if the rulers are directed to public concern, then governance can become the best. The abuse of hierarchy can turn the potential better governance to the worst form of tyranny. For Machiavelli, nothing could be worse than this loss of liberty.

5.5. Loss of Liberty: The Ruin of Authority in the Roman Republic

In discussing the topic of liberty, one is naturally drawn to a comparison between the ruling elite and the people and the notion of freedom today. It displays

¹³¹ One is reminded of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century Italian compatriot thinkers Gaetano Mosca and Vilareto Pareto, who were inspired by Machiavelli and who also believed that hierarchy was inevitable. The reduced modern knowledge is displayed by quickly assessing these thinkers as having a fascistic tendency through the simple recognition they give to hierarchic elites. Mosca in his book *The Ruling Class* was inspired by Machiavelli in the return to ancient historical study to understand the contemporary situation. He recognized the satirical mockery in *The Prince*, as a “jest for innocent babes” (Mosca 1939: 202), and the errors in the abuse of power in contemporary politics such that “rectitude, self-sacrifice, and good faith have never been anywhere or anytime the questions that best serve for attaining power and holding it” (Mosca 1939: 203). There is a realization that hierarchy, or a ruling class, is inevitable, but Mosca denies that the elites are morally or intellectually superior. For both Mosca and Pareto the state and civil society are divided by the use of power of the ‘elites’ over the masses. Pareto within his *The Rise and Fall of Elites* employs the “foxes” and “lions” distinctions, as is done in *The Prince*, to apply to his current political condition. The extent of the cunningness is used to measure the superiority or inferiority of the elite, as either the “low-life” foxes, or the “bold, courageous vigour” lions in military leadership. Mosca comprised a “political formula” to fit his historical conditions, as Pareto hoped for military superiority of the elite in psychological and personal attributes. Even though this may appear fascistic for the common man, both of them showed a concern for the public spirit, a democratic impulse. Mosca and Pareto favoured ancient forms of republicanism. Even academics made “failures” with this shallow simplistic identification. Mosca and Pareto may not have gotten into the depths of the different kinds of power without a focus on the links between politics and economics, but such matters were not important to them in what they conceived as good modes of order inspired by Machiavelli.

the worth of the comparison of general similarities of people more than 2100 years ago with those at present.

As stated earlier Machiavelli judges that the destruction of the Roman Republic was due mostly to the people, even though the ruling elite played a considerable role in manipulating them into degenerating predicaments. The Gracchi revolt was an example of the people losing the authorial consciousness, being manipulated by the *ambizione*, ambition, of acquiring power. They were then overtaken by the lust for power of military force, which made for the breakdown of the mixed constitution, a political body that provided them political input. The foundation of authority was lost in the downfall of the constitution, and ended up destroying the Roman Republic. In the end, imperial desires began and expanded, with the production of tyranny seen in its extremities, either in authoritarian command, or the licentiousness of the people. It involved the abuse of legality. Machiavelli condemns what has been a large part of political goals or the desires of the people today, and displays the often degrading human nature of the ruling elite related to the misconstrued ambition and consciousness of the people.

In the following section of *The Discourses*, Machiavelli further reveals that one form of human nature, which is even valued in the present-day, nevertheless is what he considers a common flaw in human character – the craving of ambition (*ambizione*): “The cause is that Nature has made men able to crave everything but unable to attain everything” (Machiavelli 1965: 272). *Ambizione* is the root of the destruction of the Roman Republic and her liberty. The destruction of the republic in a natural struggle of ambition indulges enmity and unjust forms of war. It was the Roman populace, with power given to the people, that, through ambition, “rose the disorder that brought forth the contention of Agrarian Law,” which, “resulted in the destruction of the republic” (Machiavelli 1965: 272). Whenever the Agrarian law “was alluded to,” all of the “city turned upside down” (Machiavelli 1965: 273). A quarrel came about over the law, but then it was subsided. “This law lay as though asleep,” Machiavelli responds, “until the Gracchi appeared; when they waked it up, it wholly ruined Roman liberty” (Machiavelli 1965: 274). As such, “it stirred up so

much hatred between the multitude and the Senate that it led to arms and bloodshed, contrary to every lawful habit and custom” (Machiavelli 1965: 274).

It led to the power game of factionalism, coming mostly from the “lust for power” of the Tribunes of the People: “The multitude acted early in this turmoil and disorder by turning its support to Marius” (Machiavelli 1965: 274), an uncle of Caesar, a military leader who made himself consular seven times, thus ensuing the power residing in the military where it became absolute and sovereign; whereas, in the Roman Republic, the authority of military power was not recognized in the political constitutional practice. At one time, the praise of the military leader was only done one day a year, and the soldiers could harshly and sarcastically criticize their leader during this day. Absolute political power could not be obtainable by the military leaders, except for that one day amidst sarcastic criticism given to the leader by his soldiers.¹³²

The beginning of civil wars was the determining sign of the measure of the “plague” in Rome: “Having no remedy against this plague, the nobility backed Sulla,” a treacherous military figure, “and making him head of their party, entered the civil wars” (Machiavelli 1965: 274). And “these feuds came to life again in the time of Caesar and Pompey” (Machiavelli 1965: 274), where Caesar was the head of Marius’s party, and Pompey became head of Sulla’s. Machiavelli concludes these events in this manner: “In the war that followed, the victor was Caesar, the first tyrant of Rome; as a result, that city was never again free [*libero*]” (Machiavelli 1965: 274). This shows that the city collapsed due to the indulgences of factionalism of power attributed to the military, which overtook the constitution. The people responded with favour to military aggression along these contexts, and

¹³² It was firmly established by the Senate during the Roman Republic that military victory could not be used as a stepping-stone for political power. In a sense, the triumph was a reminder that the victor could only be allowed one moment of the exultant expression of victory, and only one day where he could be an *imperium*, where he could retain only a fragment of political power. All of this was under the auspices that unjust war was the worst. This displays the practical use of an historical lesson on the nature of power and authority and their designations. Military authority only lasted for one day. It was not to be extended over the political authority centered on the balance between the Senate, the assemblies, and the plebeian council. These sentiments were carried over into the ensuing wars through which Rome’s recognition spread over the entire Mediterranean. From this notion, one can see how offensive Caesar was to the Roman Republic (Freeman 1996: 317-318).

therefore were more motivated by lust for power and forgot about Rome's authority.

There are many lessons that show the difficulty of being a prince with the recurrent and fluctuating performances of the people. The lesson states that the prince, who is strong, "who is able to command," must "animate the whole" under "good foundations" (Machiavelli 1980: 60), so that the people do not deceive themselves or him. One can surmise that, for Machiavelli, such a form of liberty should not be forgotten:

Therefore a wise prince ought to think of a mode whereby his citizens, always and in every quality of time, have need of the state and of him; and they will always be faithful to him (Machiavelli 1980: 60).

Being faithful for the regime requires a growth in the public concern, where the vitality of life, at a higher level, becomes possible for the people through all infrastructures of authority; that is, the representation of the people through civil liberty that is manifest in the generation of civic loyalty for protection against enemies and against the corruption of those in power, since the rulers often do nothing about making good laws, and often break them.

In Chapter 40 of *The Discourses*, "The Establishment of the Decemvirate In Rome and What Is To Be Learned From It," he returns to the subject of the Decemvirate and the ruin of authority in the Republic. The direction of the lesson is stated in the other half of the title: "How Through Such An Event A Republic Can Be Saved Or Subjected to Tyranny." Appius, one who gained power through the Decemvirate, made an appearance of nobility and prudence, and the Senate believed him. Appius made that appearance by aiding the acquisition of new Roman laws from the laws designated by Solon, whom the Senate revered. But Appius cunningly "displayed his in-born pride" in forming absolute rulership by appointing himself and then the other nine for the Decemvirate by "imparting to his companions his own habits" (Machiavelli 1965: 281). Appius lost his popular support that he once had. The people recognized his abuse of Solon, where the apparent 'good' appearance of his proceedings actually hid his desire for private gain of power. The people looked to the nobles for aid, "since the people

themselves, in disgust of their present circumstances, wished for Consuls (Livius, 3. 37)” (Machiavelli 1965: 281).

At this point, there is an appearance that the acts of the people were productive, since they did not show ignorance and could not be easily manipulated by their leader.¹³³ The people recognized the attempt of cunning trickery in Appius by illuminating a false public image that was concocted only for private gain, which Machiavelli assesses as a form of tyranny. Rome was brought back to order after condemning the Ten Decemvirate, and the Tribune and Consuls were put back into office, therefore, “Rome was brought back to the form of her ancient freedom.[liberty]” (Machiavelli 1965: 282). Following this, Machiavelli summarizes lessons acquired from such an event:

We first observe, then, in this account that in Rome the evil of establishing this tyranny came from the same causes as most tyrannies in cities, namely, the too great desire of the people to be free and the too great desire of the nobles to command (Machiavelli 1965: 282).

Machiavelli depicts the cause being either one or both of the extremes; either by licentiousness or authoritarianism, both side-stepping true authority. The fact that such a statement that he made upon the subsequent events that often recur in history – the French Revolution can be an example – are doubly enhanced by continually making the same mistake, as “a tyranny quickly appears,” even in eradicating the previous one, without true authority. Through a complete crumbling in most modern revolutions of the false aristocratic nobility, no matter how ignoble it is, the newly acquired forms of power quickly turns into tyranny, where all replicas of true nobility is also cast away: “The aristocratic *ancien regime* has passed out of history, but has been replaced by the modern state, which has demonstrated its propensity toward authoritarianism” (Girdner 1999: 155).

A revolution that attempts to destroy every weave of the fabric of history through the belief in progress in history is actually a regress in dignity. “Renewing everything” is like being a tyrant who wants absolute power. A modern revolution

¹³³ Nevertheless, Machiavelli asserts that the people as well as the faulty Senate are to blame for the fall of authority in the collapse of the mixed constitution.

wants the same component that is the cause of their revolt. Establishing true authority for public concern is not possible. Tyranny continues only under different pretexts. We may use ancient examples on these matters:

When a people thus brings itself to make this mistake of giving one man authority in order that he may attack those it hates, and that one is shrewd, he always becomes a tyrant of that city, because with the aid of the people he undertakes to get rid of the nobility, and he never turns to the oppression of the people until he has gotten rid of the nobles. By that time, when the people realize it is in slavery, it has no one with whom to take refuge. This has been the method used by all those who have founded tyrannies in republics (Machiavelli 1965: 282-283).

This is a perfect description of the activities of Robespierre. The appearance of “the best of times” could obviously, in reality, bring about “the worst of times.”

More foolish proceedings were revealed in the formation of the Decemvirate in the following chapters, where an application to the contemporary situation can be made. Book I Chapter 42 of *The Discourses* clearly displays “How Easily Men Can Be Bribe.” Chapter 43, “Those Who Fight For Their Own Glory Are Good And Faithful Soldiers,” shows the loss of the Roman armies under the Decemvirate, and once again the lesson that “mercenary soldiers are useless,” for there is “no reason to hold them firm than the little pay you give them” (Machiavelli 1965: 282). Chapter 44, “A Multitude Without a Head Is Helpless; One Should Not First Make Threats And Then Ask Authority,” displays the irony of the multitude who are helpless “without a head,” yet rely on the same destructive element that they are against, condemning cruelty but then using it, as he cites Livius: “You condemn cruelty; into cruelty you rush. (Livius 3. 53)” (Machiavelli 1965: 282). Chapter 45, “Not To Keep A Law That Has Been Made Sets A Bad Example, Especially For Its Author. To Do Everyday New And Fresh Injuries In A City Is Very Injurious To A Ruler,” speaks of Appius crying out to the people after Virginius ordered that he be put in prison. Virginius did not accept such an appeal of one who destroyed “that right of appeal... to have as defender of the people he attacked” (Machiavelli 1965: 288). Machiavelli agrees with Virginius: “For I do not think that there is a thing that sets a worse example in a republic but to make a law and not keep it, and so much

more than when it is not kept by him who made it” (Machiavelli 1965: 288). Machiavelli does, on page 289, what he did frequently in *The Prince*, shifting to the second person, making this comment more personal to a prince: “The harm done by a government is also very great when every day in the minds of *your* citizens it renews and refreshes animosities by means of new injuries done to this one and that one, as happened in Rome during the Decemvirate” (Machiavelli 1965: 289). It is also similar in contemporary conspiracies.

Even though it was displayed that Rome arose out these difficulties with a higher form of strength, nevertheless, “every day new quarrels and discords arose” (Machiavelli 1965: 290).¹³⁴ Rome did not rest. Evil wrongs were performed along the lines of party factionalism that occurred amongst the Tribunes, Consuls, and the people. The balance was disrupted, and each party became divided through their pursuit of power, diminishing authority:

Thus desire for defending its liberty made each party try to become strong enough to tyrannize over the other. For the law of these matters is that when men try to escape fear, they make others fear, and the injury they push away from themselves they lay on others, as if it were necessary either to harm or to be harmed (Machiavelli 1965: 290).

There are stirring insights here, on the political performance in current-day democratic political contention. Fear is a multi-lateral aspect that cannot be escaped in being both a creator and a victim. This fear detracts the leader from public concern, only for private gain of power. Elements of authority are only vaguely in the background or do not exist at all. These behaviours are dangerous to liberty, as far as Machiavelli is concerned. Through ambition (*ambizione*) they do all they can to escape being harmed, mostly in concern for others in competition rather than the actual people to whom they are supposed to represent:

They endeavour, in order to accomplish this, to make friendships; and these they gain in ways apparently honourable, either by aiding men with money or by protecting them from the powerful; because this

¹³⁴ Chapter 46, “Men Climb From One Ambition to Another; First They Try Not To Get Hurt, The They Hurt Others.”

conduct seems honourable, it easily deceives everybody; hence no one uses any remedy against it (Machiavelli 1965: 290-291).

From this, “republics go to pieces” (Machiavelli 1965: 290). It appears this is recurring today, with no remedies. In all of these elements that destroy any remnants of authority amongst all the parties and bodies of government, Machiavelli states, that those who cause the most harm, are the people, who, under power, harm liberty. They deceive themselves by false illusions and are motivated by unproductive elements, as is shown in an example previously given of the people subsiding to the use of force to take over Veii at the beginnings of the republic, because since it was a rich city, it appealed to the ambition of the people.

The unwise and bad intensions of the ambitions of the people broke up the balance of the mixed constitution by forgetting the other bodies of government, and was trapped into the popular political factionalism of the *optimates* and *populares*, which overrode the Consuls and the Senate. The extension of command in the army was supported by the people, the *populares*, “for that army in time forgot the Senate and considered him [Publius Philo, the first military Proconsul] its head” (Machiavelli 1965: 486). Machiavelli summarizes as follows:

In this way Sulla and Marius found soldiers who, in opposition to the public good, would follow them. In this way Caesar could conquer his country [homeland]. If the Romans had never prolonged the magistracies and the commands, they might not have come so quickly to great power, for their conquests might have been later, but they would have come later still to slavery (Machiavelli 1965: 486).

If power is gained quickly without any remnants of authority, slavery as well comes more quickly. The sole use of power, not authority, leads to slavery, and leads to the abolishment of liberty. For Machiavelli, liberty is a factor in true authority: it is not what it has become in the modern, which is getting rid of authority through the desire for private benefit. This abolishment of authority was, according to Machiavelli, the roots of the destruction of Rome. It is hoped that lessons from the errors of this destruction will be used to counter such performances. From these

errors in authority, including giving too much to the military, it is hoped that such a productive authority will be set up and last a prolonged time.

From Machiavelli's cosmological view, in attempting to give a general answer to the inherent questions designated through many intricacies at this section of *The Discourses*, it seems that an imbalance in any of the three elements in the mixed constitution are responsible, in various degrees, for the decline of authority. Yet a more careful study on the cause of its decline is intrinsic in providing a lesson that is to be learned, so that it won't happen so easily again. There are examples displaying the powers that be of *Fortuna*, and the vicious activities of rulers; however, most blame arrives in *the people*, yet with a recognition that the common people, under the command of the power elite, can more easily be coerced into images, beliefs, values, and principles that disrupt good forms of authority. All three sections of governance, at times, can be blamed; but, for the most part in Machiavelli's analysis, it is the people who have been manipulated by those in power, or taken over by the lust for power itself. The call is not only for the leaders to correct their ways, but more so, the people, since they are the most important element to be considered in the relations of power in acquiring good authority, and re-invigorating a strong republic.

We have witnessed that the break up of the Roman Republic formulated political activities similar to our present-day. With the detraction from the balance in a healthy authority, those in power, without virtue, had the 'success' of acquiring power through the popularity of the people. But with the declining virtue in the human, the emotions and ambitions of the people made the downfall in order continue. The "success" became a failure by the continuance of the downfall of the superiority of human civilization. Though most of the previous discussion in this chapter is on the lessons acquired from the Roman Republic, the following subsection reveals more directly the importance of the ancient on the present-day.

5.6. The Authority of the Roman Republic: A Distinction That Subverts the Classical Western Tradition

In the contemporary field of study, the traditional “Graeco-Roman” assimilation, as one of the sources of the western tradition, has been questioned. A study on the nature of authority in the Roman Republic, by contemporary thinkers, confirms the recent argument. Its distinction becomes important for the present-day.

“The word and the concept” authority – *auctoritas* – Arendt asserts, “are Roman in origin” (Arendt 1954: 104).¹³⁵ Roman authority is distinct, and employed in practical use beyond the confined formulation in the theory of Plato and Aristotle. Strangely and ironically, Plato and Aristotle’s approach to the concept of authority, “at least in its positive aspect, is exceptionally Roman” (Arendt 1954: 104). The Roman practice of authority was even more excellent than the theory of Plato and Aristotle. There may have been sameness in political experiences of Plato and Aristotle, but authority was expressed “in quite different ways” (Arendt 1954: 104). With the Romans, the formation of authority that encompassed their mixed constitution was done before they even knew about Plato and Aristotle. The theory of this unfinished political principle of wisdom in Plato and Aristotle was accomplished in practice by the Romans. It fulfilled in reality what Plato could only unhappily imagine. Such a view on this political framework was acceded in the republican discourse from Cicero to Machiavelli. Authority has become the most important aspect that distinguished the Roman Republic.

Pocock’s link of Aristotle to the concentration on the Roman constitution that we see in Polybius, Cicero, and Machiavelli, *cannot* be upheld. Roman political practice was not “an off-shoot of an Aristotelian-Polybian synthesis” (Nelson 2004: 6). Also, Plato’s “assimilation to the republican tradition” will “only be regarded as a watershed event” (Nelson 2004: 2). But even his discourse on the best or “second-

¹³⁵ Giorgio Agamben, in his “explanation of *auctoritas*” from *The Global Oneness Committee* emphasizes that “*Auctoritas* and *potestas* (power) are clearly distinct, although they form together a binary system.” He quotes Mommsen, “who explains that *auctoritas* is ‘less than an order and more than an advice.’” What seems the best can easily become the worst when *auctoritas* is combined only with *principis*, the prince. The examples of the charismatic use of authority in Augustus, Napoleon, Hitler, and Mussolini, as identified by Agamben, are not true versions of *auctoritas*. A careful study of the current-day history of the Roman Republic and Machiavelli can enlighten such an argument (http://experiencefestival.com/auctoritas_-_Giorgio_Agambens_explanation_of_Auctoritas/id/4815364).

best regime” in his *Laws* is only a theory. This recognition undermines the “Graeco-Roman tradition.”¹³⁶ The identity of the “source of Western thought” is falsified.

Rome, in practice, made a better constitution than the ones only theorized in Plato and Aristotle, and made it during the rise of democracy in Athens, which became the basis for the Western theoretical identity. Rome breaks the Utopian character of Greek philosophy. Rome achieved what was not even marvelled at in the Utopian view of Greek political theory. As such, any argument in favour of a mixed constitution cannot be infinitely tied to Aristotle, and therefore the argument that Machiavelli’s republicanism is a later version of Aristotle’s political theology is false, just as many common links of Greece with Rome is claimed as relatively the same.

The Western tradition and the modern offshoots are false in the coupling of the Greeks with the Romans, and are false in the claim that the rise of political thought at the level of Plato and Aristotle is a product aligned with the rise of democracy. The rise in political thought came about from the downfall in aristocratic authority through the rise of hubristic ignorance that fostered a false sense of power for the people. The argument for the utter distinction of Rome, divergent from ancient Greece, is the central point in Eric Nelson’s work:

The present study, in contrast, assumes that Greek and Roman political theory were substantially different from one another, making it highly unlikely that the induction of Plato and Aristotle into the “republican” canon should have yielded a single, synthetic Graeco-Roman political theory (Nelson 2004: 6).

The concentration on the mixed constitution extends in history from Plato to Hegel, but the theories do not come close to the actual in the Roman Republic. Plato and Aristotle did have an educative effect on the thoughts and practices of the

¹³⁶ A part of the Western civilization made a rough link between Rome and Greece with the common term used to describe our legacy, the “Graeco-Roman tradition.” To generalize the intricacies involved at present, we can roughly state that this tradition ties Rome to the West through the influence of “classical Roman law” which was formed after the decline of the Roman Republic (Wiser 1982: 78-81). Therefore, this rough link was made for the Roman law that developed during the Roman Empire, not the Roman Republic. Cicero, who lived at the fall of the Roman Republic, learned much from Plato and Aristotle, but still distinguished himself through the practical use of justice: it was not a metaphysical Platonic realm. For now, let us conclude by stating that during our contemporary period, such a rough link of tradition is severely questioned.

Roman Republic, but it was learned in Rome only done during its decline, and was commonly used for the purpose of entertainment among the Roman erudite. As Arendt tells us, there are distinctions conformed in practice in Rome that were not even considered by Plato or Aristotle.¹³⁷ The Roman mixed constitutional framework was accomplished in practice that was only idealized in Plato and Aristotle. Rome put into practice an “aristocratic polity” close to Plato’s abstract ideal city-state in his *Republic* that Aristotle even banished from ‘reality’, let alone theory; and, in focusing on the “second-best regime” in the *Laws*, Plato almost did the same theoretically, partially banishing his “best regime.” But in Rome, it was the best regime. Machiavelli’s portrayal indirectly states that its features must be known to educate current-day politics.

Arendt states that the fundamental conviction of authority was education through generation: “Authority can acquire an educational character,” says Arendt, when the “ancestors represent the example of greatness,” when “they are the *maiores*, the greater ones, by definition” (Arendt 1954: 119). Education was based on a politically determined aspect as an ancestral example for authority, not in the ‘making’ of arts (*techne*), or from the private household, or community. With this combination of authority to education and tradition, it “had already displayed a decisive role in the political life of the Roman republic” (Arendt 1954: 120). Speech or action was necessary; and certainly not persuasion, coercion, or violence. The ancestral example is fostered to the people through its recognized sacredness.

Arendt is following Machiavelli in bringing together the past and future into the present when she reveals the importance of “the conviction of the sacredness of foundation,” which “remains binding for future generations” (Arendt 1954: 120). It involves the founding of the city of Rome: this includes the expansion it added to the original function, that the Romans were bound to the specific locality of this one city, and there was no finding of new cities; therefore, it was not the Greeks, but the Romans who were “rooted in soil”: their *patria* [homeland] was the founding of a new body politic, through an unrepeatable beginning of their whole history, a truly

¹³⁷ See, Hannah Arendt, “The Roman Answer,” *The Life of the Mind: Willing, Book I*. She identifies the differences between Roman thought and that of Plato, Aristotle, and Hegel. (Arendt 1978: 151-166)

unique event. Yet, it is such an important event that is practically and theoretically lost in modernity: “the Roman experience of foundation – seems to have been entirely lost and forgotten” (Arendt 1954: 136). A key element practically lost in secular times is its religiosity.

The religious aspect for such a foundation can be seen in the formation of Janus, the god of beginning, and Minerva, the goddess of remembrance. We revert to the central and higher importance of religion, *re-ligare*, “to be tied back” (Arendt 195: 121). When looked at practically, it is to be “tied again” to the obligation of remembrance of the superhuman, natural beginning, a foundation of a cornerstone to last for eternity. Looked upon more specifically, it employs the use of cyclical history. Rome, the “Eternal City,” was religiously revered and historically preserved, where, for both Livius and Machiavelli, religion and politics were almost identical, as they were continually reimbursed historically. These alignments created a spiritual unity, influencing and strengthening the civil religion and civic loyalty. This spiritual significance is another aspect that is almost entirely lost and forgotten. The destructive remnants of that loss of consciousness are growing in all parts of the world.

Cicero states: “In no other realm does human excellence approach so closely the paths of the gods (*numen*) as it does in the founding of new and in the preservation of already founded communities” (*De Republica* 1998: 1.7). This example is almost an exact repetition of Machiavelli’s sense of newness that is coupled with the preservation of the old. “The binding power of the foundation of itself,” Arendt retorts, “was religious for the city also offered the goods of the people a permanent home...It is in this context that the word and concept of authority originally appeared” (Arendt 1954: 121). This is unlike the Greek religion whose home of the gods was far from the abode of man on Mount Olympus. Authority was in an ancient Roman political practice not divided by religion, and not in the practice closely related to the religion of classical Greece.

As has been continuously argued, authority is above power, and is conducted upon features that is rare in the current-day. “The most conspicuous characteristic of those in authority,” Arendt states, “is that they do not have power” (Arendt 1954: 122). Authority is “in contradistinction to power”; and furthermore,

“while power resides in the people,” Cicero states, “authority rests with the Senate (Cicero *De Legibus*, 312: 38)” (Arendt 1954: 122). The Senate is the barter of order in the maintenance of the mixed constitution during tumultuous times of disorder. If the foundational principles of the Senate are lost, then all is lost in an utter chaos. Authority is “the augmentation of the founding of the city which the Senate must add to political decisions” (Arendt 1954: 122). Therefore “a judiciary branch of government,” Arendt adds, “constitutes the highest authority in constitutional governments” (Arendt 1954: 122-123). It acts “more on advice and less on command, an advance that one may not safely ignore (Mommsen, 1, 1034)” (Arendt 1954: 123).¹³⁸ Authority in its true manner is contrary to the popular cruel assessment of authority. The common opinion of authority comes from an almost complete misunderstanding.

All these are closely tied to the religious binding force of *auspices*. It is unlike the Greek oracles that “hint at the course of events,” but the *auspices* reveal a judgement from the divine approval or disapproval of decisions made by men: “the gods, too, have authority among, rather than the power over men; they augment and confirm human actions but do not guide them” (Arendt 1954: 123). This portrays an influential distinction between power and authority, something almost completely lost in the present-day. It displays the catastrophic transformation from ancient to modern religion, similar to the transformation from ancient to modern republicanism, where the ancient superior politics is almost completely lost. It can also be stretched to a denial of the modern-state: “a denial implicit in the reduction of republics and principalities alike to the status of mere ‘states’ – constituted by what Max Weber called a ‘*monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory*’ ” (Rahe 2008: 30). The focus on ancient authority forms a “new species of republicanism” (Rahe 2008: 21), since, in describing Machiavelli, “a classical republican, he was not” (Rahe 2008: 22).

All authority derives from the origin of this eternal city, Rome: “all auspices were traced back to the great sign by which gods gave Romulus the

¹³⁸ Much historical knowledge used in this section of the article and others comes from the works of Theodor Mommsen, *Römisches Geschichte and Römisches Straatsrech*, one of the most notable historians on Roman history.

authority to found the city” (Arendt 1954: 123).¹³⁹ Arendt clearly states: “All authority derives from this foundation” (Arendt 1954: 123). Authority is bound to the sacred beginnings of Rome, the sacred beginnings of Roman history, “adding as it were, to every single movement, the weight of the past” (Arendt 1954: 123). For political standards, these were considered definitive actions that merited authority: “the *auctoritas maiorum* became identical with authoritative models of active behaviour” (Arendt 1954: 123). Actions formed merit, provided exemplary sources of education, and augmented authority. A continual augmentation requires the recognition of eternal recurrence in the cyclical view of history, so that meaning and purpose can be derived from learning of exemplary great accomplishments in the past.

There are many occurrences that get transformed by Machiavelli into historical exemplary activity, and this is the basis by which Machiavelli’s exemplary lessons educate. A person of old age was for the Romans a person at the climax of life due to the fact that the elderly person has grown closer to the ancestors, closer to the past. This is contrary to our current-day concept of growth in the future, which is associated with the modern belief in progress. The elderly man was the seed of education. All of these values are difficult for the modern or the common present-day man to understand: “Contrary to our concept of growth, where one grows into the future, the Romans felt that growth was directed to the past” (Arendt 1954: 123). There is also praise on other matters that would be opposed today, such as a peaceful and vital acceptance of the realization of hierarchy:

If one wants to relate this attitude to the hierarchical order established by authority and to visualize this hierarchy in the familiar image of the pyramid, it is as though the peak of the pyramid did not reach into the height of a sky above (or, as in Christianity, beyond) the earth, but into the depth of an earthly past (Arendt 1954: 123-124).

The peak is possible on earth, according to the ancient pagan religion, and the Christian separation of the residence of greatness outside “the city of earth,” to one beyond even the sky in the “city of God,” is the beginning of weakness through the

¹³⁹ Arendt cites this quotation in Theodor Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte*, book I, chap. 5, page 87.

non-acceptance of the nature of earth and human vitality within it, which sparks the beginning of the forgetfulness of history. A misunderstanding of hierarchy continues in the illusory Utopian belief found mostly in modern secularism, which displays that secularism has general similarities with modern forms of religion.

The breaking up of one of these elements in the mixed form of Roman trinity – religion, tradition, and authority – would be like a complete downfall in the ensuing ventures of politics and authority. The orderly pyramid would collapse. Arendt gives examples of this historical process firstly in the workings of Luther, who challenged religion, and then Hobbes, with other “political theorists of the seventeenth century,” who believed that without tradition, authority and religion, politics could be saved. These were obvious errors (Arendt 1954: 128). Their “errors” were contributions to not only the loss of authority, but of the loss of productive politics and religion. “So too was it finally the error of the humanists,” Arendt retorts, “to think it would be possible to remain within an unbroken tradition of Western civilization without religion and without authority” (Arendt 1954: 128). The modern version of the Western tradition involves a further breakdown from the argued original identity, even more divided from Roman practice. The origin of the Western “Graeco-Roman tradition” is broken down by a clear historical study initiated by Machiavelli. The modern workings have broken the tradition of the possible identification of Western civilization itself, yet most moderns and most common people today do not know it yet, as many important features of Rome are not known. It is hoped that such distinctions are not forgotten.

We have seen examples that the foundation of authority itself, the practices used as lessons for his “modern” situation, come from the Roman Republic, which is outside the “Western world view,” or the “substance of Western thought.” It becomes important at a time of transition. The developed quintessential elements, within the previous metaphysical formulation of the West, are called into question. The study of the Roman Republic can provide a seed for the needed re-configuration of political order for the present-day. Again, if it is cast out of even a debate, Machiavelli would lose all hope for present-day politics. Such a debate can aid in proper understanding of revolution, a factor indispensably tied to the relevance of authority.

5.7. The Relevance of Authority in Its Relation to Revolutions

The topic of revolution arises in the discourse on the nature of authority. The conception of revolution has many misunderstandings and is reminiscent of the mistaken understanding of authority. A true revolution supposedly re-configures an authority where the previous one fell into a form of tyranny, with either “too much power,” or “too much authority.” Revolution is a topic that arises in Arendt’s article, “What Is Authority?.” The debate on whether or not the modern revolutions were true revolutions continues today. In truth, the tendency in contemporary thought is now becoming aware that many “modern” ‘revolutions’ were not genuine. Many did very little to re-establish order out of a flawed authority. Let us look at this advocated summary on revolutions.

In describing the depiction of authority, the reader can more easily detect that it is indispensable in Machiavelli, and that the ‘common’ misinterpretations of Machiavelli should not be so common anymore. And yet, in one section, her interpretation of connecting Machiavelli to modern revolutions becomes extremely questionable. But yet again, in her work *On Revolution*, published seven years later, Hannah Arendt practically reverses her former attachment of Machiavelli to modern revolutions. She too, has made a false interpretation of Machiavelli. But at least, she later recognized it. A display of false interpretation can also lend a helping hand in a better understanding, as both Machiavelli and Arendt have displayed. It really displays the difficulty in coming to a clear judgement on the positive or negative effects of revolution.

Even though extensive “praise” can be rendered for Hannah Arendt’s historical description of authority and its pertinence for today, it should be reversed by claiming extensive “blame” in her unfamiliarity with the revolutionary aspects of Machiavelli, at least at first. Arendt did not form a convincing understanding on the nature of modern revolutions. She coupled Machiavelli with Robespierre, the leader of the people who displays a good example of what Machiavelli described earlier, as a leader of the people turned into a tyrant. The spiritual crisis in the weak vengefulness of rebellion and revolution, which is generated from a private lust for power that manipulated over a large number of the people, is only a sign of disorder

that is more plentiful than a justified revolution. Such a rise in revolution has nothing to do with liberty, but is more closely related to a cause of servility and self-slavery.

In part VI of her article “What Is Authority?,” she re-iterates that Roman authority is lost and forgotten, “because we have no reality, either in history or in everyday experience to which we can unanimously appeal” (Arendt 1954: 136). The salvation of the history of the Roman Republic is due mostly to Machiavelli. Yet, Arendt states something - and it leads to many other discrepancies that will be rejected in this work - the “one type of event for which the notion of founding is decisive...the revolution of the modern age” (Arendt 1954: 136). But no distinction is given in the factors regarding the nature of conditions or type of revolution.

Machiavelli, in a large part, did not support revolutions. Quite the contrary. Many academics perceive of his understanding of revolution falsely.¹⁴⁰ And if you consider the modern revolutions after Machiavelli, the “revolution of the modern age” is nowhere near the teachings of Machiavelli. He is *not* “the first to conceive of revolution,” as Arendt admits, and even more so, would not comply easily to the modern form of revolution. He would satirically mimic someone like Robespierre, as an apparent leader of the people that turned into a tyrant, similar yet worse than Savonarola. We have already seen the many intricacies that he revealed and should be considered between the rulers and the people, which is not revealed or repeated in Arendt’s analysis. Machiavelli’s “revolution” obviously implies a return to ancient lessons in order to ground a foundational stone which re-formulates the current discrepancy in the clash between religious ‘authority’ and political ‘authority’.¹⁴¹ Upon this pretext, many revolutions could only be described as trivial

¹⁴⁰ Often, the English translation from the Italian as “revolution” is false. “Revolution” gets translated from “*fare novita*,” to make newness (Sasso 2000: 85), “*cose nuove*,” new things (Sasso 2000: 156), and “*innovazione*,” innovation (Sasso 2000: 521) They are related, but such a translation reveals the modern obsession with “revolution” as being a matter of progress; where for Machiavelli, modern revolutions would be, in the most part, a continuation of decline in political order.

¹⁴¹ Singular ironic quotation marks are used, since it is well-known that many of the practices in modern or current-day religion and politics is far from the performance for authority under the teachings of its source, the Roman Republic.

and, if anything, offer an example that re-affirms the continual degeneration of authority in the nature of such ‘revolutions’.

There is agreement in the further description of Machiavelli and the general interpretations of lessons on *virtu* and *Fortuna*. He had a deep contempt for all traditions that enforced weakness, such as the Greek and the Christian versions. Arendt correctly displays the revival of interest he made in Roman antiquity, “who were removed from Christian piety and Greek philosophy” (Arendt 1954: 138). She was also agreeable in his approach for the benefit of the people:

He saw that the whole of Roman history and mentality depended upon the experience of foundation, and he believed it should be possible to repeat the Roman experience through the foundation of a united Italy which was to become the same cornerstone for an ‘eternal’ body politic for the Italian nation as the founding of the Eternal City had been for Italic people (Arendt 1954: 138).

But there are inconsistencies and crude generalities in her work where she fails in her attempt to paint a clear picture of Machiavelli. In agreement, “he was certainly not a father of political science” (Arendt 1954: 136), and that any “scientific character is often greatly exaggerated” (Arendt 1954: 137). In Machiavelli’s “unconcern for moral judgements,” he anticipated modern morality from the flawed and weak version of Christianity. The false and crude misinterpretations of Machiavelli are examples of the lack of insight in modernity’s understanding of the reality of politics, religion, and the nature of the world:

Respect for these religious forces (the deeply religious) and contempt for the Church together led him to certain conclusions about the basic discrepancy between Christian faith and politics that are oddly reminiscent of the first centuries of our era (Arendt 1954: 138).

But then, she states that, through his displayed awareness of his contemporary beginning of the birth of nations and the need for a new body under the concept of *lo stato*, it “has caused him to be commonly and rightfully identified as the father of the modern nation-state” (Arendt 1954: 138). But, as has been stated in a careful

study, such awareness made him turn away from the principles that became solidified in the modern nation-state.

Machiavelli's awareness made for a criticism of the modern state before it fully occurred. The "modern nation-state" is *not* "commonly and rightfully identified" as Machiavelli being its father. This is startling from the usual profound insight of Arendt. But the most startling was in the statement that "Machiavelli and Robespierre so often seem to speak the same language" (Arendt 1954: 139). Machiavelli would be utterly opposed to such a contention. The French Revolution is similar to the revolt of the Gracchi, which was the source of the downfall of the Roman Republic, even though the French aristocracy was also tyrannous. The people of the French Revolution would easily fall under the category of people who are deceived, and therefore only continue to degenerate political order. The justification of immoral practices is only at times of chaos, and the ones without any reliance on factors that generate good authority will only continue the degeneration.

Machiavelli does not entirely wish to "go beyond the Romans themselves" in foundation. The only newness – to repeat again – is to conform to the particular situation, but the general sameness of foundational principles continues. In the Dictatorship appealed to by the Romans, Cicero, and Machiavelli, there was no "connection between foundation and dictatorship identical to the modern" (Arendt 1954: 139), or the brutality of dictatorship without any real ancient foundational principles. Dictatorship is only temporarily used at a time when the potential fall of the Republic was at stake. We have seen that Machiavelli is opposed to most revolutions, since in most of them the people are deceived, since what appears to them as better is not, and it may be only an unrealistic view that generates a worse condition.

Further on, she states something veritable, that in the present world, the "decline of the West," is due to being void of "the Roman trinity of religion, tradition, and authority" (Arendt 1954: 140). This is clearly agreeable. But the next statement does not make sense, if the previous is true. If so, then how can she assess that the "revolutions of the modern age appear like gigantic attempts to repair these foundations," if the disappearance of those elements are characteristic of the modern age? Nevertheless, she previously stated "that neither the grandeur nor the

tragedy of Western revolutions in the modern age can be properly understood” (Arendt 1954: 140).

In the previously mentioned personal direction to a prince in Chapter 45 Book I¹⁴² of *The Discourses*, because the refreshed “animosities by means of new injuries done to this one and that one,” the rise came in condemnation by not only the nobles, but also the people that formed “the greatest terror in all the nobility, who judged that such condemnations would not end until all the nobility was destroyed” (Machiavelli 1965: 289). In this example, it is quite evident that the elimination of nobility as a modern revolutionary premise was worse than the original tyranny.

As Machiavelli further teaches, the original fault was that of the people who choose to have the election of the Ten Citizens. It was an “authority taken by violence” that “injures a republic” (Machiavelli 1965: 269). “The citizens” as Machiavelli further states, easily “in time became tyrants.” The fault is generated by the power of the people that turned into tyranny. Yet, the nobles are not entirely free of fault either:

Here we see how damaging it is to a republic or to a prince to keep the minds of subjects uncertain and fearful with continual penalties and attacks. And without a doubt there is no method more destructive, because men who suspect they are going to suffer something bad take any means to make themselves safe in their peril and become more audacious and less cautious about attempting revolution (Machiavelli 1965: 289).

The people should consider the quality of the times and of themselves, since at times “people wish to live in servitude, at others they wish to live in liberty” (Machiavelli 1965: 290). Only if they live in servitude and desire of ancient liberty to an extensive degree, and not in modern forms of freedom, is revolution just. When men are bored in good times and easily complain in bad, they become so eager for change through this weakness, such that, “this desire then, causes gates to open to any man who makes himself leader of a revolution in a province”

¹⁴² Chapter 45, Book 1: “Not To Keep A Law That Has Been Made Sets A Bad Example, Especially For Its Author. To Do Everyday New And Fresh Injuries In A City Is Very Injurious To a Ruler.”

(Machiavelli 1965: 477).¹⁴³ But it is not “any man” that can form a good revolution, especially in chaotic times.

He speaks of the riots in an unorganized city in his work “A Discourse On Remodelling the Government of Florence,” where the men “with arms and violence” will either defend the government or one party will “plunder the other party,” and from this, one cannot even imagine, “how many deaths, how many exiles, how many acts of extortion will result” (Machiavelli 1965: 115).¹⁴⁴ The answer against these ills is to form organized institutions: “when everybody knows what he needs to do and in whom he can trust, and no class of citizen, either through fear for itself or through ambition, will need to desire revolution” (Machiavelli 1965: 115).

Most revolutions for Machiavelli form worse conditions than formed by its cause. The prince more easily engenders servility and slavery of the people and more easily causes revolution, but all this does, is put the people in a worse condition:

being accustomed to live under the orders of others, not knowing how to think about defense or offense by the state, not understanding monarchs and not being understood by them, returns quickly beneath a yoke that usually is heavier than the one that a little earlier it threw off its neck (Machiavelli 1965: 235).

Beforehand, Machiavelli reveals the slander involving Giovanni Guicciardini, the brother of his friend and colleague, Francesco, who was falsely accused of being bribed by the Lucchese, the people of the neighbouring city Lucca, as Florence did not capture Lucca in the process. This affair caused great indignation among Giovanni’s friends, “who formed the majority of the rich and were among the number hoping to cause revolution in Florence. For this and similar reasons, the trouble grew so great that it caused the ruin of that republic” (Machiavelli 1965:

¹⁴³ In the Italian version of *The Discourses*, “*capo d’un innovazione*” (Sasso 2000: 521), is translated as “revolution.” Yet it literally means, the “head of an innovation.” Literally, “revolution” would be “*rivoluzione*” in Italian.

¹⁴⁴ Machiavelli, “A Discourse On Remodeling The Government of Florence.”

217).¹⁴⁵ The lesson is that, if the government came into existence through violence, a revengeful revolution could easily be formed.

He refers to revolution in his *History of Florence* as well: “Nobody should start a revolution in a city in the belief that later he can stop it at will or regulate it as he likes” (Machiavelli 1965: 1154). He speaks of the contrast between rival families in Florence, the Guelfs and Ghibellines, who “issued by those in revenge” many houses “were plundered and burned,” because of either “general hatred or private enmity.” (Machiavelli 1965: 1154-1155). Then, “the mob broke open the public prisons,” and “then they sacked the monastery of the Agnoli and had it not been protested by some signors,” they would not have “withstood...the fury of the multitude” (Machiavelli 1965: 1155).

“Revenge in themselves” is identified as a symptom of a spiritual crisis seen in the “wish to seize that of the others and to revenge themselves” (Machiavelli 1965: 1156). Machiavelli assesses a psychological and spiritual problem of the people, who quickly believe in things that appear better, but in reality are worse. From this weak condition, the people could never be secure, if their enemies “were not driven out and destroyed” (Machiavelli 1965: 1156). This is reminiscent of a contemporary psychological and spiritual condition extending, from the unacceptability in the nature of life to the point of hatred that engenders a twisted revengeful direction, which is linked to the on-growing revolt against almost every form of politics. But such a revolt is generated by an illusory fantasy that believes in a state of conditions that is not possible, given the nature of the human as Machiavelli depicts it, unless he opens himself to a reformation of that image and identity.

Further on, in Book VII Chapter 12 of the *History of Florence*, vengefulness can be identified even in the bitterness of the once free people who only resort to aggression rather than debate: “to people with nothing left to do often are the tool of him who is attempting to cause a revolution” (Machiavelli 1965: 1352). In disputes over the changes of power and alliances over Milan, often, with Francesco, The

¹⁴⁵ “Revolution” here, is used to translate “*fare novita*” which literally means “making novelty.”

Duke of Milan, the Florentines would easily “have weapons in their hands,” and “with either trickery or force,” either method ironically “would cause the ruin of the Florentine Republic” (Machiavelli 1965: 1353).

As one can easily see, Machiavelli had little favour for revolution. We have displayed the limitation in Arendt’s claim on Machiavelli in his relation to revolution. The modern revolution simply valued change and nothing else, similar to the flawed consciousness of the people generated by weakness and false deception that only caused a further decline in organization. The modern is only beginning to see that under the modern principles, any revolution cannot restore order unless those principles are overtaken for higher ones.

Machiavelli is *not* an “ancestor” of anyone yet, since hardly anyone, outside of the short-lived Garibaldi revolution of the nineteenth century, has attempted to re-instigate a revolution through a renewed version of the Renaissance. Under a new identity generated by the greatness of excellence of the old, Garibaldi attempted the setting-up a mixed constitution with a unified military might, to capture the entire nation. On these premises, Machiavelli surely would become an ancestor to great revolutions. But it never continued. Machiavelli implies that if hardly any attempt is made along these lines, then disorder or tyranny will continue. A true revolution is needed but the analysis so far implies that it is directed to a new framework with divergent principles of philosophy, metaphysics, and religion than the modern contentions.

To lessen her errors, Arendt corrects her previous views on Machiavelli as being a modern revolutionary. She ends by identifying modernity as characterized by the break up of tradition, and that “all revolutions since the French have all gone wrong, ending in either restoration or tyranny” (Arendt 1954: 141). All “salvation provided by tradition have become inadequate” (Arendt 1954: 141). The new political realm that has the “awareness that the source of authority transcends power and those who are in power,” must be in the re-making of a sacred beginning. If it is “without the religious trust in a sacred beginning” (Arendt 1954: 141), it will not be a successful revolution.

One can sense that it is a partial apology and an explanation of her previous mistakes. At first, she realizes that revolution was not used at a time when one thinks it could: “It is therefore more than mere antiquarian interest to note that the word ‘revolution’ is still absent when we are most inclined to think we could find it, namely, in the historiography and political theory of the early Renaissance in Italy” (Arendt 1963: 28). She disentangles him from modern revolutions: “What makes him so relevant for a history of revolution, in which he was but a forerunner is that he was the first to think about the possibility of founding a permanent, lasting, enduring body politic” (Arendt 1963: 29). She distinguishes him from the modern conceptualization of “newness” used in modern revolutions: “In other words, the specific revolutionary pathos of the absolutely new, of a beginning which would justify starting to count time in the year of the revolutionary event, was entirely alien to him” (Arendt 1963: 29-30). His revolutionary spirit “was in the institutions of Roman antiquity” (Arendt 1963: 30). The modern revolution did not “revive antiquity,” nor achieve the “task of foundation,” (Arendt 1963: 30) which was the task of forming a cornerstone. This was not done in modern revolutions; therefore, one could say, they were not revolutions, as far as Machiavelli was concerned.

This does not dispel newness nor revolution but the contexts applied to the contemporary technological age, require to be newly conceived by the prudence in the challenging judicial decisions, whether to preserve or dispense traditional practices. These decisions are dependent on the assessment of strength and vitality in the growth of civilization, through a clear analysis of the conditions.

The call to re-direct politics to any remaining virtue is something that makes Machiavelli archetypal in the grand spectrum. Machiavelli contested upon the development of activities that other thinkers could not, that many values with which he had to contend with, persisted in the *decline of politics* which broke up the natural and historical cycle of return for growth. What made him exceptional was the unparalleled condition he was in. The framework that later developed into the identity of “modern values” were succumb to elements that persisted in the downfall of essential elements in human political order.

Much of his work that has been ignored is that he indirectly composed a prognosis for future times. His “path not yet trodden by anyone” comes from the

recognition that we need masters more so than any other time in history for a return to growth in civilization. A significant revolution must be reached for the required level of mastery to form that path in the re-establishment of entities that have been almost completely lost today. If the re-configuration of ancient consciousness has been re-gained in him, then it is a possibility. It can change the modern limited conception of time and the relinquishment of authority that impede upon a true revolution. The display of such a possibility within his works and world view shows his originality as being significant for contemporary times. One can concur that Machiavelli's form of revolution involves an artistic revolution, where politics is a work of art, which embodies within it, a new form of consciousness that disrupts the now questioned classical Western consciousness.

CHAPTER VI

THE EVALUATION OF MACHIAVELLI AS RELEVANT FOR CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL THOUGHT

“The history of scientific thought as it has unfolded in the West,
is a history of errors seen through.”

Lee Harris, *Civilization and Its Enemies: The Next Stage of History*

After asking a former American and now Canadian, and
a former mentor and now colleague and close friend,
about his opinion on the US invitation on Iraq that
began the 2003 War on Iraq, he answered with five
words: “The Rubicon has been crossed.”

Freedom, that terrible word inscribed on the chariot of the storm’,
is the motivating principle of all revolutions. Without it, justice seems
inconceivable to the rebel’s mind. There comes a time, however, when
justice demands the suspension of freedom. Then terror, on a grand or
small scale, makes its appearance to consummate the revolution.

Albert Camus, *The Rebel*

6.1. Preface: Time of Transition

Up to this point, we have carefully analyzed Machiavelli’s primary works and others closely related. Suggestions have been made that the lessons learned can be applied to the present-day. This chapter will expand on those suggestions and conclusive notions from the previous four chapters, and display the level of value of Machiavelli for today.

The analysis of Machiavelli’s primary works on the selected themes has been contrived from the standpoint of a general similarity of being in a similar “time of transition,” of the Italian Renaissance and the present-day: the decline in Christianity coupled with the decline towards an ‘end’ of modernity. The discoveries from the first series of educational premises will be compared to the discourses on similar themes by contemporary scholars. This educational process will reveal that Machiavelli can be a source for the contemporary study of history, religion, power, and authority. It will display that he is relevant for the “being” or “depth of human existence” of the contemporary condition.

As we have seen, comparative analysis is productive for a better understanding of both divergent time and space, and his works make for a better comprehension of our current-day, just as he made a comparative survey to understand his condition from the occurrences in the Roman Republic and Empire, beginning circum-2000 years before his day, and with reference to legendary heroes that go further back in time.

It appears quite concretely that Machiavelli foresaw that the future could have elements to which he could never be directly exposed, just as we do not have secure knowledge of what will happen in the future. But it has become clear that, through the ancient cyclical framework of time and history, he incorporated in his educational process, events that not only have occurred in his time, but also to those which have not yet occurred in his future. This present analysis displays that Machiavelli is not temporal. His insights can be applied to various times in history and geographical spaces.

The contemporary insight and consciousness produced by the contemporary realm of political thought, that sees the decline in modernity and that envisions a rise of consciousness of being beyond and above it, is comprised less so by the popular consciousness of the common people. Yet, one can still make a simple argument that Machiavelli is more important today than previous times, and provides an educative approach for the transition from the consciousness of modernity to one beyond or above it, which we have seen in contemporary thought.

6.2. Contemporary History and Its Alignment with Machiavelli

It will be revealed that contemporary history shows the flaws in the modern sense of history, and ways for its productive recovery, and forgetting. This claim can be rendered from Machiavelli's lessons on history, as it does on further insights on our contemporary state of nature.

Today modern history as progress can be viewed ironically as "a thing of the past." The denouncement of modern views of history is supported primarily by the contemporary figures of Nietzsche and Hannah Arendt. The use of a renewed history, similar to the ancient, is aligned with such an argument:

Historia abscondita:¹⁴⁶ Every great human being exerts a retroactive force: for his sake all of history is placed in the balance again, and a thousands secrets of the past crawl out of their hiding places – into *his* sunshine. There is no way of telling what may yet become a part of history. Perhaps the past is still essentially undiscovered! So many retroactive forces are still needed! (Nietzsche 1974: 104).

This sentiment was repeated in Arendt's "What Is Authority?":

It could be that only now will the past open up to us with unexpected freshness and tell us things no one has yet had ears to hear. But it cannot be denied that without a security anchored tradition – and the loss of this security occurred severely hundred years ago – the whole dimension of the past has also been endangered. We are in danger of forgetting, and such an oblivion –quite apart from the contents themselves that could be lost – would mean that, humanly speaking, we would deprive ourselves of one dimension, the dimension of depth of human existence. For memory and depth are the same, or rather, depth cannot be reached by man except through remembrance (Arendt 1954: 94).

History now, is not the historiological vision of progress, but a reassignment of confronting it, inquiring about it, "sitting in judgement over it" for health in the vitality of life. Human dignity may be won back by rising above modern historicism, by starting a "denial of the Hegelian right that History as Progress is the ultimate judge" (Arendt 1982: 5).¹⁴⁷

Such a end to a dialectic of progress is truly a target of satirical, serio-comical, rhetoric with its paradoxical quality. For Mircea Eliade, who is the leading twentieth century thinker in the comparison of ancient history and religiosity with the modern, it is "ridiculous audacity," especially to believe as Hegel did, that the greatest period of human history occurred within his own version of Protestantism and within his own country. It also makes even more ridiculous the claim of the 'end of history' asserted by either the communist ideology, or the liberal one, which

¹⁴⁶ An unknown, concealed history.

¹⁴⁷ Hannah Arendt, "Postscriptum to Thinking," *Kant's Lectures*, page 5.

was done by Francis Fukuyama, a Japanese-American bureaucrat. The illusory fantasy made such ideological claims believable in the future time-process, where just “time is history.” The latter-day modern consciousness turns away from history to focus only on the future: “Those who study history are concerned with the occurrences of passed times; those who conceive time as history are turned to what will happen in the future” (Grant 1969: 10).

The notion of “time as history” was begun by George Grant, a twentieth-century Canadian political philosopher, a Nietzschean and Roman Catholic that also taught religion. The historical consciousness of “time as history” is still dominant today, yet it is limited in providing an understanding of who we are in relation to our natural condition. This limited view of ‘history’ is a part of the modern project, and Grant lists Rousseau, Kant, and even Hegel, as being within this limited modern understanding of history: “the modern conception of history first made its appearance in the thought of men such as Rousseau, Kant, and Hegel. The realm of history was distinguished from the realm of nature” (Grant 1969: 6).

Any viewpoint from such a limited sense of history in the modern consciousness is only a “temporal abstraction,” a breakdown of memory which impedes upon knowledge. Its reactionary impulse only gives a limited understanding of the reality of the present, and cannot predict to any significant degree the occurrences of the future. In the renouncement of history came the attempt for the modern man to “make history” different from the past, as the modern man was re-oriented by the ideology of progress:

men oriented to that future in which great events that have yet been, will be. They conceived time as that in which human accomplishments would be unfolded; that is, in their language of their ideology, as progress. Whatever differences there may have been between the three dominant ideologies of our century – Marxist communism, American liberalism, national socialism – they all similarly called men to be resolute in their mastery of the future (Grant 1969: 10).

But with the praise in an absolute end, the opposing tendency began to be conceived, as George Grant tells us: “Western civilization became world wide just as it becomes increasingly possible to doubt its assumptions” (Grant 1969: 2). The

assumed modern 'mastery' turns into a slavish conceptual perspective of illusory ignorance. The breakdown of Hegelian idealism is being revealed.

Under the modern consciousness, "time as history" is entirely opposed to the experience of eternal recurrence directed towards sacred events in ancient cyclical cosmology, which Machiavelli used as his basic educative method. The passing of time in the modern consciousness bypasses any foresight into meaningful action upon influential circumstances. If anything, the modern avoids such circumstances in lacking the desire to confront the alleged difficulties involved. The turning back to the ancient consciousness is a potential, and is necessary in confronting the on-growing decline of modern principles.

History should be re-constructed; in reality, it can formulate a better assessment of superiority and inferiority, and re-instigates factors that have been lost in the political agenda of modernity, such as virtue, excellence, prudence, honour, and glory. Machiavelli can provide these elements.

One can return to Hannah Arendt, since in her chapter "Tradition and the Modern Age," in *Between Past and Future*, she paints a clearer picture of the modern sense of history. The 'victory' of the modern age, with its beginning in the turning away from history, "does not mean that traditional concepts have lost their power over the minds of men" (Arendt 1954: 26). If anything, "this power of well-worn notions and categories becomes more tyrannical as the tradition loses its force and as the memory of its beginning recedes" (Arendt 1954: 26). The break in history "sprang from a chaos of mass perplexities on the political scene and of mass opinions in the spiritual sphere which the totalitarian movements, through terror and ideology, crystallized into a new form of government and domination" (Arendt 1954: 26). The attempt of great thinkers like Hegel to break away from historical tradition "may have foreshadowed this event," an event that "marks the division between the modern age" (Arendt 1954: 27). The error, that lessons from the past were no longer able to cope with the modern technological age, was an error that may have caused, as Arendt states, "the actual event of totalitarian domination" (Arendt 1954: 27). It was an error in the avoidance of history. At such an event, history became silent. The contemporary age is beginning to see that the silence of history may allow terror to continue.

In the last chapter of her last book, “The abyss of freedom and the *nuovo ordo seclorum*,” in “Willing, Part Two” of *The Life of the Mind*, Hannah Arendt states explicitly that Machiavelli started the contemporary search in antiquity. For her, this is “what started a entirely new beginning” (Arendt 1971: 210 II). Her “new order” displays the mistake of the modern misunderstanding of newness extending from the complete rejection of antiquity and any religious sentiment in politics. Yet, these lessons, “starting with Machiavelli, had gone to Roman antiquity” (Arendt 1971: 210 II). They were truly a new Renaissance, which “ransacked the archives of Roman antiquity for ‘ancient prudence’ to guide them in the establishment of a Republic” (Arendt 1971 : 210 II). The Renaissance can be more fervently seen as being beyond the modern Enlightenment. Machiavelli is a predecessor for today, the contemporary period beyond modernity.

“History” is used in the study of a dimension of reality, a dimension that is crucial in Machiavelli’s educative direction. It comes from the assumption that we are historical beings. All things have a history, the stars, the plants, the animals, trees, lakes, rivers and oceans. It involves an ontological explanation of who and what we are. It is an attempt to revive a meaning in life. The understanding of the meaning involves the forming of an adequate story of the nature of our own species and all others, in our own space and time. One can conceive that Machiavelli was well-aware of these aspects as essential in his educational process.

The breakdown of popular beliefs generated by modern science and the technological age is a sign of the acknowledgement of nihilism: modern beliefs are no longer believable, and no longer mean anything. To overcome nihilism is to recognize it first, and to bring back what has been left, what has been abused by the modern project; this is all done in order to enlighten the human, to come to know his nature, his time and place on earth. The measure of worth is in the measure of strength. “The strongest,” in Nietzsche’s judgment, are “those richest in health who are equal to most misfortunes and therefore not so afraid of them” (Nietzsche 1967: 38). The judgment on the use or abuse of history is to be measured by the level of acceptance of reality. Man’s position on earth and history, his cosmology, must be changed in order to encompass a truer understanding of the nature of earth and man,

and thus a cosmological understanding of time and history. This is a new challenge for the contemporaries.

Nietzsche's understanding of nihilism is similar to the breakdown of concepts and meanings of the previous world in Machiavelli's experience, with very little insight in confronting the new challenges. These lessons can be extracted from careful readings of Machiavelli. His re-established cosmological and cyclical sense of history provides the means to productively re-constitute the worth in history at the "end of history," similar to the need stated by the scholars in the realm of contemporary thought. The proper interpretation of the "end of history" is the "end of modernity." The use of history in Machiavelli's educational approach can be a foundation for creating a re-invigorating use of history. A renewed ancient cosmology can form the productive criticism of modern historicism. Contemporary historicism attempts to overrule the modern. The strength in Roman concept can be re-born, where it,

conceived of history as a storehouse of examples taken from actual political behaviour, demonstrating what tradition, the authority of ancestors, demanded from each generation and what the past had accumulated for the benefit of the present (Arendt 1954: 64-65).

For Machiavelli, the differences in the cycle include an ebb and flood in politics, as there is in Nature. But the Flood may be sustained instead of the ebb.¹⁴⁸ Machiavelli is only 'modern' in the realization of being at the forefront of seeing the "end" of modernity, therefore, he is linked with the contemporary "radical" view, the meaning of "radical" that is forgotten in the present-day: the means of approaching the "fundamental roots" to acquire a new political process, not eradicating all such fundamentals as we have seen in 'radical' modern revolutions.

Through the works of Machiavelli, a renewal of the ancient forms of the understanding of nature and history for true human action can be a stepping stone to overcome the flaws in modern 'political' movements that are mostly the result of the destructive and uncontrollable elements in the play of forces of power, which

¹⁴⁸ For Polybius, the focus was on the "ebb" of the Roman Republic; but for Machiavelli, "The Flood" is nearby, since so much of the Roman Republic has been forgotten.

are moving towards a growing inhumanity in man, even though, in foreseeing the disastrous effects of modernity, such a claim appears idealistic in itself. It involves a call for courage and bravery, which were motivational factors in Machiavelli's works.

Such an appeal displays Machiavelli as ground-breaking in the traditional "Western world view," and the "substance of Western thought." The lessons he reveals can be a cornerstone for the re-formulation of need for a renewed identity. At this "time of transition," it has been revealed the modernity is in decline, whose historical and religious morality is becoming more concretely degenerated. It is more clearly degenerated in its use of "time as history," which is only the passing of time with no influential meaning.

At the decline of modern times, a creative stance is required to form the grounds for a new framework in which to address the experiences of another "time of transition." Our contemporary times, as stated by many thinkers, are times of crisis, times of nihilism. Yet this assertion is necessary to rise above the nihilistic condition. The superabundance of meanings from the ancients provide a creative stance for re-formulation of civilization, hopefully with *virtu* and prudence, a "retroactive force," with nobility of character, and true liberty. It can involve an eternal recurrence, therefore a re-birth in ancient cosmological historicism. This is the clearly given reason for the contemporary appeal of Machiavelli. That is why one can say that Machiavelli is on the brink of nihilism, therefore the beginnings of a re-birth, a re-formulation to rise above chaotic turmoil. At such times, we need a new Renaissance, to which Machiavelli can be a source.

It has been established, that in Machiavelli's use of history, an imitation of antiquity is required in the productive response to a fallen civilization. The decision of its remembrance or forgetting is merited by the strength in facing the reality of the present condition. Human nature is considered by Machiavelli as being generally the same over time. Nevertheless, through knowledge coming from the ancient cosmological view of history, and the development of strong virtuous judgment under ensuing conditions can tame the power of *Fortuna*. This historical lesson is not only for the nationalization of Italy, but over all times and places. The

study of history entices its use in performing meaningful actions. It is valuable therefore in contemporary historicism.

6.3. 'New' Contemporary Ideas on Religion

No other entity in the present-day calls for a re-conceptualization more than the term "religion." Arising studies on the subject form the school of thought of the "criticism of credibility" in contemporary times. Nevertheless, religious scholars go beyond the traditional understandings of the three main monotheistic religions, and one can say in a Machiavellian manner. He too, from the standpoint of the "criticism of credibility," engaged in a re-interpretation of Christianity, which brought about the possibility that which is typically opposed in Christianity - ancient paganism - could actually be its truer depiction. Many problems that must be contended today are similar to those of Machiavelli. Many problems identified in the present-day are similar to those which Machiavelli faced.

The spiritual crisis that we face today is larger than what Machiavelli encountered. As the one-time Catholic nun, and now religious scholar, Karen Armstrong, tells us, "by the sixteenth century, a complex process was at work in Europe and, later, its American colonies which was transforming the way that people thought and experienced the world" (Armstrong 2000: 61). "Inventions and innovations" made for conclusive effects. The mythical ethos was undermined, the meaning of the term was obversed, and "new ideas about God, religion, the state, the individual, and society arose" (Armstrong 2000: 61). This change started a "violent era," with "destructive wars and revolutions, violent uprooting, the despoliation of the countryside, and hideous religious strife" (Armstrong 2000: 61). The growth of modernity produced,

bloodshed, persecution, inquisition, massacre, exploitation, enslavement, and cruelty. We are witnessing the same bloody upheavals in countries in the developing world which are going through the painful modernizing process today (Armstrong 2000: 61).

It seems Machiavelli would have agreed with this "end of modernity," as "a profound sense of terror, a sense of meaninglessness and annihilation, [that] would

be part of the modern experience” (Armstrong 2000: 97). It affected not only Christianity, but the other monotheistic religions as well:

..the exuberant exhilaration of modernity was beginning to give way to a nameless dread. This would affect not only the Christians of Europe, but Jews and Muslims, who had also been drawn into the modernizing process and found it equally perplexing (Armstrong 2000: 97).

Anarchic conditions frequently abuse religion for horrendous conspiratorial activities both in what has been described as “fundamental Islamicism,” and “Christian fundamentalism.” Generally speaking, Machiavelli encountered similar dilemmas, and his educative approach proposed for a better comprehension of the relations between historicism and religion, which was evident in ancient paganism with the final goal to develop judicial practices in politics.

The notion of “fundamental faith” that we hear so often in the claim of “Islamic fundamentalists” in the media and in popular rhetoric is a misrepresentation, since the true “fundamentals of religion” have been lost (Armstrong 2000: 365). Armstrong states, “we must appreciate the depth of this neurosis” (Armstrong 2000: 368-369), since “fundamentalism is not a throwback to the past; they are modern, innovative, and modernizing” (Armstrong 2000: 369).

As Armstrong concludes, “secularism and religious faith are profoundly threatened by one another” (Armstrong 2000: 368). Theology and ideology are rooted in fear, not for respect for God, gods, oaths, omens, auspices, and auguries, but a revengeful fear for other humans simplistically concocted as enemies. The final claim is the need for the combination of the fundamentalists and the secularists:

fundamentalists must evolve a more compassionate assessment of their enemies in order to be true to their religious traditions, secularists must also be more faithful to their benevolence, tolerance, and respect for humanity which characterizes modern culture as its best, and address themselves more emphatically to the fears, anxieties, and needs which so many of their fundamentalist neighbours experience but which no society can ignore (Armstrong 2000: 371).

The final lesson is one of a blending of two normally opposing religious tendencies, of secularism and modern religions that can come together in a productive manner. It is a common mode in Machiavelli's teachings.

The lesson here is that secularism is not the resolving answer to the "neurosis" in modern forms of religious fundamentalism. With Machiavelli's teachings, religiosity is distinctly a product of human nature. Its harmful decline calls for a new rebirth of the ancient. Machiavelli introduces a Renaissance to religion. His renewed sense of religion is certainly unique and original.

Monotheistic Occidental religions, especially the modern transformations in Christianity, have developed themselves through a further separation of religion from the former sacredness of nature, where most things in the modern consciousness are perceived as profane. Max Weber, in a chapter entitled "The Social Psychology of the World Religions," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (1958), recognizes the oppositions between monotheistic Occidental religions and present-day forms of politics. Max Weber's essential educative direction is to set-up a new framework for the contemporary study of sociological and political affairs.

Though both are argued as belonging to "corporate authority," the religious form of authority is in contention with political authority. In considering all ruling powers, Weber cites the "profane" with the "political," and the "religious" with the "apolitical." This haphazard legal separation "is specifically modern" (Weber 1958: 294). There is a competition between each contrasting realm for their own version of legitimacy: "These types are constructed by searching for the basis of *legitimacy*, which the ruling power claims" (Weber 1958: 294). The general confrontation is revealed between the secularization of the modern political sphere, with the competitive authority of the religious sphere.

The bases for which religions establish authority are in contrast to the political sphere. The modern political sphere is based on "material efficiency," and religious authority is based on "salvation" which involves a view of the "world of abnegation" with "ascetic and contemplative manipulations" (Weber 1958: 325). The quest for salvation is ascetic and continues in the "Occidental religions." They seem active to tame "the beastly and the wicked," but they are "Janus-faced": "On

the one hand, abnegation of the world, and on the other, mastery of the world by virtue of the magical powers obtained by abnegation” (Weber 1958: 327). The “Occidental sects of religion” are linked to metaphysics, since the “ineradicable demand for a theology,” is “the metaphysical conception of God and of the world” (Weber 1958: 275). From this knowledge, we can claim that Machiavelli’s re-birth in religion includes a dismantling of the modern religious consciousness, which is linked to metaphysics.

The “ineradicable” demand for a God is similar to the ineradicable modern belief that technological elements can control the world. It has been revealed that such a ‘logical’ process ends up subverting itself. Instead of the superiority of civilization, one discovers the sense of nihilism.

We have a general similarity of Machiavelli’s criticism of Christianity and its by products, with the thinker who is the source of the extensive criticism of Christianity and modernity, Friedrich Nietzsche. For Nietzsche, “Christianity’s triumph over Rome is the triumph of slave-morality over master-morality” (Dannhauser 1973: 789). They are similar in identifying the determining context of the strong and the weak: “slave-morality is a rejection of the strong by the weak” (Dannhauser 1973: 789). The worst effect of Christianity for Nietzsche is synonymous with Machiavelli, that the slavish-weak values produce the “deliberate degeneration and atrophy of man” (Nietzsche 1966: 75). Nietzsche reveals that modern ideologies stem from Christianity: “Both democracy and socialism preach egalitarianism and both have true heirs of Christianity and slave morality” (Dannhauser 1973: 790).

In retrospect, the grand-weaving ancient framework accepted differences in religious beliefs and ethnic customs, and learned from them as they were within the cosmological inter-woven tapestry. Modern forms of religion are similar to modern politics – *they break down that cosmological inter-woven tapestry*. The Christian leaders took advantage of the propensity of the people to enslave themselves under those in power, through the dogmatization of the untouchable morality of good and evil, with no consideration of the nature of the conditions. The continuation of another form of dogmatized enslavement occurred in modern ideologies, both left and right, which were generated by the false illusions of grandeur. A renewed sense

of religion is demanded with strength and determination in the people for politics and military affairs. It is a request for a religious change in culture today, tomorrow, and yesterday. This would have an effect on politics, because his religiosity is not separated from politics.

Machiavelli's unique and original sense of religion is divergent from current-day Occidental religions. It involves a combination of religion and politics. One can infer that his depiction of 'religion' displays and is opposed to limitations of both the secularism of modern politics and the contexts of Occidental religions. His renewed ancient pagan religion is similar to the use of ancient history, which is to be incorporated in the present-day to correct its flaws. In this conception, it points to a re-configuration of these elements in the present-day that may be addressed to alleviate the violent tensions between religious and political powers.

6.4. The Present-Day Dominance in 'Political' Power

We have seen through the study on Machiavelli on power, that the modern attachment of politics to power is limited in two modes: the concentration on power is a denouncement of orderly politics, and it has very few barriers towards its "good" or "bad" use. Power is multi-fold and manifold to such an extent that any particularity or concrete definition can easily be distorted, disorienting and obscure. Machiavelli's lessons are valuable, since they provide the means to deal with the complexities and intricacies of power. Machiavelli, with primarily his literary artistry, displays an implicit criticism of particular forms of power. The educational insights arrived at from such an approach, can be productive in revealing the shortages in contemporary conceptions that do not override modern frailties.

Gramsci and Althusser are examples of the effects the study of Machiavelli had on the early-onto-the-middle of the twentieth-century. We see in these neo-Marxists a transgression from modernity to one pointing beyond that consciousness and time period. They were profoundly influenced by Machiavelli, as were others. As Gopal Balakrishnan stated in a recent article in *The New Left Review*: Machiavelli formed "an arc across the political map," including "Carl Schmitt, Wyndam Lewis, Leo Strauss, Benedetto Croce, Raymond Aron," who also "identified the century as Machiavellian" (Balakrishnan 2005: 6). Machiavelli

influenced a different spirit in Althusser, breeding uniqueness amongst his other works. For Althusser, Machiavelli was “a more radical and original theorist than any successor in the communist tradition,” (Balakrishnan 2000: 1) stating Althusser’s dedication, that Machiavelli, “without a doubt [is] the author who has most fascinated me, much more so than Marx” (Balakrishnan 2000: 1).

On the positive side, Gramsci employed a partial alteration from the flaws of Marxism when he envisioned that the civil society could interrupt the power of the State, breaking down the firm separation of the structure and superstructure. Gramsci’s general analysis is done through his own terminology stemming from the early twentieth century experience, and reveals the intricacies involved in his established levels of performance of a “hegemony” that is somewhat beyond modern conceptualization. The civil society for Gramsci comprised of the intellectual and moral elements engendering leadership and consent. The state involved the political element, which engendered domination, subjugation, coercion and force. For Gramsci, his present-day struggle for power was amongst consent and force. Consent involved agreement and willingness to obey authority, while force, the opposing contention, involved corruption, tyranny, and the practices of unscrupulous leaders.

Gramsci also revealed acquiring lessons from *The Prince* on the interrelations of power and authority. Gaining power became the first necessity in his condition through the need of intellectual and moral leadership. But after acquiring power, one should not enforce domination by force, but by the consent formulated by the intellectual and moral leadership. There is agreement in the recognition made by Gramsci that *The Prince* formulates lessons beyond acquiring power or force towards consent: “there are allusions to the moment of hegemony or consent in *The Prince* too” (Gramsci socserv2: 125fn). The pathway to consent can be claimed as a re-configuration of authority, in the Machiavellian sense of authority, to counter the force of the “corruption and fraud” of the power of dictatorship, which is the formulation of the state without any contribution by the civil society.

Gramsci was fruitful in adapting to his own condition. His views were directed to the situations at the beginning of the twentieth century, of a global

economy, and the internationalization of the rise of capitalism. But some elements of importance for Machiavelli were not considered by Gramsci. Even though, he produced alternatives to the assessed limitations in Marxism, some contradictions remained continuously unresolved. It is clear that any “alternative hegemony” for Machiavelli must display a foundational cornerstone to formulate authority which displays a high level of excellence, prudence, virtue, honour, and glory. One must imitate the ancients, especially in times of turmoil. Hegemony should be a combination of adapting to force in a chaotic condition with a later consent that requires the goals and values stemming from true authority. It is this element that balances “the combination of force and consent,” which means “without force predominating over consent” (Gramsci socserv2: 169) One can surmise that the consent of an alternative hegemony, or an authority in Machiavelli’s terminology, must challenge the “dialectical unity” or the “dialectical relation” between force and consent with a more divergent consciousness in providing a clear analysis of the contemporary condition, and acting productively towards it.

For Gramsci, his ‘modern prince’ was the Communist party. But today, “it would seem that faith in the guiding role of the ‘Modern Prince’ – the Communist Party – is fundamentally misplaced in today’s social world” (Morton 2007: 207). For Althusser, the “recognition of the cycle in history,” with his notion of “revolutionary materialism,” formed a duality with “the impossibility of a definite solution” (Balakrishnan 2005: 2). But he partially resolves it in “revolutionary practice” by assuming that Machiavelli threw out the cyclical use of history in *The Prince*. It must be accepted that a final answer can never be known when dealing with politics, especially an ill-conceived one.

Any revolution without any hindsight of an uprising hierarchic balance of forces in a republican constitution is not a good revolution. Such a revolution under false precepts only furthers disorder, and is a symptom of the banishment of authority with the destructive and unjust use of power. Machiavelli “for the future” does not mean that he is “taken out of the historical contexts.” This is clear falsity. No reference is made to the Roman Republic or any discussions on authority. His “path not yet trodden” does not mean that he escapes the reliance on ancient lessons. If Machiavelli does not escape “utopian illusion,” then nobody does. There

is no sense in Althusser or Gramsci of a degree of farcical mockery in *The Prince*. There is no recognition of the necessary *imitation* of the past, which is so essential for Machiavelli. We are on that dividing line, therefore a careless mistake or interpretation can have enormous consequences. One main lesson from Machiavelli is the need for a very virtuous authority to override the misguided majority of the people, to overcome the opposing duration of the fallen auspices of civilization. Such essential features are only partially approached by Althusser and Gramsci. Yet, such strong debates indicate Machiavelli's importance on these matters. He can be the source for a better understanding of the complexities of these factors for the present-day.

The criticism on modern forms of power are in the recent works of Max Weber and Michel Foucault, and they can be designated as particular examples of Machiavelli's "lust for power," or the unconscious subjugation involved in being a cog in the wheel of a more technologized modern experience.

For Weber, power is a determining factor in twentieth-century politics, as he states in his "Economic and Social Consequences of Bureaucracy": "The consequences depend therefore upon the direction which the powers using the apparatus give to it. A very frequently a crypto-plutonic distribution of power has been the result" (Weber 1958: 230). Power is in all social relations so that it need not be confined to a single area of the state. Generally speaking, modern versions of sovereignty involve the acquisition, establishment, and distribution of power in the modern-state. Weber defines the modern-state "only in terms of the specific *means*"; that is, "to every political association, namely, the use of physical force" (Weber 1958: 78). Power involves "pressure, intimidation, coercion or violence" (Heywood 1994: 87). It is one, which we have learned, contrasts most severely with authority: "threat or exercise of force, coercion can be regarded as the anti-thesis of authority" (Heywood 1994: 88).

In modernity, the sovereignty of the monarchy is transferred to the "ownership by means of administration," or bureaucracy. It can be efficient at times, but under full consideration, the machine-like quality can easily erase any of the humane elements: "The price of great efficiency he feared, was a more de-personalized and inhuman social environment, typified by relentless spread of

bureaucratic forms of organization” (Heywood 1994: 92). “Under normal conditions,” he writes, “the power position of a fully developed bureaucracy is always over-towering” (Weber 1958: 232). Weber significantly recognizes the loss in the modern-state in the crucial distinctions between public and private concerns through the dominance of bureaucratic power: “the de-personalization of administrative management by bureaucracy does not realize any distinction or separation of the public and private fully and in principle” (Weber 1958: 239). These observations display the dominance of bleak power in modern politics, and are closely related to the lessons learned from a careful reading of *The Prince*.

Power is all encompassing for Foucault: “It seems to me that it *is* ‘always, already there’, that one is never outside it” (Foucault 1972: 141). There are distinctions that one can assess are productive or destructive in Foucault’s analysis of power, slightly similar to the power of necessity and lust for power in Machiavelli. They can be felt in the confusing “political struggle” in the dichotomy of “discursive practices”: some significant in enlightenment, others reductive to knowledge through the dominance of power:

It seems to me that this whole intimidation with the bogey of reform is linked to the lack of strategic analysis appropriate to political struggle, to struggles in the field of political power. The role of theory today seems to me to be just this: not to formulate the global systematic theory which holds everything in place, but to analyse the specificity of mechanisms of power, to locate the connections and extensions, to build little by little a strategic knowledge (Foucault 1972: 145).

The importance of the discursive practice for enlightenment is on the civil society and its relation to the state. It involves an analysis of the “governmentality” of the state, which he sees as a study of its “genealogy”: “Foucault deploys the concept of governmentality as a ‘guideline’ for a ‘genealogy of the modern state’ ” (Lemke 2007: 1). For him, productive power rests on this recognition. Its importance has a global effect. Power is productive through this form of knowledge opposed to bureaucracy and political factionalism.

These two antithetical conceptions beyond the terms of good and evil are similar to Machiavelli’s “power of necessity,” which is also mostly comprised as a

“play with nature,” which is different than the terms of good and evil in the maintenance of authority. As Gordon states, for Foucault, power involves “the tendency towards strife and play with nature” (Foucault 1972: 234). As such, “he introduces the double methodological principle of neutrality or scepticism of an analysis of power” that consists in various forms of sovereignty (Foucault 1972: 235). Up to this point, he is in line with the teachings that have been revealed by Machiavelli. Machiavelli more forcibly engenders practice and action under the difficult decision of what is right and what is wrong. Machiavelli is involved in literary discourse on elements of power, as they become dominant in the formulation of actions and reactions at times of political turmoil. All of the subjects touched upon by Foucault can be demonstrated in the contexts by which Machiavelli reveals power.

Machiavelli’s running paradox and oxymoron usage in his satirical literature gets incorporated into the study of contemporary forms of Foucault’s “biopolitical power.” The most explicit example is in the contemporary Italian scholar Giorgio Agamben, whose influential books *The State of Exception* and *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* demonstrate that Foucault did not have a clear awareness of his own new category of power for contemporary analysis. The work of Giorgio Agamben captures more than others the attachment of the contemporary understanding in the realm of political thought to a Machiavellian approach; one that goes beyond modernity, and engenders a productive analysis, synthesis, and criticism of current-day events.

Agamben goes back to ancient Rome to demonstrate a comparative analysis for a better understanding of the current-day perplexity, and traces the lower level of humanity and its animalistic roots that are elevated in modernity. It involves the potential disastrous situation similar to Machiavelli’s, where the ‘high’ are actually low, and the ‘low’, who should be high, are actually ostracized by the crude inhumane abuses of power. Even though this seems directed towards totalitarian states, a similar general situation exists under states formed under liberalism. He claims that Hobbes’ “state of nature” “justifies the absolute power of the sovereign,” including the “in distinction of law and violence” (Agamben 1995: 35). Agamben argues that these practices are paradigms in present-day forms of

government, where those in power can do almost anything, dismantling any foundational justification in the use of law, creating situations where law itself becomes powerless.

“Bare life,” or the “re-animalization of man,” is the hidden basis for the state’s sovereign power. Wars solely for economic power, with the killings of the innocent, are justified by the common insipid concepts in which most people still believe, and which fosters a simplistic identity of friend and enemy in ideology or reduced forms of religion. Any attachment for economic determinism involves the dehumanization of man, since it involves the justification of atrocities in inhumane warfare and terrorism. These lessons in Agamben are easily derived from a close study and use of Machiavelli.

The dismissal of justice is becoming a paradigm in current-day ‘political’ practice. This real analysis of our current-day situation is presented by Agamben, in going back to ancient Rome and discovering, with retroactive power, the present-day extent of the downfall in human civilization in politics. For Agamben, it is to get back to the “*homo sacer*, (sacred man)” who has an “essential function in modern politics,” where, an,

obscure figure of archaic Roman law, in which human life is included in judicial order solely in the form of its exclusion...has thus offered the key by which not only the sacred texts of sovereignty but also the very codes of political power will unveil their mysteries (Agamben 1995: 8).

The creation of the modern-state power involves the birth of modern democracy, “in which man as a living being presents himself no longer as an *object* but as the *subject* of political power” (Agamben 1995: 9). He assesses the irony of modern democracy by revealing its “specific aporia” in this manner: “it wants to put freedom and happiness of men into play in the very place – ‘bare life’ – that marked their subjection” (Agamben 1995: 9-10). But for the ancient, there is no “bare life.” The nature of life incorporates religion and politics within it. In the very moment that modernity had arrived at a claim to supremacy, it proved itself incapable of protecting itself from unprecedented ruin. The *hubris* of modernity produces many blind spots.

'Great State' structures in modernity are falling into dissolution. A "new perspective" is needed and certainly beyond even the latest ideologies, since by the misunderstanding of the modern notion of State power "is the reef upon which the revolutions of our century have been shipwrecked" (Agamben 1995: 12).¹⁴⁹ Agamben has revealed, through reliance on the study of antiquity, that the modern scientific view of biopolitics incorporates a complete reduction from the ancient natural sense of the sacrality of life, which amounts to a "tie" between politics and religion frequently "re-tied." It is clear that the Machiavellian approach can provide much on the insights into the abuse of power by current-day governments or the power elite. Machiavelli can be productive in renewing the consciousness of people in order to generate strength in dealing with the present-day conditions and reformulating the framework of analysis and action. He can truly be "new."

The elements of "newness" have not been incorporated in the cosmological circular realm, as was done by Machiavelli. The aspects of newness are not entirely new beyond any recall. The "all new" or "wholly new" involves the continuation of chaotic turmoil. This "all new" is tied to the features on the brink of nihilism. If it is his usual newness, it is on the condition where the past is needed more, where the fallen replicas of civilization will be heralded, in order to change the flaws in some of the new ones. Machiavelli's "path not yet trodden" is to seriously play with the forces of nature, with the bravery to accept whatever effect it may have on the world, yet coupling this acceptance with a hidden prudence, one hidden by necessity; but, the necessity is through a means of newly displaying the human condition, which gives new ways of guiding it in the formulation of human action.

Power, the practice of politics almost synonymous to activities of the modern-state, is approached by Machiavelli in a divergent and productive manner. His politics, like religion and history, is not detached from the cosmological world view. He had the foresight to recognize the modern unscrupulous practices;

¹⁴⁹ Agamben makes a powerful statement in agreement with the sentiment on ideologies in this work, where any revolutionary direction based on any form of idealistic illusion does no good: "The weakness of anarchist and Marxian critiques of the State was precisely to have not caught sight of this structure and thus to have quickly left the *arcanum imperii* aside, as if it had no substance outside of the simulacra and the ideologies invoked to justify it" (Agamben 1995: 12). They are not profound enough to invoke a true revolution. The 'revolutions' based on them were only further dissolutions.

nevertheless, to accept them and challenge them without the growing vengefulness witnessed in the current-day. Machiavelli provides a “new” framework from which to re-formulate the practice of politics, in order to correct his and our “modern” errors. The modern reliance almost solely on power, subverts any call for strength, nobility, glory, honour, and worldly virtue, displays more of its downfall. This is his “novelty,” providing a new form of identity of ancient valour called for in contemporary times. His intricate sense of power provides a productive backdrop in the study of its interrelations with authority.

6.5. Contemporary Review of Authority

For Machiavelli, the most important aspects of life is beyond the required pursuit of power and focuses primarily in the establishment of authority. There are some similarities with the modern, yet, and most importantly, is in contrast to modernity. The modern constitutional framework is very deprecating on the level of quality of human nature required for Machiavelli’s required form of rule.

The authority we have almost lost in the twentieth century is a “very specific form,” and not “authority in general” (Arendt 1954: 92). It is a very specific form that “had been valid throughout the Western World over a long period of time” (Arendt 1954: 92). Machiavelli is referred to in this article on the on-going topics, and it constitutes him as important for contemporary times, due to his knowledge and use of the ancient forms of authority in tackling the fallacy of religious and political degeneration that the contemporary world is still facing. It is hoped that such a contention in the realm of political thought gets exposed in such a way to affect the practices of current-day politics.

For Arendt - and Machiavelli would agree - authority never was power, violence, persuasion, equal argumentation, coercion, or force. Modern common reason does not come close to such an understanding that authority “is always hierarchical” (Arendt 1954: 93). The democratic sentiment for equality believes that any form of hierarchy implies elements that authority clearly is not: “power, violence, coercion, persuasion, and force.” (Arendt 1954: 93) It is ironically coincided with the false illusion and misdirection of the necessity of judgment in egalitarian principles. Egalitarianism is not real. Any form of good judgment

involves a hierarchic practice. The necessity of hierarchy is in the practice of justice, and Machiavelli frequently displayed this nuance. The understanding that authority “is in contradistinction to both the coercion by force, and persuasion through arguments,” would be baffling to some, since the only common conception of hierarchy is one related to sheer brutality (Arendt 1954: 93). Yet it is an alternative to the common use of persuasion, propaganda, coercion, force, and violence in present-day politics, which is prominently used by those in power, without just authority.

Liberty, under authority, has nothing to do with the common understanding of modern freedom, which is primarily the illusory praise of egalitarian licentiousness, a faulty extreme of the lack of authority. Authority, as Arendt tells us, includes a divergent understanding of obedience and freedom than the modern: authority “implies an obedience in which men retain their freedom” (Arendt 1954: 106). With the common distorted idea of freedom today, the present-day common man would be completely confused by such a statement. Confusion arises at times of transition.

With this realization, at a “time of transition,” the workings of Max Weber are also prominent for the concern of authority. In Part III entitled “Religion” of the book *From Max Weber* in the chapter “The Social Psychology of World Religions,” he recognizes, firstly, that authority in the past is different than modern authority, yet still has effects on the present-day: “The past has known other bases for authority, bases which, incidentally, extend as survival into the present” (Weber 1958: 295). From this unmentioned difference, he merely outlines his well-known 3 types of authority: charismatic, traditional, and the legal-rational or bureaucratic. Even though the first two were prominent in the past, nevertheless, at times, “the charismatically gifted persons, like prophets and heroes, or upon sacred tradition,” get submitted under the legal-rational authority, which “is based upon an *impersonal* bond to the generally defined and functional ‘duty of office’” (Weber 1958: 299). The right to exercise authority is given by “*rationaly established* norms,” in such a way that “the legitimacy of the authority becomes the legality of the general rule” (Weber 1958: 299). On this matter, for Arendt, this “general rule” of bureaucratic authority equals a “no-man rule,” where it can turn out to be “its

cruellest and most tyrannical versions,” with its “invisible hand” (Arendt 1958: 40). As far as Heywood is concerned, although Weber appears that he favours the legal-rational or bureaucratic authority, he also recognizes that it carries with it a “depersonalized inhuman social environment” (Heywood 1994: 92).

The administrative elements of the “modern ‘constitution’” constitute “orders given in the name of the impersonal norms,” rather than “personal authority” (Weber 1958: 294-295). Those in ‘command’ are guided by the established rules, not by their own personal authority. This element is shared by both the political and religious spheres. There is a “legal separation” of the “‘private sphere’ and the ‘official’ sphere,” that is “specifically modern” (Weber 1958: 295).

For Weber, the effects of the “modern constitution,” with its “impersonal norms,” are similar to the analysis of the impersonal element of the modern-state in the pre-mentioned article by Harvey Mansfield. Machiavelli would contest any “impersonal” element from the typical modern assessment. This makes the “impersonal” element of modern authority somewhat ironic and dubious: most officials act as they are respondent to the authority of norms, duties of offices, and rationally established laws, but such elements were derived from some human agreement. A question arises after such an observation: from what goals are the modern norms, duties, and laws derived?

The response of the people to the administration of authority, be it the bureaucratic authority of today, or the monarchic or prince-like authority at the beginning of modernity, consists of the nature of the on-going and increasing number of revolutions in the latter part of human history. Revolution is a grand concept of performance, involving many factors that are complex and require good interpretation for a good understanding. There are many challenging common opinions of the level of worth of revolutions. We have seen the complexities and difficulties in interpretation in the changing views of Hannah Arendt on the nature of revolutions over a few years.¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ We see the difficulty of coming to a clear understanding of the effects of modern revolutions in Arendt’s divergent interpretations of Machiavelli’s alliance with them, from her article “What Is Authority?” to the book *On Revolution*, published nine years later. She realizes in the later work that there is very little recognition of authority in both the French and American Revolutions: “The people in France, *le peuple*, in the sense of Revolution were neither organized nor constituted”

As far as Andrew Heywood is concerned, as he states in his “Revolution” section, there is a general divergence in revolutions from the beginning of modernity to its latter-day. From the beginning of modern revolutions, “the English Revolution of the 1640s and 1650s, which culminated in the Glorious Revolution,” differed them from the previous revolutions in which the term developed, “the fourteenth century” (Heywood, 1994: 303). They “created the idea of revolution as a cyclical change, evident in the verb ‘to revolve’” (Heywood 1994: 303). The following “modern” revolutions were “with the Western idea of revolution as progressive change” (Heywood 1994: 304).

For Machiavelli, the only manner by which a revolution would be valued is to re-install the revolving circular view of history: to re-install an awareness of authorial virtue in the people, to properly know the state of their condition, and the means to overtake the tyrannical rulers. He could only be tied to the more recent “East European revolutions (1989-91)” where “the socialist revolution being itself overthrown by a revolution which, to some extent, sought to resurrect pre-socialist principles” (Heywood 1994: 304). This seems to be the truer nature of revolution contrasting the western idea of progress in history. It may reveal the beginning of knowledge that the people were deceived by modern revolutions.

Often Machiavelli reveals the desire of men to change their ruler, “believing [they will] better [themselves],” but more often than not, they frequently “deceive themselves, for they then experience that they have the worse” (Machiavelli 1980: 11). It is very rare, as far as Machiavelli is concerned, that people are beyond false

(Arendt 1963: 179). Any reference to “ancient liberties” was only connected to recover property rights (Arendt 1963: 180). There are similarities in the American Revolution where the Constitution under the Declaration of Independence is silent on the question of authority. The revolution was to dissolve any constitution, yet it was not replaced by any organized new constitution. They had “no authority to do what they set out to achieve” (Arendt 1963: 184). Such revolutions comprised a “vicious circle”: the lack of authority was only replaced by another lack of authority. The “spirit of revolution” was “too modern, too self-centered” to match the formation of the productive political bodies of the past: “the new spirit and the beginning of something new – failed to find its appropriate institution” (Arendt 1963: 284). The modern influence tosses aside the educational importance of memory to form appropriate institutions. It is necessary to get over the failures of revolutions: “There is nothing that could compensate for this failure or prevent it from becoming final, except memory and recollection” (Arendt 1963: 284). This lesson is obvious in the works of Machiavelli.

deception.¹⁵¹ Within the condition of the frequent self-deception, revolution, for Machiavelli, is worse than tyrannical rule. This is evident in his reference to such activities.¹⁵²

From Machiavelli's exemplary lessons, these are illusory platforms of revolution that does no good. One can say that the only "good revolution," under Machiavelli's view, was the workings of Giuseppe Garibaldi and Giuseppe Mazzini in their attempt to re-establish the Roman Republic in Italy in the year 1849. It began by the overthrow of the theocratic Papal State, done primarily by Giuseppe Mazzini, and by the military conquest over the French siege by heralded Italian national hero, Giuseppe Garibaldi. But it only lasted four months.¹⁵³ Nevertheless, many Italians at present still see their actions as the source for bringing together the Italian nationhood.

Mazzini knew that the attempt to re-establish the Roman Republic would likely not last long. Nevertheless, he continued in his pursuit and formed comradeship with Garibaldi. But later, as he predicted, "serious failures" came about. He noticed his "weakness and miscalculation by himself" (Smith 1994: 213).

¹⁵¹ We are reminded of the Gracchi revolt, the sign of the downfall of the Roman Republic, as one of "lust for power" generated by a hubristic ignorance that Machiavelli conceived as the seed of corruption. More often than not, for whatever the source may be, in Machiavelli, the people are ignorant or corrupt. If this ignorance is due to the rulers, the blame is on them, but often the fault is amongst the people, and even though almost all say that Machiavelli is a republican, therefore focusing on a public concern, often for him, the people are often to blame for decline and degeneration: "The *concilium plebis* had emerged as an alternative centre of power which could be manipulated by ambitious rulers" (Freeman 1996: 340). This observation calls for the importance and necessity of education for the people.

¹⁵² Some modern revolutions formulated state-socialism as we have seen in the former Soviet Union and China, but now there is another version of modern revolutions of seemingly opposite, but similar movements; instead of for 'social equality', it is for political liberalization against state socialism or communism. They are also familiar on other grounds because neither of them has succeeded. They do not alter political and social foundations. *There is not enough true revolution*. It appears that Machiavelli had already perceived this insight into modern revolutions before they actually happened.

¹⁵³ Many innovations were made in those four months: the multi-religious and multi-ethnic openness in the new constitution, the abolishment of capital punishment, and the formation of a Constitutional Assembly that formed a "Triumvirate," a three-layered mixed constitution. One level was devoted to its founders, another made for a senate of government officials, and the third by the Revolutionary Roman Assembly, headed by Garibaldi. Unfortunately, Mazzini did something similar to what Soderini did in Florence, his weak attempt at diplomacy in facing the aggressive French instead of engaging in military action, proved fatal for the new Roman Republic (Trevelyan 1907: 117)

With his desire for popular sovereignty he “overestimated both the capability of ‘the people’ and the possibility of reaching them with his patriotic message” (Smith 1994: 213). A small division arose between him and Garibaldi.

Mazzini was a religious man throughout his entire life, and he desired some clerical element within the “governing triumvirate” (Smith 1994: 67), in the “new republican constitution” (Smith 1994: 68). But Garibaldi was anti-clerical. As such, Mazzini’s desire for passivity held back Garibaldi’s military assertion to pursue the French after their retreat. Yet, as George Macaulay Trevelyan displays in recorded speech, Mazzini challenged his complainers: ““With those who have said or written that the resistance of Rome to her French invaders was an error, it were useless to discuss”” (Trevelyan 1907: 117). For Mazzini, ““it was therefore essential to redeem Rome; to place her once again to the summit, so that Italians might again learn to regard her as the temple of the common country”” (Trevelyan 1907: 117). For him, “the defence of the city was therefore decided upon: by the assembly and people of Rome from a noble impulse and from reverence for the honour of Italy”” (Trevelyan 1907: 118). One can easily see the influence of the Roman Republic on Mazzini and Garibaldi:

The Roman Republic showed its faults, but it showed yet more abundantly the virtues, of its origin as the work of an extreme faction. Its history is full of that appeal to the ideal in man that often guides the life of the individuals, but finds little direct representation in the government of the world, except in those rare, brief moments of crisis and of concentrated passion where some despised ‘ideologue’ is lifted to the top of the plunging wave (Trevelyan 1907: 97).

Although Garibaldi was not “commander-in-chief,” “whoever heard the conversations of the people, or took a more or less active part in the fortification of the town, had occasion to notice at every moment that Garibaldi, and no other, was recognized as leader” (Trevelyan 1907: 120). It was certainly a distinct revolution.

Modern revolutions were a contention of authority. In the common opinion, revolutions were conceived as merited by revolting against cruel authority. But this is from a misinterpretation of authority, equating it with power. One can generalize

modern revolutions as a reaction to the decline of ancient virtues that readily leads to oppression of the people, be it in various forms of rule, from monarchy to democracy. Yet, the ‘revolutions’ with the increasingly opposed view of history, did not “revolve” to the past to significantly better the power-relations of the state and the people. According to Heywood (1994), there was a decreasing cyclical view of history from the Glorious Revolution to the Vietnamese Revolution of 1972. It is evident that studies in Machiavelli can give fruitful understandings of revolution, and especially ones related to the present-day.

Giorgio Agamben reveals, with intensity, the abuse in political practice of the recent American democratic government that resorts to totalitarian means of control. This new version of totalitarian control has become a paradigm for present-day politics. Such proceedings continue to rise in number in the performance of contemporary governmental techniques of power over authority. Agamben defines the “state of exception,” in his book of the same title, and which is an addendum to *Homo Sacer*. It refers to an argument, stated by Carl Schmitt that was used to describe a tumultuous state: “a close relationship to civil war, insurrection, and resistance” (Agamben 2003: 1). It is similar to the state of Italy that Machiavelli had to confront. But the succumbing proceedings are completely different.

Agamben further defines the “state of exception” as consisting of a “‘point of imbalance between public law and political fact’ (Saint-Bonnet 2001, 28),” at the “intersection of legal and political” (Agamben 2003: 1).¹⁵⁴ It comprises of the alteration in the typical assertions of judicial matters. It includes an alteration on justice itself. However, the notion of “state of exception” can be abused in order for states to avoid any form of justice. This notion describing contemporary politics is quite similar to the “state of exception” that Machiavelli faced in the Italy of his day.

¹⁵⁴ Schmitt justifies it in the production of Nazism. But obviously, Agamben displays the “wickedness” in such a justification.

The abuse of the “state of exception” or “state of emergency” is used for the elites in political power to ‘justify’ unjust acts.¹⁵⁵ Such conditions are at the “border” - the crucial fine-line - in which it is difficult to ascertain the ‘good’ or ‘evil’: “the suspension of law itself...is the preliminary condition for any definition of the relation that binds and, at the same time, abandons the living being to ‘law’” (Agamben 2003: 1). This insight into the tangibility of public law is similar to the conflict Machiavelli recognized in his chaotic state. It involves the paradoxical notions that some ‘laws’ can be used to do horrendously unjust activities. An example is the activities of George Bush after 9/11, who used the excuse of “state of emergency” to “take into custody any alien suspected of activities that endangered the national security of the United States” (Agamben 2003: 3). It is “entirely removed from law” and from “judicial oversight” (Agamben 2003: 4). The only thing that it could be possibly compared to is “the legal situation of the Jews in the Nazi camps” (Agamben 2003: 4). In the detainees at Guantanamo Bay, “bare life reaches its maximum indeterminacy” (Agamben 2003: 4). It loses its legal identity, but keeps its racial identity, which is the basis for being imprisoned. George Bush acted like the wicked ignorant prince who did anything desirable to fulfill his lust for power in a so-called democratic state.

Such an activity grew from a measure of war to one “to be used as an extraordinary police measure to cope with internal sedition and disorder, thus changing from a real, or military state of siege, to a fictitious or political one” (Agamben 2003: 5). This is a ‘democratic’ construction, supposedly not an absolutist one, but it is here. It is almost as if the detrimental separation of military authority from civil authority encourages the policing of the state, as if the police forms a mercenary military contention against not only the foreign enemies of the state, but those shallowly conceived as enemies within the same state. Political factionalism is used to acquire power and to police the state through the mercenary

¹⁵⁵ We have seen this quite recently in Pakistan, as Musharraf, the military leader of the country who is in support of the American government, has claimed a “state of emergency” whose justification is being severely questioned as being only a means to acquire power. The recent assassination of Benazir Bhutto in January in 2008, is a replica that contravened authoritarian power, makes one wonder who committed such an act. Although blame was readily and conveniently given to Al Qaeda, perhaps the current leader in power should be brought under investigation. Anything is possible in current-day politics.

form of the military. For Machiavelli, this is the bad use of power, and the downfall of military authority.

Comparatively speaking, Machiavelli dealt with similar extremities, and his satirical mockery condemned those activities in such a pursuit and indirectly revealed the nihilistic destructiveness that has occurred more concretely in the twentieth century. With *The Prince*, Machiavelli predicted such occurrences: “a principle of judiciary power is extended to executive power”; but it is a ‘judiciary’ power that demerits authority, in an unjust form of ‘justice’ (Agamben 2003: 5). For Machiavelli, such activities seemed inevitable in the modernization of politics. The educational merit of Machiavelli is in interpreting *The Prince* as a warning to the downfall of authority and detriment of justice.

Giorgio Agamben is forced to re-instigate an analysis of ancient Rome and her interrelations with power and authority in his last chapter of *State of Exception* entitled “*Auctoritas* and *Potestas*.” There is an obvious correlation with Machiavelli, who similarly displays, that with a lack of provision for the “*status tumultus*,” one will be ruined if the normal form of law and order is not broken:

the *institutum* responds to the same necessity that Machiavelli unequivocally indicated when, in the *Discourses*, he suggested “breaking” the order to save it (‘For in a republic where such a provision is lacking, one must either observe the orders and be ruined, or break them and not be ruined.’ [138]) (Agamben 2003: 46).

It involves a legal definition that contemporary legal historians have difficulty in defining their function. But for certain, “*auctoritas* has nothing to do with the *potestas* or the *imperium* of the magistrates or the people” (Agamben 2005: 78). Under extreme conditions in a state of exception, “*auctoritas* seems to act as a force that suspends *potestas*” (Agamben 2005: 78). But, in truth, that is not the real case. The modern *auctoritas* is equalled to *princeps*, the prince. *Auctoritas* is equalled to *potestas*, therefore, *auctoritas* is abolished. Authority is broken down again. From Agamben the relations of power and authority are necessary in analyzing the potential abuse of powers in divergent ways than previous times. New and good laws should be made to temper this destructive potential. It also displays

the importance of the military as an essential element of authority. It appears that this is in full response to the study of Machiavelli's works.

This is a clear lesson in Machiavelli, and one that can be productive in the assessment of our current-day world. The worthiness of Machiavelli is in the retrospect, arriving from a study of the ancient human conditions being directed towards a contemporary and more internationalized world. The lack of strength, insight, and authority required to match the growing nature of derogatory warfare is heard in the claimed inability and incapacity of the United Nations in matters that require international law and justice, or international authority. From Machiavelli, lessons can be applicable to administer the incapability of the UN and other forms and movements generated by the internationalization of politics. Even though international politics is much divergent than the situation that Machiavelli faced, it does not necessarily lessen his importance. We are obviously dealing with the same general principles, and just as he used examples from the Roman Republic, a condition at least 1600 years ahead of his time under different political conditions, they were used productively for his "modern" time. If Machiavelli is taken as important, then this basis of his educational approach can be re-used with his wealth of knowledge and insight on these general principles.

There is no doubt that he thinks most highly of the ancients; and yet, it is a new series of values of the ancient beyond the typical Western tradition. Machiavelli provides the means for the creative re-vitalization of life in the face of nihilism, in a re-configuration of politics through the use of a retroactive force of history in reviving productive political order of the past. In this manner, Machiavelli accomplished something from the cyclical historical world view that he believed in, that his teachings have become essential for today. On this pretext, Machiavelli may be called a founder of a new 'science' of politics that counters the modern understanding of "science."

In an attempted honest description of Machiavelli's importance for the present-day, with the learned notion of general similarities combined with temporal difference, he has, so far, revealed a sufficient level of his importance on the general principles involved for productive use of knowledge, judgments, and goals involved for a healthy civilizable life in amongst a comparatively difficult situation.

We have learned that when politics, values, and lives are degrading, we need a new form of knowledge in which a strong judgement must be developed to re-install those noble virtues from the past that are almost lost at the present. The numerous readings and writings on his subjects in the current-day exposes that his unique insights are relevant. Machiavelli has displayed that the general principles revealed in the four themes, history, religion, power, and authority, are essential for this purpose of being important for recurrent times of history. Therefore, they are essential for our time, if we accept the recurrence of what the Renaissance faced as generally similar to ours: the downfall of one world, of one time period, with the rise of another world, starting a new, unclear time period. This acceptability indicates the worth of his educational approach, and therefore that some ancient form of cosmology can be incorporated on the present. This makes him more relevant for the present-day, at the downfall of modernity, than previous times of modernity under these general notions. For this on-going need, Machiavelli is essentially relevant for today. These elements are a part of his future “path not yet trodden by anyone.” It is a part of his “hunt for seas and lands unknown.”

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

...The heavenly powers
Cannot do all things. It is the mortals
Who reach sooner into the abyss. So the turn is
With these. Long is
The time, but the true comes into
Its own.
“Mnemosyne,” Hölderlin

The planetary system that turns in space like rapid disks, and whose centers also move, describing an infinitely large circle, only move away continuously from their own position in order to return to it, completing their rotation. Movement is the figure of love, incapable at stopping at a particular being, and rapidly passing from one to another. But the forgetting that determines it is this way is only a subterfuge of memory.
“The Solar Anus,” Georges Bataille

7.1. Implications on the Disruption of Classical Forms of Philosophy, Metaphysics, and Religion.

This concluding chapter will reveal the manner by which, as the main argument borrows the summarized idea of Isaiah Berlin, that Machiavelli disrupted “philosophy, metaphysics, and religion” (Berlin 1979: 36-39), to the point where he thrust “a sword” in “body politic” of Western thought (Berlin 1979: 39). He is outside of the “normal intellectual assumptions of his age” (Berlin 1979: 36). It has been established that he provides a trace at the latter-day questioning of the Western tradition, a questioning of the “Western world view,” or the “substance of Western thought.” We will see if this development, within this interpretation, may even heighten his value for contemporary times. We will reveal the essential features of his uniqueness and originality.

In this analysis, we have envisioned that the general principles acquired from the four main themes, history, religion, power, and authority, are related to the general condition of today, just as he did in taking lessons mostly from the ancient

Roman Republic on his present-day. The argument has been made that these general principles are important in amongst changing temporal conditions.

To answer the on-going debate as to whether Machiavelli was ancient or modern, it is quite appropriate to say that the basis of his educational approach relies on lessons from the ancients. But this does not cast him aside from being a starting point in the investigation of modern political theory. Giving this claim, another contrasting argument arises, where his display of politics, at the beginning of modernity, is more critical of modern politics than has otherwise been acclaimed by the thinkers who see him as provoking modern political theory and action. His tie to the ancients makes him closer in general theory to what has been designated in this work, as the contemporary realm of political thought, stemming from the works of Nietzsche, and including, Heidegger, Arendt, Foucault, Derrida and other subsequent authors, who see an “end of modernity,” and who engage in an intensive criticism of modern values and consciousness. This conclusion will summarize the lessons learned in this study upon these connotations.

Machiavelli’s historical-educational direction is more contrasted to this latter-modern belief, of progress in history, made by man. The apocalyptic spirit was re-directed from the power of God, to the power of man under the Age of Enlightenment. But, within the contemporary time period, these pronounced modern beliefs and goals of the Enlightenment are, in reality, no longer believable:

The modernist project of rationality, organisation and control has been put under a critical microscope to reveal the hidden aspects of domination, leading to a critique of the Enlightenment aim of emancipation (Schwarzmantel 1998: 152).

The acclaimed superiority of man in the production of modern science and technology displays itself as being a utopian, illusory ideal, in witnessing the grandness of destructive powers in our technological age. From the two world wars, the production of atomic bombs, and the examples of the highest level of inhumane cruelty, modern beliefs in greatness are no longer tenable. If anything, the opposing valuation arises in the need for a “re-valuation of values.” The contemporary realm of thought felt impelled to return to the ancient, and find a foundation outside of modernity and Christianity, outside the identity that captures both of these epochs;

that is, “the West.”¹⁵⁶ The “crowning political achievement of the West” is really a downfall (Kaplan 2000: 98).

On this matter, Machiavelli’s historical approach is shared by the educational direction in contemporary thought, which attempts to form an artistic creation of thought outside of the “systems of thought” in modern scientific rationale and the related modern ideologies: “the acquisition of knowledge and scientific method that characterized modernity...underpinned modern ideologies” (Schwarzmantel 1998: 153). Machiavelli can point to a productive direction: can point to the significance of contemporary authors whose concern is with cosmopolitan validity in the examination of the sources of political turmoil in the present-day. As such, Machiavelli is valuable for today in re-instigating a higher vitality back into life, for a re-establishment of those lacking elements in modern systemization.

Machiavelli’s treatment of ‘religion’ is another example of his uniqueness and originality, since no other thinker attempted previously to re-install ancient pagan religiosity back into his “modern” condition. The spiritual impetus that once was directed to God became directed to the power of man, present-day forms of religions are comparable to secular ideologies through their manipulation of consciousness into illusory ideals: “notably liberalism and socialism, were themselves suspect, because they gave rise to new forms of domination and thwarted rather than promoted freedom” (Schwarzmantel 1998: 153). Machiavelli’s criticism of Christianity corresponds with our need to criticize secular utopian ideals, and the extreme abuse of religion to manipulate the consciousness by committing acts with an increased level of inhumane cruelty.

Present-day religion is equated with traditional forms of philosophy and metaphysics, in establishing transcendent, stable, and absolute principles. Both Machiavelli and contemporary thought disrupt “the tenets of classical theism,” where “God is One, the supreme Creator, who through the mediation of the divine

¹⁵⁶ Contemporary historians recognize that the “West” includes almost all of the world: “What is more significant is that most of the upsetting ideas of the non-Western world are Western in origin” (Lundin 1964: 262).

Logos, brings the world into being and providentially directs its course” (Taylor 1996: 516).

Even though the supreme element has been changed over the course of time, the sentiment is similar in the belief in a “logos,” in various versions of philosophy or metaphysics that was still seen as providing the course of events in history. Machiavelli’s questioning of his religious direction involves a questioning of the basic principles, which, has been argued, were still maintained in the modern versions of philosophy and metaphysics. His aversion to Christian religion is an “aversion to metaphysical posturing” (Femia 2004: 89). We have seen that modern ideologies can produce the same coercive and destructive consequences that Machiavelli faced in the false authorization and power-ridden performance of Christianity.

The main lesson on the factors of power was to acquire knowledge of its productive and destructive uses, in order to draw the fine-line between the “power of necessity” and “lust for power.” The necessity of power included finding a means to diminish power and re-establish a virtuous authority. *The Prince* was not a “handbook for power and how to keep it.” The manner in which his political teachings were misinterpreted reveals the lack of knowledge and insight of political affairs in modernity, through the falsity of modern illusory fantasies in utopian ideals:

Modernity is seen as being linked to the idea of enlightenment and continued progress towards individual and social emancipation, a goal that was taken for granted by liberalism and socialism, and (through the route of national liberation) nationalism (Schwarzmantel 1998: 152).

The focus solely on power from the latter-modern principles is a decline in political performance, ensuing a harsh relationship between these acclaimed elements within the modern-state ideology and the people.

Machiavelli implanted the “new” - yet based on the old - form of liberty, as an essential principle in the authorization of his “modern” state. Within it, is an implicit criticism of the dominance of democracy, which is similar to the current-day questioning of the idealistic democratic ideals, such as freedom and

egalitarianism, since we are more aware that these principles, coming from the Enlightenment and designated in both liberal and socialist ideologies, are unreal:

The critique of modernity here seems to be that the growth of capabilities can stunt human freedom rather than extend it, as the modernist Enlightenment tradition uncritically assumed (Schwarzmantel 1998: 153).

They are now seen as aspects of dominance and power rather than freedom:

in our time the notions of enlightenment and emancipation have been criticised not just by conservative and reactionary theorists, but also by those who see the project of modernity as intrinsically bound up with elements of domination and power (Schwarzmantel 1998: 152).

The falsities in modern ideologies are more closely revealed in the present-day.

The modern conceptualization of the impersonality of the state is implicitly undermined by Machiavelli. The falsity of the “impersonal” conception of the modern-state was revealed in the inherent personal accomplishment, or failure. Machiavelli constantly shows that a person makes decisions, makes laws, and either create or avoid action. For Machiavelli, the person’s worth in creating a state is measured by knowledge of the past, and the natural strength in character directed towards virtue, excellence, prudence, honour, and glory. If this is avoided, it displays human weakness.

The view of “the state as a work of art,”¹⁵⁷ Jakob Burckhardt chose Machiavelli as being unique and original, beyond any comparison: “But of all who thought it possible to construct a state, the greatest beyond all comparison was Machiavelli” (Burckhardt n.d.: 84). It is another element attributed to Machiavelli’s distinct uniqueness and the importance of his literary artistry. With “modern” forms of wit and satire, with distinctive discourses with characters interchanging the past with the present, imparting the knowledge of politics in this manner became a work of art. Not only an art of governance, but inclusive of the “art of war.” It is indeed a new science which is a severe break away from traditional political science, in this new ‘science’, and new manners of epistemology (knowledge) and ontology (the

¹⁵⁷ The title chosen by Jakob Burckhardt of Part I of *The Renaissance in Italy* was precisely “The State As A Work of Art” (Burckhardt. n.d.: 1).

essence of being of man). With this new forefront, the contending intricacies of *The Prince* may be better unleashed as well as our condition. His literary texts resist the style of Western systematic thought. His ambiguities and inconsistencies was an analogue to what exists: a dynamic flow of appearances that are never clearly solidified. His works display that they were co-existent with his present-day.

In effect, Machiavelli disrupts the very core of what has been identified as a unified system of thought, from Plato to Hegel; and his diverse formulation of philosophy, metaphysics, and religion is in harmony with the new prognosis given in contemporary political thought. He breaks the unified logo-centric power of the unified system of thought. Whether it is centered on the untouchable concept of “Justice” or “the Good,” the absolute authority of God, or the absolute knowledge of Western Enlightenment rationale, he breaks open the unification of Western thought, and, if followed, may un-grip its power over consciousness.

Revolution is an unavoidable topic on the discourse of authority. It seems his understanding of time on revolution corresponds to the view of contemporary times, as Andrew Heywood concludes with these statements, in his study of revolution: “To break completely with the past by bringing about revolutionary change is, in effect, to enter unknown territory without a reliable map for guidance” (Heywood 1994: 298). As far as Heywood is concerned, even the concept is unclear: “Revolution may indeed be another example of an ‘essentially contested’ concept. It may be impossible to decide objectively whether a revolution had taken place, since there is no settled definition of ‘revolution’” (Heywood 1994: 304). It is an “abstract theory,” and is “often accompanied by violence, which may be regarded as morally unacceptable” (Heywood, 1994: 298). Yet, it becomes evident that such a profound authorial judgement is required in our condition. Even the last counter-socialist revolutions questioned the standard depiction of modern revolutions: as far as Heywood is concerned, they “cast grave doubt on the conventional notion of historical progress” (Heywood 1994, 304). One can suggest,

that for Machiavelli, a true ‘revolution’¹⁵⁸ appears to involve breaking-away from the modern notion of progress in history.

Machiavelli initiated a “great revolution in political thought initiated in Florence” (Rahe 2008: 355). Under a clear reading of *The Discourses* and *The History of Florence*, Machiavelli appears opposed to many of the ‘revolutions’ of his day and those in future times. His revolution truly involves a “revolving” turn to the past to re-configure the present. It is based on his authorial contexts.

Modern forms of utopian ideals generated the belief that modern science and technology, coupled with democracy, would form the most superior level of civilization. But, in reality, such a belief is being transfigured almost completely, and reality is far-removed from the future vision of the ideal. The realization arises that the modern belief, in man-made superiority, will be incorporated within the fallen turnover of cyclical history. Kaplan quotes a nineteenth century Russian liberal intellectual, Alexander Herzen, on these matters: “Modern Western thought will pass into history and be incorporated in it...just as our body will pass into the composition of grass, of sheep, of cutlets, of men” (Kaplan 2000: 98). We are beginning to see the cyclical downfall of the once heralded supremacy of modern politics.

His general principles of virtue, stemming from the ancient cosmological view, disrupt the traditional, classical, or Western conceptualization of philosophy, metaphysics, and religion, as this disruption is now becoming an inherent part of contemporary thought. His literary style imparts such lessons indirectly, since he does not explicitly state such claims. But, through the elements of his literary artistry, the implicit renderings are nevertheless important, in giving a fair understanding, interpretation, and use of his works.

Borrowing from another comment by Melograni, Machiavelli was an “extreme humanist,” “*un umanista estremo*,” which reveals his relation to an important debate in current-day humanism. Martin Heidegger, in his “Letter on Humanism,” identifies the importance of both the Renaissance and the Roman

¹⁵⁸ We can also include the fact, that the use of the word “revolution” seems to be a modern fancy in current-day translation, since often the words translated as “revolution,” in these works by Machiavelli, were found in the original work, as not entirely true.

Republic, which formed the source of the intricate study of *humanitas*, humanism: “*Homo humanis*,” [the humanitarian man]...means the Roman, who exalted honoured Roman *virtus* through the embodiment of *paideia* [education]” (Heidegger 1977: 200). The direction of thought towards the essence of the human, imparts lessons on the foundational principles of philosophy, metaphysics, and religion. Machiavelli is focused on these foundational principles, but they are not solidified in the traditional philosophical or metaphysical mode.

One can surmise, that Machiavelli foresaw the “deconstruction” of Western philosophy, metaphysics, religion, and politics, but his response was not to settle on the previous framework, but to creatively re-construct out of the deconstruction. There are differences in his works, in the implicit renderings of the characteristics of the nature of man, the necessities of acquiring virtuous goals, and the “ontological” relation of the human to Nature.

Indirectly, Machiavelli’s ‘ontology’ negates the stable structure of “Being” on a foundation that is more aligned with the present-day, through the acceptance that modern science and technology has brought about its greatest crisis; it has brought about a time of nihilism. The reality of the present inputs the “necessary and recognizable rhythms” that do not have a stable foundation. Contemporary ‘philosophy’ calls for a “return to the origins” (Vattimo 1990: 5), in order to obtain the “dissolution of the category of the new” (Vattimo 1990: 4). The contemporary realm challenges the view of ‘newness’ within progress in history, by re-installing the ancient cosmological historical view. It involves a new condition of “newness.”

Though it is argued that we live in a nihilistic state of condition, it may provide a basis for creativity with its acceptance: “nihilism [has] a salutary and liberating consequence” (Rosen 1989: 145). Its acceptance involves an “active, or positive, nihilism” (Vattimo 1990: 11). It incorporates a new sense of ‘ontology’, as it attempts to achieve a new essence of the human and nature. The new essence elevates “becoming” above the modern metaphysical concern of “Being”: “nihilism [is] implicit in any acceptance of the ‘idea of becoming’,” which “subverts the basic beliefs in progress,” generated by the “rise and development of modern technology” (Vattimo 1990: 5). The world of becoming challenges the world of Being, which

solidifies and stabilizes the entities, either in philosophy, metaphysics, or religion, as being absolute.

Machiavelli took part in the devaluation of the world of Being with the ancient cosmological consciousness. The contemporary recognition of the “innocence of becoming” is reflected in the acceptance of the powers of *Fortuna*, where the “truth” of the essence of things cannot be known absolutely. Becoming forms an epistemological approach beyond the logicity of knowledge under the objectivity of the modern rationale. As we have seen in the study of Croce, Machiavelli disrupts logic in the process of affirming all that is. Western forms of “Logic” reduce that formulation.

The notion of Being still maintained a stabilization in the thought process: “Being ...[is] conceived of – metaphysically, Platonically, etc. – in terms of stable structures” (Vattimo 1990: 11-12). It is linked to the attached foundation of the illusory ideal of history, of arriving at a final state through progress. From the ancient cosmological view, of the eternal recurrence of similarity with temporal difference, “becoming” is used to question even post-modernism: “the post-modern would be positioned along the line of modernity itself, since the latter is governed by the category of the ‘new’” (Vattimo 1990: 4).¹⁵⁹ Its “dissolution” is not done by the post-modern position. Its desire for “non-historicity” still has the vision of progress in history within it: “the same mechanism of legitimation which typifies modernity itself” (Vattimo 1990: 6). This historical view “is opposed to the ancient way of thinking governed by a cyclical and naturalistic vision of the course of events in the world” (Vattimo 1990: 3-4). This gives value to the contemporary thinkers in the use of “non-historicity” that shifts the ontological weight from the typical view of modernity, the uni-linear historical view of the modern and even the post-modern

The necessitated shift in this ontological basis is done by the “world of becoming” where ontology is no longer the main branch of metaphysics. This “new” shift in the ontological weight of the metaphysics of Being, to an

¹⁵⁹ Vattimo re-iterates that the “basic flaw” of post-modern positions, is still a “call for a vision of Being which has not yet been subverted.” Therefore, in their “attempt to return the to origins,” they are “traced back to it” (Vattimo 1990: 5).

unsubstantiated 'ontology' of becoming, corresponds to the use of Machiavelli's ancient cosmological vision of cyclical history. This basis of his educational direction was displayed in the actual examples given in his exemplary educational mode.

The basic elements of his education correspond to the new view of becoming. The "world of becoming" is comprised in the contemporary thought that realizes the end of modernity, and that it brings about a nihilistic condition that should be affirmed through the new possibility for creativity from a new standpoint. Machiavelli may be used as an example of the view of becoming. Becoming fits well in the new century.

The "world of becoming" does not involve the abandonment of religion or faith. There is no atheistic denouncement of religion. Analogous to Machiavelli's sense of 'religion', the 'new' faith comes from ancient religiosity that is in opposition to the previous Occidental religious faith which turns away from the affirmation of all of life. Seen in both the Judaeo-Christian tradition the secular progress in history, it turns away from the desire to flee the "this-worldly," which devalues the "here and now" for the sake of some transcendent element. The previous form of faith, directed to "the categories of reason[,] is the cause of nihilism" (Nietzsche 1967: 13). The affirmation of the world, stemming from ancient religiosity, may be renewed today, since, as Nietzsche tells us, "in affirmation after the full realization of nihilism... nihilism, as the denial of a truthful world, of being, might be *a divine way of thinking*" (Nietzsche 1967: 15). One can acquire corresponding lessons through Machiavelli in the sympathy he gave even to tyrannous leaders, and the acceptance of his own maltreatment, an acceptance of *Fortuna*, even though he was a victim of bad fortune.

Machiavelli's description of the natural world is generally similar to that of Nietzsche. It is more of a "world of becoming":

a sea of forces flowing and rushing, eternally changing,
eternally flooding back, with tremendous years of
recurrence, with an ebb and a flood of its forms
(Nietzsche 1967: 550).

With the shift in the instability 'foundation' to adapt to the divergent present condition, yet not entirely undermining the foundation. With the creativity in his unique literary style Machiavelli displays his worth in the contemporary mindset, where, as Vattimo states, with "the arts," "perhaps, a different possibility of existence for man emerges" (Vattimo 1990: 11). One that is "less apocalyptic and more in line with our own experience" (Vattimo 1990: 11). On this standpoint, the work of art can form a new philosophical discourse, outside the classical and even the post-modern position, which gives "a background upon which we may move with care" (Vattimo 1990: 13).

This notion stemming from contemporary thought collaborates with an overall picture of Machiavelli's works and the related teachings. He indirectly and implicitly displays the need for creativity in a declining condition, where the standardized formulations are weak, denigrating, debilitating. His call for creativity is to generate vigour in a nihilistic condition.

Machiavelli sets the theatrical stage for the future readers. Within it, he calls for a measure of courage and strength to debunk the former framework of thought, to upset the traditional realms of philosophy, metaphysics, and the related form of religion. The task of the student is to form a proper interpretation cast upon the indeterminacies of the present-day, as was the case in his day. This hermeneutical test is done through his "masks and multiplicities," his "ambiguities and inconsistencies" to promote a measure of competence in the reader. With his "*allegriissimo*" style, these interpretations are not only done for analysis, but to give the reader an *occasione* to formulate meaningful action.

His main focus for his entire educational approach is on history. His 'history' involves the telling of stories, even amongst the unclearness of the present-day. Machiavelli writes historical stories in order to entice the reader into an affirmation of life in the way it is. He persuades his reader to form his own creativity, amongst his own condition, and to "put it into effect": to act through the new knowledge to affect the nature of the conditions. This implicit interpretation, now made explicit, elicits itself as a primary educational goal within his works.

7.2 The Contributions of Machiavelli for Contemporary Political Thought

In this whole process, there are many contributions made to the main argument that he is more relevant today for the contemporary realm of political thought, which criticizes similar aspects of modernity that Machiavelli also criticized. This line of study on Machiavelli has emanated important insights on the nature of the present-day.

The fostered lessons of his educational approach that he developed in his use of exemplary history is proof that we can use this comparative method to educate, analyze, and act upon our current condition. The cyclical approach continuously augments itself through the call for judgement to be made, generating from historical knowledge and from a lesson on strength in dealing with the reality of the current condition. It involves the recognition and assessment of an ancient form of cyclical history, with the recurrence of general similarities coupled with temporal distinctiveness in order to form this comparative analysis, and in using judicial insight in difficult situations embedded in the application of previous samples. This method of acquisition of knowledge and its use is divergent from the cause-effect simplicity of the modern science.

Melograni has called Machiavelli an “extreme humanist” which indicates his worth on the current-day concern for humanism. The study on humanism displays a re-formulation of the clashing contentions of human nature. It is an important debate in the present-day realm of study in contemporary political thought. The study itself indicates that the modern ideals of the nature of the human are no longer believable. This basic modern material can easily be undermined with Machiavelli’s conception of human nature, from which all else of his lessons derive. As we will see in Martin Heidegger’s work, “Letter on Humanism,” Machiavelli’s anciently derived world view can as well undermine the current-day dependence on Western classical metaphysics. Though at times there was satirical mockery of the political performance of princes, there was also simultaneous “sympathy” for those rulers through the recognition of their misfortunes and weakness in character, or the situation they had to confront. This is a product of cosmological tolerance, an aspect of ancient religious reverence. One can rest on these inherent contradictions in present-day consciousness by realizing the need for a better understanding of the

essence of human nature in a new study of humanism – *humanitas* – a feature which characterized both the Roman Republic and the Renaissance.

One of the leading contemporary thinkers, Martin Heidegger, sought to define the human in his “Letter on Humanism” through the “Language of Being” with a distinct factor of “being”: “Language is the house of Being” (Heidegger 1977: 193). Through modernity, the “Occidental ‘logic’ and ‘grammar’ seized control of the interpretation of language” (Heidegger 1977: 194). Heidegger asserts that there is a need for a new figurative language that disrupts the Western modern dominance: “The liberation of language from grammar into a more original essential framework is reserved for thought and poetic creation” (Heidegger 1977: 194). Machiavelli used some form of poetic creation in his literary style throughout his teaching process.

We have learned from Benedetto Croce that Machiavelli’s creativity disrupts the logic of Western metaphysics. Humanism being grounded on modern metaphysics is truly limited: “because of its metaphysical origin, humanism even impedes the question by neither recognizing nor understanding it” (Heidegger 1977: 202) The disruption of the classical forms of philosophy, metaphysics, and religion in Machiavelli makes him a source on the topic of humanism, a subject distinctively a part of both his time, during the Renaissance of Italy, and the time period that he relies upon almost wholeheartedly for his educational approach, the Roman Republic. It is another example that the quintessential elements of his works, and the lessons derived from them, surpass modern consciousness.

Implicit in his works, is a derivation of a new sense of “Being”; it is one closer to “becoming,” which reveals another element of close relation with the works of Friedrich Nietzsche. Understanding the question of “Being” through an extreme form of humanism implies an understanding of living in a “world of becoming”: “this world, is the world of becoming,” consequently, “there is a world of being” (Nietzsche 1967: 310). In the consciousness of the “world of becoming” there is no final state, no final outcome from progress in history. Generally, all things recur.

For Nietzsche, the concentration on Being “shelters” the recognition of becoming. Nietzsche’s sense of becoming is related to the common world view for

the ancient man and is an element that Machiavelli uses in his educational method, that is, eternal recurrence. Nietzsche clearly identifies the flaw in the Western consciousness of progress in history which forgets about the past. Under clear analysis, the modern world view involves a “hatred of time” (Haar 1985: 28). It is a denouncement of the state of the world, since, under the sense of a world of becoming, on the grand scale nothing is absolutely divergent. As Michel Haar further tells us in his article “Nietzsche and Metaphysical Language,” progress in history is a “belief in non-being.” It involves a “will to nothingness” (Haar 1985: 28). To perceive “time as history” is to acquire a “vengeance” for the nature of the world. The ancient perception of the “world of becoming” linked with eternal recurrence challenges the flawed modern world view. The recognition of eternal recurrence and the world of becoming reflect the sentiments implicated by Machiavelli: “everything that is has already been,” “everything is equally necessary,” and “time itself is a circle” (Haar 1985: 29).

Similar to Machiavelli, Nietzsche foresees that “progress in history” involves a “*ressentiment*” with the world, and that Christianity is the seed for this “depreciation of life” (Haar 1985: 31) This is also duplicated by Hannah Arendt in her “Prologue” to *The Human Condition*, where she indicates that the present-day consciousness is even weaker than the Christian tradition, from which it is derived, in facing the nature of life on earth: “The immediate reaction” to the event when the Sputnik spacecraft, “the first earth-born object made by man,” being “launched into the universe,” was considered by many during the late 1950s, as a “relief” – it was perceived as a relief by the possibility of leaving earth: “the first step towards escape from man’s imprisonment to the earth” (Arendt 1958: 1). This is a display of the growing weakness in the latter-day man.

A product of modernity is the rejection of life on earth. Nothing could be more irreligious for the ancient cosmological man. This modern conception is combated by the formulation of the acceptance of the world of becoming, the acceptance of the notion of cyclical eternal return of the quintessential elements of human nature in ancient cosmology of having adapted to the temporal conditions. This is a basic lesson given by Machiavelli. It leads to a new sense of perfection in contemporary thought similar to Machiavelli’s: perfection involves an “affirmation

embracing imperfection itself” (Haar 1985: 31). It involves the necessary defence of the strong against the weak. Machiavelli’s extreme humanism is to address the weakness of the human, which, in certain contentions, have worsened with modernity and its effects on the present-day. The latter-day modern sense of progress in history is harmful due to its rejection of the nature of the world as it is. Many modern values have come into question.

‘Freedom’, for Nietzsche, under this latter-day modern sense of history, contains “animality.” Modernity’s values directed towards the “life of pleasure” entails a pursuit of animalistic impulses, which gets registered as a depiction of freedom. These are weakened, degenerate, and sickly impulses, with no other satisfactory outlet today. For Nietzsche – and Machiavelli would agree – they are features of *decadence*. Very little of the modern world has consideration for noble traits. It is the reason why many political leaders who ‘successfully’ win power positions, yet come with a lack of noble qualities, some with degenerate qualities.

One can assert that through the practical use of occurrences from the ancient, through the comparative learning process used to make influential decisions on his current-day practice, the depiction of the worth is more obvious in Machiavelli than the theorization of Nietzsche. Machiavelli displays clearly the educational use through the recognition of general similarity on the grand scale, nevertheless, with the requirements to interpret the present-day difference as influential for proper anticipation of the future.

Machiavelli makes the indirect argument, that if the drive to virtue, excellence, prudence, honour, and glory is forgotten, then human determinism is even lessened. In such a situation, more power is handed over to *Fortuna*, and human indeterminism increases. This encompasses his divergent position from that of Polybius, where the turning away from the virtuous practices sustains the *declining conditions* in the cyclical rise and fall of civilizations. Turning away from virtuous characteristics engenders more inhumane cruelties.

His call for strength is a call to be humane. This includes facing the reality of many inhumane activities as a product of modernity. Turning away from ancient virtue or the ancient cosmological reverence means turning away from the possibility for human determinism. From the ancient standpoint, history and

economics is nowhere near being inevitable as it is claimed in modern political rhetoric. Ironically, the modern consciousness takes pride in the fact that “anything can happen.” But when “everything is possible,” life is out of the control of human hands.

Machiavelli’s importance on the current-day has been revealed, since both the Renaissance and the end of modernity is a “time of transition,” and that such a time period is a “time of crisis.” Today, it is continuously reported of a fall in the modern form of optimism that is given through the consciousness of progress in history, from the Age of Enlightenment. The supposed “triumph” of modernity occurred simultaneously with “its greatest crisis” (Cahoone 1996: 133). Fascism and communism are seen now as reactions to certain features of modernity. More people are realizing the increasing problems in the public sphere. There is a loss in public confidence in religious and political-secular authorities. One more easily recognizes the use of false illusions of ‘freedom’ and ‘betterment’ in order to generate Western imperialism. It is now perceived that, in the 1960s in particular, “the juggernaut of modern Western culture broke” (Cahoone 1996: 269). “Less and less,” in the later-half of the twentieth century “could anyone regard this as the best of all possible worlds” (Cahoone 1996: 207). As such, Machiavelli is closer to the later developments in the questioning of the assumed superiority of modern civilization, a product of the flawed view of progress in history.

Our time of crisis is also on a global scale. In a more globalized world of modernization one can assume that there will be no central organizing government or constitution, and no unification in administering divergent social and cultural preferences. Most of the globalization process was a product of the “expansion of European culture via settlement, colonization,” and moral values (Waters 1995: 6). Malcolm Waters, in the chapter “A World of Difference” of his book *Globalization*, reveals that the set of political, social, and cultural arrangements are continuously being denied and possibly rejected (Waters 1995: 6).

The requirements to meet these challenges requires the spelling out of humanist values which incorporates the multiplicity of distinct cultures and with the realization that political, social, and cultural values, within the spread of the West, may no longer form a universal cornerstone for the world system. A great grand-

scale conceptualization is required. The modern world system “cannot encompass” any amalgamation of the multiplicity of separate cultures. It involves a “Janus-faced mix of risk and trust” (Waters 1995: 16). There is the possibility of a global systemic collapse. Some trust can be formulated with the world wide organizations and social movements to challenge the dominant framework to which Machiavellian lessons would be in cohesion.

Machiavelli would strongly disvalue the social impartiality in the mechanistic conception of the modern-state, as it occurred in Hobbes. We have seen in a close study that the modern conception of the impersonality of the state is a product of human weakness, and such a concept can malignantly be used to oppress, coerce, and subjugate the people, even if they are bound by a supposed liberal democratic constitution. It has been argued that there is absolutely no conception in Machiavelli that the state, as a machine, is above the state of nature, or of making its “absolute sovereignty” better than the “state of nature,” a state, which, according to Hobbes, is “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.” For Hobbes,¹⁶⁰ life is the pursuit of power. Following Hobbessian notions, modern power politics loses any claim to humanism.

It was argued previously that there is uncontroversial uniqueness in modern civilization, with “new machine technologies and modes of industrial production,” that has led to the “rise in the material living standard,” with the development of secular culture of “capitalism, liberal democracy, individualism, rationalism, and humanism” (Cahoone 1996: 11). But the common growth of the questioning of superiority implies the questioning of modernity itself.

The belief in the utter uniqueness “in all of human history,” is now “controversial” (Cahoone 1996: 11). It is true that “the modern combination of science technology, industry, free market, liberal democracy, etc., is certainly unique in history, but whether each of these elements separately considered is

¹⁶⁰ For Hobbes, the pursuit of power involves the pursuit of pleasure in the “matter-in-motion” to “satisfy appetites.” This is done, according to him, solely in “obtaining things desired.” Happiness was constituted as “gaining pleasure and power” - which is similar to “lust for power” - by “indispensable and necessary means.” We also see a clear link of power and acquisition, but only acquisition: “a man...cannot assure the power and means to live well, which he hath present, unless with the acquisition of more” (Hobbes 1985: 80). Machiavelli - with satirically dark sarcasm - would laugh at him.

unique is less clear” (Cahoone 1996: 11). Cahoone cites Peter Berger, one of the first and leading sociologists of the present-day academic spectrum, who stated the question: “are we simply ancient Egyptians in airplanes?” (Cahoone 1996: 11). The shift in modernity is the shift in the tools that human beings use “rather than a difference in the human beings themselves” (Cahoone 1996: 12). Modernization is purely a technical affair. Its ‘development’ has little to do with culture and the growth of civilization: “the specification of what makes modernity modern” is “endlessly controversial” (Cahoone 1996: 12). This can be seen in the response of those critical of modernity in the twentieth century, with the critiques of “class domination, European imperialism, anthropocentrism, the destruction of nature, the dissolution of community and tradition, the rise of alienation, and the death of individuality in bureaucracy” (Cahoone 1996: 12). For more people everyday, modernity has become more and more ambiguous. The questioning of modernity and the perceived lack of quintessential difference from the ancient is in line with the perception of Machiavelli.

From the recognition of strength or weakness, praise or blame, a new ethical code was fostered by Machiavelli, with the measuring line being on the acceptance of the reality of the ancient world of becoming, not the modern illusion of absolute Being in the best possible worlds. He is opposed to naivety, nostalgia, optimism that is void of reality. It is to accept the indeterminism of *Fortuna* to be partially reprieved by virtue and related characteristics: excellence, prudence, divergent historical knowledge, honour, and glory. From him as well as with contemporary thinkers, one should contrive a new world view stimulated by the ancient cosmological realm of a concern for the nature of the world, this life on earth, and to act in it.

The contemporary present-day and the Renaissance have a corresponding experience, a similar sense of ‘being’ in facing the ontological crisis, which brings a call to form knowledge of the essence of humanity to the nature of the world in which we live. Only during the crisis in humanism does the question of the essence of the human arise. In disrupting traditional philosophy, metaphysics, and religion, Machiavelli shares the view of the “world of becoming” with that of Nietzsche and subsequent contemporary thinkers, of the requirement of a new understanding of

human essence, in order to re-create a new framework of the consciousness upon our present-world condition. That framework of consciousness has been identified by contemporary thinkers as an “artistic revolution” to confront the limitation of the dominance of scientific rationale. The source of this new consciousness is the Renaissance, and therefore closely linked to Machiavelli. As such, the works of Machiavelli may become prominent in present-day political thought.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX-A

TURKISH SUMMARY

TARİH, DİN, GÜÇ VE OTORİTE: MACHIAVELLI’NİN EĞİTİMSEL YAKLAŞIMININ GÜNÜMÜZ POLİTİK DÜŞÜNCESİ AÇISINDAN ÖNEMİ

Tüm bu sürecin amacı, politika bilimi alanı, ya da daha doğrudan söylemek gerekirse, politik düşünce için, eğitimsel becerilere liyakat elde etmektir. Politik düşünce alanında genellikle bir düşünür seçilir ve bu tezin açılış paragrafının da değindiği türden bir karşılaştırma yapılır: “günümüzdeki yaşam şartları üzerine bunu tarihteki diğer zamanlar ve diğer düşüncelerle kıyaslayarak kafa yorulur.” Bunu yaparken, Machiavelli’nin çelişen çok sayıda yorumuna rastlanır. Dürüst bir değerlendirme yapmak niyetiyle, net bir amaç veya yorum bolluğuna değinmek için, yeni bir Machiavelli yorumu formüle edildi, ki bu diğer yorumların bir çoğunun kısıtlı veya hatta yanlış olduğu anlamına gelmektedir. Amaç Machiavelli’nin önemli eserlerinin dikkatli bir çalışması yoluyla, ve böylelikle ikincil kaynaklara akademik anlamda ünlü olmadıkları veya akademik olarak ikna edici argümanlar ortaya koymadıkları sürece bağımlı olmayan, dürüst bir yorum ortaya koymaktı.

Düzgün bir yorum getirmeye olan bu ilginin önemli bir nedeni, Machiavelli’de var olan ve netleştirilmesi gereken belirsizlik ve kafa karışıklığıdır. Daha fazla bilme ihtiyacı, Machiavelli’nin eserlerini çalışma deneyimiyle ikiye katlanmıştır, zira bilgi onun için çok önemliydi. Christopher Marlowe’un dediğine göre “cehalet Machiavelli için en büyük günahıdır.” Öyle sanıyorum ki, ben bu cehaleti iyileştirmek dileğindedim. Machiavelli okurlarını bunu yapmaya ikna eder. Böyle bir bilincin, bu çalışmanın tamamında sürdürüldüğü söylenebilir. Bu aşamada, Machiavelli’nin tarih, din, güç ve otorite prensipleri bağlamında incelendiği bu çalışmada, genel özellikleri ana hatlarıyla çizmek gerekir.

Tez önerisi için öz yazarken, tezin kendi özünün bundan genellikle farklı olduğu söylenir. Ancak bu tez için bu durum geçerli olmadı. Araştırmanın başlangıcında üretilmiş fikirler, olsa olsa, çalışma boyunca pekiştirildi. Bir önceki özün ilk paragrafında, “Machiavelli’nin fikirlerinin büyük bir kısmı modernitenin genel standart özelliklerine karşıdır, o kadar ki, Machiavelli’nin eserleri bugün için önemlidir, zira “modernitenin sonu – ki bu, otoritenin sonunun bir yansımasıdır – daha da görünür olmaya başlamıştır. Günümüz politikasındaki yükselen kargaşa, Machiavelli’nin yaşadığı dönemdeki İtalya’da meydana gelen feci vaziyete bir şekilde benzemektedir” demiştim. Takip eden cümleler de “Günümüz için Machiavelli’nin önemi şu savdan kaynaklanır: biz de farklı bir çağın eşliğinde duruyoruz, öyle bir çağ ki “modern” kavramının farkı şüpheli, gelecek çağ ise henüz meçhul. Machiavelli günümüz düşünürlerini, politik alandaki kaosu ıslah etmek konusunda rehberlik edecek örnek teşkil eden tarihi olaylarla etkilemiştir,” der. Bugün biliyoruz ki tarih, din, güç ve otorite, toplumsal kaygı pahasına kişisel çıkar sağlamak için suiistimal edilmektedir. Bu dört maddenin çarpıtılması yüzyıllardır süregelen tarihi bozulmanın bir sonucu olabilir, ki bu durum 500 yıl önce Machiavelli’nin karşı karşıya kaldığı duruma benzemektedir. Bu dört ana maddenin derinlemesine bir analizi yoluyla, bu çalışma, günümüz için, ki bu dönem bir önceki dünya görüşünün çöküşünü deneyimlemek anlamında benzerlikler taşımaktadır, Machiavelli’nin düşünüldüğünden daha gerekli olduğu savını ortaya atar. Machiavelli antik çağa dönmesiyle çağının çok ilerisindeydi. Modern bilinç için böyle bir yargı bir anlam ifade etmeyebilir. Ama modern bilinç, günümüz politik düşüncesi alanında da tartışıldığı üzere, tam anlamıyla zararlıdır ve yeni bir tanesi oluşturulmalıdır yoksa çağdaş olayların gerçekliğinin yanlış yorumlanması devam edecektir.

Bu çalışma Machiavelli’nin eserlerindeki dört ana unsurun – tarihin kullanımı, din anlayışı, ve güç ve otoritenin karşılıklı ilişkisi – dikkatli bir çalışmasını yaparak bu yanlış anlaşılmalara tersine çevirmeyi amaçladı. Bu dikkatli analiz dahilinde, Machiavelli’nin günümüzdeki önemi resmedildi, ki bu Machiavelli’nin önemini kendi geçici döneminden daha ileriye taşıdı. Çalışmanın

yönü yoğun analizin kendisi olarak tezyin edildi, ve bu çeşitli dönemlerde tarih, din, güç ve otorite üzerine ilgili materyalin söylemine de izin vermektedir, ki bu Machiavelli'nin yol gösterici eğitim üslubunun bir tekrarıdır.

Mecazi olarak, Machiavelli, tarih, din, güç ve otorite kullanımı ve suiistimali günlük olaylarda ortaya çıktığında, gelecekteki öğrencilerle bir söylem içindedir denebilir. Otoritenin, moderniteyi tanımlayan güç-oyunları etkileşimleriyle suiistimal edilmesini sanki bugün hayattaymış gibi bir derinlik ve netlikle ortaya koyar. Tarihsel kayıtlar ya da edebi eserlerinde – *Prens* de buna dahildir – verilmiş olan karakterlerin hareket ve tepkileri günümüz dünyasındaki mevcut aktivitelere benzemektedir. Geçmişteki örnek teşkil eden ibretleri kullanması sadece kendi zamanına değil geleceğe de yöneliktir.

Kaotik zamanlarda politika, şiddet ve acımasız güç oyunları ile angaje olmaya indirgenir. Machiavelli, büyük efsanevi liderlerin ve kahramanların bile vahşi güç-odaklı durumlar içine girmek zorunda olduklarını öğretir. Kendisi, özellikle Hıristiyan keşişlerle karşı karşıya kalındığında, yalan söylemenin gerekli olduğunu bile itiraf etmiştir. Yine de, sanki Hıristiyanlığı tamamen gözden çıkarmayı dilemez gibi görünmektedir. Hıristiyanlığın suiistimal edildiği bir çağda yaşıyordu ve Hıristiyanlık adına yapılan yıkıcı ve ahlak dışı uygulamaların bilincindeydi. Tek tanrılı dinlerin büyümelerini reddetmek istemeyiz ancak takdir edilmelidir ki yok edici eğilimlerinin köklerini sürekli suiistimal edilmelerinde oluşturmuşlardır.

Machiavelli'nin argümanlarını özetlemek gerekirse, ona göre, antik pagan spiritüalizm Hıristiyanlıktan çok daha diniydi, ve bu eleştiri diğer tek tanrılı “dinlere” de uyarlanabilir. Modern din ve laiklik çalışmasının önemi sözde “din” adına var olan tansiyon, ajitasyon, savaş ve terörizm nedeniyle artmaktadır ve laikler dine karşı çıkarlar. Modern anlamıyla “din,” eski Yunan ve Roma ile kıyaslandığında, kısıtlı bir din olarak algılanabilir. Diyebiliriz ki, belli zaman ve durumlarda, dinin modern şekilleri antik çağdakilere göre dini değildir. Laiklik dinden tamamen uzaklaşmayı arzular. Günümüz terörizminde dinin nasıl suiistimal

edildiğini de görüyoruz. Tamamen laik bir görüş de pek yardımcı olmayacaktır. Bu düşünce yöntemlerinin hiçbiri politik, sosyal ve askeri meselelerde verimli değildir. Machiavelli'nin ortaya koyduğu biçimde din, politik ve askeri meseleleri ihtiva eden, insan doğasının bir parçasıdır. Laiklikteki dinden uzaklaşma, ya da dinin suiistimali, en basitleştirilmiş haliyle, haksız sataşmanın, şiddetin, ya da terörün 'mazur gösterilmesidir.' İnsanın ne ölçüde hayatın doğasının kabul edilebilirliğinden uzaklaştığını gösterir, ki bu, günümüzde, sıradan insandaki ruhani bozulmanın boyutlarını ortaya çıkarır.

Bunlar Machiavelli'nin güç ve otorite arasındaki farkla ilgili öğrettiği temel derslerdir. Otorite tamamen gücün dışında değildir, ama güç otorite kurmak için gerekenlerin sadece küçük bir parçasıdır. Güce ne kadar dayanılıyorsa, o kadar az otorite vardır. *Prens*'teki ana odak güç üzerinedir. Ama, gücün işleyişi içerisinde farklılıklar vardır: "ihtiyaç gücü," "güç arzusu," ve arka planda da emsal teşkil eden otorite dersleri. İhtiyaç gücü kaotik düzensizlikle karşı karşıya kalındığında ve bu durumdan kurtulmak istendiğinde gerçekleştirilir. Sadece "güç arzusuna" yatırım yapanlarla, düzen bozulmaya devam eder.

Otorite *Prens*'te arka planda olabilir ama kesinlikle göz ardı edilmemiştir. Otorite basitçe "kuralları takip ederek" yasalara uymakla bu uyuştaki gerekçeyi anlamak arasındaki önemli farka işaret eder. İyi yasalar, sadece yasalara uymanın ötesinde, yasalara uyma konusunda isteklilik ortaya koymanın üzerindedir. İyi otorite güçlü ve sağlıklı bir politik düzen kurmak için gereken kuruluş prensiplerine göre davranma istekliliğini dahil ederek oluşturulur. Otorite öyle düzeyde yurttaşlık bağlılığı ve din oluşturur ki, insanlar şehirlerinin ya da cumhuriyetlerinin devamlılığı için hayatlarını riske etmeyi göze alırlar. Eğer askeri performans güç kullanımına yakınsa, o zaman da bir otorite kaybı var demektir. Otorite kaybıyla birlikte, kamu düzeni ve politik düzen de kaybolur, ki bu medeniyetin çöküşünün bir belirtisidir. Machiavelli'nin ağırlıklı olarak otoriteye odaklanan eseri *The Discourses*'dir, kaldı ki, bunda da arka planda güç ile ilgili dersler vardır. Machiavelli otorite kaybındaki bu ikilemlere değinir, ve *Prens*'te bunları düzeltmeye çalışır. Otorite kaybı moderniteyi tanımlayan temel bir özelliktir.

Prens'in düzgün anlaşılabilmesi için, okuyucunun bilincini Machiavelli'nin edebi artistik tekniklerine açması gerekir.

Yoruma açıklık onun edebi sanatının bir özelliğidir, ki bu, okuyucu için, kendi kışkırtıcı değerlendirmelerini ve yorumlar üzerine yargılarını ortaya koyabileceği bir mücadele demektir. Bu, büyük sanat eserlerindeki muazzam değere yöneltilmiştir. Okur içinde benzer bir biçimde ilgi çekicidir çünkü aynen politik otoritenin mevcut talepleri gibi, bir yargı oluşturma gerekliliği vardır. Machiavelli geçmişin bir yazarı olarak – *auctore* - büyük yazarlarla aynı çizgidedir. “Ebedi Şehir” Roma, ve ilgili büyük antik liderler Machiavelli'nin eserlerinde yeniden doğarlar – bir Rönesans yaşarlar. Prenslik, onun o anki durumunda, politikanın tepetaklak gidişini tamamen düzeltebilmek için artık mevcut değildi. Kaotik, anarşik zamanlarda, acımasız taktikler uygulanmaktaydı, ki bunlar prenslerin süregelen gaddar tarihlerinde yaygındı. *Prens*'in düzgün bir yorumu, yarı şaka yarı ciddi bir kinayenin, dil hilelerinin ve oldukça zor yazı tarzından kaynaklanan amaçlı mücadelenin kullanımının derecesinde yatmaktadır.

Kitabın tahsis edildiği var sayılan Prens II. Lorenzo'nun, Machiavelli'nin değindiği bu tür anlamlı hareketlerde bulunmak için gerekli liderlik seviyesi, düşünce derinliği ve tarih bilgisine haiz olma ihtimali hiçbir şekilde yoktur. Kaotik zamanlarda bile, düzenin otorite – Roma Cumhuriyeti'nden kaynaklanan otorite – yoluyla sürdürülmesi olmadan, sadece kaba güce dayanmak yıkıcı sonuçlar doğururdu. Yaygın olarak bilindiği üzere, “yeni prens” prenslikten feragat etmeliydi. Machiavelli hakkındaki yaygın bilgi zıt fikirler içerir, ve Machiavelli'nin gerçek öğretisinin yakınından bile geçmez. *Modern yaygın görüşün “Machiavellicilik” adı altında Machiavelli'nin yanlış yorumlanması, aslında, tarihsel, politik ve kültürel anlayıştaki düşüşün işaretidir, bunlar Machiavelli'nin ortaya koymayı istediği, düşüşteki bir medeniyetin belirtileridir, ama yine de, bu sertlik içinde dahi, Machiavelli büyüklük, mükemmellik, erdem, cesaret, ve mertliği tekrar inşa etmek istemiştir.*

Modern zaman ve günümüz arasında bir ayırım yapmak gerekir, zira bu Machiavelli'nin önemini anlamak noktasında önemli bir faktördür. Leo Strauss ve J. G. Pocock gibi kabul gören 20. yüzyıl bilim adamları, bu genel terimi Machiavelli'nin “ya antik ya da modern” oluşunun derecesinin temel sorgulamasında kullanırlar. James Wisner'in *Political Philosophy: A History of the Search for Order (Politik Felsefe: Düzen Arayışının Bir Tarihi)* adlı kitabının “Birth of Modernity: In Search for New Order” (“Modernitenin Doğuşu: Yeni Bir Düzen Arayışında”) başlıklı III. bölümünde ilk kısmın başlığı “Machiavelli”dir. Politik teori çalışmaları içinde, modernitenin 17. yüzyılda Hobbes ve Locke'un eserleriyle başladığı üzerine süregelen ihtilafli bir tartışma vardır. Ama var olan bir diğer iddia da, modernitenin 17. yüzyıldan sonra başladığıdır. Diğer çalışma alanlarında, modern zaman daha belirgindir, geç 18. yüzyıl ve erken 19. yüzyıla denk düşer. Bu çalışmada, modernite ve çağdaş arasındaki fark önemlidir, zira Machiavelli'nin daha kesin yorumlarından kaynaklanan birçok argüman, onu modernite başlığı altındaki birçok gelişmeyi eleştiren bir çerçeveye oturtur. Machiavelli'nin modern mi yoksa antik mi olduğu sorusu hala akademik bir tartışma konusudur. Bu, onun daha çok modern değer ve inançları sorgulayan ve bunların temelini çürüten farklı bir bilinç formu olan çağdaş dönemle bağlantılı olduğu savıyla ilintilidir.

Bu çalışmada kullanılan “antik” kavramı Socrates-öncesi zamanlara ya da “Batı” Avrupa medeniyeti kimliğinin orijini sayılan bu etkilerin dışındaki yerlere bir atıftır. Roma Cumhuriyeti de bu “antik” tanımına dahil edilmiştir, zira burada, Roma İmparatorluğunun çöküşüne kadar, Sokrat, Platon ve Aristoteles bilinmemekteydi. Bu bağlamda, “antik,” “Batı” bilinci denilen şeyden farklıdır.

Zaman dilimlerindeki değişimlerin anlatımında olduğu gibi, hem tamamen yeni ayırımlar hem de bir önceki zaman diliminin etkilerinden yayılan farklı gelişmeler vardır. Zaman dilimleri arasında net bir kopma bulmak oldukça zordur. Daha büyük bir ölçekte, insanlık tarihinin antik zamanıyla şimdiki zaman arasındaki en önemli ayırım Doğa'nın kavranışındadır. Her ne kadar Eski Ahit'te başlamış olsa da, antik çağdaki Doğa'ya duyulan saygı. Bilim ya da *epistémé* kavramı bile, modern bilinçte tamamen farklı bir kavramdı. Nietzsche'nin *Will to Power*'ın (*Güce*

İstenç) III. kitabı “Principles of New Evaluation”da (“Yeni Evrimin Prensipleri”) dediği gibi “19. yüzyılı ayırt eden şey bilimin zaferi değildi, bilimsel metodun bilim üzerindeki zaferiydi” (Nietzsche 1967: 261).

Modernite Orta Çağ’dan belirgin biçimde farklı olan bir zaman dilimidir. Orta Çağ politika alanındaki tepe noktasına 13. yüzyıl Aristoteles’in öğretileriyle ortaçağ Hıristiyanlığını bağdaştırmayı deneyen Thomas Aquinas’ın eserlerinde erişmiştir. Genel anlamda, tarihçiler Orta Çağ’ı Roma İmparatorluğu’nun çöküşünden 15. yüzyıla kadar uzatırlar. Bilinen diğer bir zaman dilimine geçiş, özellikle İtalya’da, 15. yüzyılın ikinci yarısı ve 16. yüzyıl itibariyle Rönesans’tır. Jacob Burckhardt’ın belirttiği üzere, İtalyan Rönesans’ıyla, “İtalya’da Orta Çağ sona ermiştir” (Burckhardt, 1:246), ve “artık dışında durduğu için İtalyan aklının daha iyi takdir edebileceği” “yeni bir dönem” başlamıştır (Burckhardt, 1:246). Böyle bir bilgiyi üreten şey Rönesans’ta gelişmiş olan tarihsel saygıdır. Böyle bir farkındalığı mümkün kılan şey, tarihe geri dönme, antik döneme geri dönme çalışmasıdır. Bu da, Machiavelli’nin eğitimsel yönteminin önemli bir özelliği olan geçmişten ders çıkarmanın önemini ortaya koyar.

Geç 15. yüzyıl ve 16. yüzyılda, Martin Luther’in teorileri ışığındaki Protestanlığın yükselişe geçişiyle, dini bağlamda modern kelimesinin kullanılmaya başlandı. Martin Luther’in ortaya attığı önemli bir kavram, “Ortaçağ skolastisizmi içerisinde, Thomas Aquinas’ın *via antica*’sına alternatif olarak ortaya atılmış olan” (Wiser 1982: 152) *via moderna*’dır. Yeni *via moderna* ve ilintili olan *devotion moderna* Kilise ve devletin birbirinden ayrılmasının başlangıcı olarak alınabilir. Bu durum Hobbes’un da yaşadığı dönem olan geç 16. ve erken 17. yüzyılda Protestanlığın yükselişi için de önemli bir gelişmedir. Kalvinizm Thomist teorilere karşıydı ve “popüler iktidar” için yapılmış olan izah “yüz yıldan daha uzun süre sonra İngiliz düşün adamı John Locke tarafından geliştirilecek olan modern anayasal teoriye inanılmaz biçimde benzemektedir.” (Wiser 1982: 165) Bu gelişmeyle beraber, demokratik prensiplerin yükselişinin başlamasıyla, kutsal kraldan halkın gücüne geçen bir iktidar kavramı gelişir. Bu gelişmeler deniz kuvvetlerinin büyümesine fırsat veren merkantilizmin ve güçlü Avrupa

toplumlarının dünyanın neredeyse tamamına yayılmasına izin veren sömürgeciliğin yükselişiyle neredeyse eşzamanlıdır.

Modernitenin tanınmasındaki diğer ana unsurlar, reformist Protestan teolojisindeki “bireysellik, milliyetçilik, ve gönüllülük” (Wiser 1982: 151) bağlamındaki farklı bilinçtir. Bu kavramlar, Kutsal krallık ve prenslikleri yok eden laiklik ve demokratik prensiplerinin yükselişiyle eş zamanlı olarak ortaya çıkan merkantilizm, sömürgecilik ve büyük modern zaman dilimine de yerleştirilen Aydınlanma çağında tekrar formüle edilmiş ve güçlendirilmiştir. Genel olarak kabul gören modern değer ve inançların sorgulanmasının ilk kavranışı Hegel ve Marx’a bağlanabilir, ama, bu çalışmanın da gösterdiği üzere, onların kavramsallaştırmalarının içerisinde, her ne kadar farklı bir tarzda olsa da, tam bir modernist inanç olan “tarihin ilerlemesi”ni sürdüren bazı içerikler vardır, ve bunun, şeylerin doğasını tam bir kavrayışı hatalı biçimde saklayan zararlı bir bilinç olduğu açığa çıkmıştır. Politik düşünce alanı içinde, modernitenin sert bir eleştirisi ve dolayısıyla da günümüz dönemi olarak tanımlanan zamanın başlangıcı Nietzsche’nin eserlerinde mevcuttur. Yaygın popüler “politik” ve kültürel işlerde, yakın zamana kadar, modernitenin unsurları, modernitenin bir çöküşte olduğu bilinci ya da farkındalığı olmadan, pratikte devam etmiştir.

Politik düşünce alanında – birçok entelektüel tarafından genellikle göz ardı edilen – Nietzsche çağdaş dünyanın durumunu anlamak için ancak 20. yüzyılın ikinci yarısında önem arz eden bir yere gelmiştir. Kimse sadece politik düşünce değil aynı zamanda çağdaş edebiyat alanında Nietzsche kadar etkili olamaz. Heidegger, Arendt, Foucault ve Derrida’nın çalışmalarında modern formlar ve inançlar nedeniyle unutulmuş olan antik farkındalık geri çağrılarak modern prensip ve inançlar sadece sorgulanmamış aynı zamanda tersyüz edilmiştir. Modern değerler ve inançları alt etme eğilimi dönemin ünlü sanatçıları George Bernard Shaw, Thomas Mann, Franz Kafka, Albert Camus, Milan Kundera ve Nietzsche’den etkilenmiş diğer birçok edebi figür tarafından devam ettirilmiştir. Bu, Machiavelli’nin önemini ortaya çıkarır zira Machiavelli ile ilgili yanlış yorumların birçoğu onun edebi sanatının bilinmemesinden kaynaklanır. Nietzsche, kendisinden

500 yıl önce ortaya atılmış inancın modern prensiplerini alt eden bir argümanı yeniden sunmuştur. Bu argüman Nietzsche'nin temellendirdiği çağdaş politik düşünce sürecine bir şekilde benzer, ki Nietzsche de İtalyan Rönesans'ında olduğu gibi bir yeniden doğuşu, antik dönemin yeniden doğuşunu ister. Genel anlamda, Rönesans'ın temel unsurları çağdaş edebiyatta yeniden hayat bulmuştur.

Machiavelli'nin yeniden değerlendirilmesi ya da yorumlanması üretken bir noktaya varabilir: maksatları, günümüzde politik karmaşanın kaynaklarını incelerken evrensel kozmopolit geçerlilik olan çağdaş yazarların önemine dikkatleri çekebilir. Tarihin, dinin, gücün ve otoritenin yeniden yapımı "modernitenin" üzerinde ve ötesinde unsurlardır. Barry Cooper'ın dediği gibi "modern ve postmodern politik rejimler arasındaki temel fark doğaya – kainata, tarihe, ilahi olana, Tanrı'ya – karşı takınılan tavidir." (Cooper 1985: 25) Bu farklılığın temeli doğadır. Başka hiçbir kavram antik ve modern kavramsallaştırmalarında "doğa" kadar farklılık göstermez. Modern tavır, eski varlık durumlarına karşı devrimsel prensipler üzerinde yükselir. Kutsal olan ve dini gelenekler bilinçli olarak yok edilmiştir. Geçmiş, bir nostalji olmanın ötesinde bir önemi olmaya eskimiş fikirlerin yer aldığı bir arka plana dönüşmüştür. Veya, algılanan daha iyi bir gelecek için kullanılacak tuğlalar olarak görülen bir "fikirler" torbası haline gelmiştir. Tarihi "Tarihsel ilerleme" kavramı, "dünyanın sonu"nda algılanan bir iyileştirmeyi içeren apokaliptik bir görüşü içerir. Tarihsel ilerleme "modern metafizikten" türetilmiştir. Ama biz modern metafiziğin sorgulandığı bir dönemde yaşıyoruz.

Machiavelli bu çalışmada geliştirilen güçlendirilmiş çalışmayı, geçmişten ders almak, bu günü anlamak ve gelecek için hazırlanmak bağlamında, motive etmiştir. Bu süreç onun eserlerinde sürekli olarak öne çıkar, inanıyorum ki benim çalışmamda da böyle olmuştur. Tarih onun eğitimsel yaklaşımı için merkezi bir önem addetmektedir. Kendi çağında, eğitimsel yönü için antik döneme bağlıdır, ve, "modern politika için bilimsel el kitabı" olarak oluşturulan şey de aslında modern politikanın içsel bir eleştirisiydi. Machiavelli'nin yaklaşımı ve edebi tarzı klasik anlamdaki felsefeden, metafizikten ve dinden farklıdır hatta bunları bozar. Bu meseleler konusunda Machiavelli günümüzde çok daha etkili olabilir, zira,

tartışıldığı üzere modernitenin çöküşünün kabul edilmesi klasik “Batı” bilincinin bir ürünüdür. Günümüz politik düşünce alanı antikleri değerli tutar ve şu anı anlamak ve harekete geçmek için daha uygun bir biçimde kullanır.

Machiavelli'nin eserleri yaklaşık 500 yıl önce yazılmıştır, ve günümüz için bu eserlerin geçerliliği sorusu akla gelebilir. Tarihi gözden geçirecek olursak, Machiavelli'de hem gerçeğe benzerlikler hem de belirsizlikler görürüz. Bu, yirminci yüzyılda Machiavelli'ye değinen liderlerin doğasında aşıkardır. *Prens* adlı eserinde ve satirik oyunlarında gerçek tavsiye ve alaycı hileler arasında dikkatli bir ayrıma gidilmesinin gerekmesinin sebebi budur. Kaotik zamanlarda ne yapmak gerektiğini bilmek politika tarihini çalışmak ve sözde “otoritelerle” uğraşırken yaratıcı bir hayal gücüyle düşünce yaratmak ve bunları uygulamak ve yaratıcı olmak demektir. Böyle olunca, kişi politikadaki “gerçeğe benzerlikler ve belirsizlikleri” görmelidir. Bu görev için gereken cevaplar en güçlü politik otorite olan Roma Cumhuriyetinin tarihini ve düşünce derinliğini bilmeyi gerektirir. Bu nedenle, Machiavelli günümüz için de geçerlidir.

Yaygın yanlış okumalar Machiavelli'nin geçici, sadece zamanına ait bir düşünür olduğunu, ve tüm enerjisinin sadece yaşadığı dönemdeki İtalya'nın durumlarından kaynaklandığını söyler. Ama dikkatli bir okumayla, evrensel niyeti gayet net bir biçimde açığa çıkar. Cassirer'in görüşüne göre “Machiavelli'nin tarzı evrenselcidir: biz tarihin kendini hiçbir zaman yenilemediğini düşünürüz, o tarihin kendini her zaman yenilediğini düşünür” (Cassirer 1946: 125), ve “Machiavelli ne sadece İtalya için ne de sadece kendi dönemi için yazmıştır” (Cassirer 1946: 126). Gelişen hızlı iletişim ve taşımacılık akışıyla birlikte dünyanın tarihin eski zamanlarına göre çok daha evrensel bir yer olduğu görüşü mevcuttur. Ama antik kozmoloji – dünyanın küresel doğasının biyolojik çember prensibinin içerisinde politika ve dinin harmanlanması sebebiyle – günümüze göre daha global ve evrensel bir bilince sahipti. Teknolojik argüman, haberin yayılmasının hızının artması ile ilgilidir. Ancak haber bilgi demek değildir, hatta sağduyu ve hikmetin yakınından bile geçmez. Asalet ve insan mükemmelliği ile ilgili hiçbir şey söylemez. Uluslar arası hale gelmiş politik dünyanın çok önemli değerlendirilmeleri

üzerine yargıda bulunmak için gerekli yetenek, günümüzde unutulmuş, göz ardı edilmiş faktörleri gerekli kılar. Bu faktörler, erdem, cesaret, asalet, mükemmelliktir ki bunlar sağduyu ve hikmete ulaşmak için harmanlanmıştır. Hem antik hem de günümüz politik uygulamalarının tarihi bir analizi politik eğitim için gerekli ve vazgeçilmez bir platformdur. Sağduyu denilen şey, verimli politik yansımalar ve hareketlerin toplamında yapı taşıdır. Sağduyu, geçmişe ait karşılaştırmalı tarihi bilgidir. Geçici durumlara kadar yeni bir yaklaşım sunabilen bilgi sahibi yargıları gerektirir.

Ancak, Rönesans'ın doğuşu İtalya'daki "yoğun mücadele"nin sonucunda oldu. Machiavelli tarafından ortaya atılan çıkarımlar mücadelenin sağlıklı ve güçlü politik ve sosyal yapılar üretebileceği yönündedir. İtalya'daki "yoğun mücadele"den uluslar arası yaşamın birçok ürünü, ve şu anda çok daha geçerli olmaya başlayan bir yaşam biçimi ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu güçlükten "diplomasi, devlet adamlığı, güç dengesi teorisi, devletlerin topluluğu fikri" çıkmıştır (Shaw 2000: 34). Amaç geleceğin politik yapısına yönelik üretken politik ittifaklar kurmaktır. Ancak bu gelecek geçmişe yeniden bir bakışla, Helenistik çalışmaların ve, Roman Cumhuriyete dönemi sırasında değil de Roma İmparatorluğu döneminde oluşturulmuş olan Roma Yasalarından alınan, Doğal Yasa düşüncesinin yeniden doğuşuyla meydana gelmiştir. Temel klasik Batı kimliği olan Roma Cumhuriyetini oluştururken, Machiavelli'nin tarihi ibret derslerinin ana noktası bu Batı kimliğinin dışında olmuştur. Tüm bu çıkarımlar elbette ki devasadır ve bu tezin içerisinde detaylıca açıklanmıştır.

Machiavelli'nin bugünün selevi olduğunu söylemek abartılı olmaz. Temel amacı, genellikle, belli geçici, zamansal durumlarda tüm seçilebilir faktörlerin yaratıcı bir yeniden inşasıdır. Harekete geçme talebi adaletin pratik formlarının bir talebidir. Bu Cicero'yu zamanının diğer politik düşünürlerinden ayıran şeydir, ve Machiavelli'yi de ayıran şey budur. Cicero ve Machiavelli pratik, dolayısıyla da gerçek adalet örneklerine dayandıkları için diğerlerinden farklıdır. Bu ayrım modern durumlara uygulanması açısından biriciktir. Machiavelli tarihi bilmenin

gerektiğini çünkü geçmişin bilgisine karşı duran modernitenin, inançları artık şüpheli olduğundan, artık inanılır olmadığını ortaya koyar.

Bu dersler, geçici, zamansal durumlara yenilik uyarlanmasına .çağrı yapar. Ancak, bu yenilik, antik bir kavram olan ve günümüz politik düşüncesi alanında yeniden doğan “sonsuz tekerrür”deki antik kozmoloji yoluyla döngüsel tarihin genel aynılığıyla beraber olmalıdır. Antik paganizmden edinilen dersler ortaya koyar ki güçlülük ve zayıflıklar Doğa ve insan doğasının kabul edilebilirlik seviyesiyle ölçülürler. Onu kontrol etmek adına kolaylıkla doğadan yüz çevirmek bir zayıflık göstergesidir. Ve şu anda her zamankinden daha çok güce güçlülüğe ihtiyacımız var. Antik ruhiyatçılık, cennetteki yaşamdan öğrenilemeyecek olan dünyadaki yaşamın doğasını kabul etmekten geçer. Antik din ve ürünleri politikayı, adaleti ve güçlü bir orduyu da içerir. Bu tür bir ruhiyatçılık politikayı aştığından başlama noktasıdır.

Dört ana maddenin (tarih, din, güç ve otorite) her biri, bu çalışmadaki ana argümanları mümkün kılarken bir diğerini besler. Örneğin tarihsel bilgi aracılığıyla tanımlanan otorite, politik düzen için bir antik dini bir mihenk taşıdır, ki bu, iddia edilen politik düzen ve insanlık tarihindeki politik insanların karma bir bileşimini ortaya koyar. Bu tarihsel olgunun düzgün bir biçimde anlaşılması ve tanımlanması amacının, modernitede otoritenin öyle ya da böyle kayıp olduğu tartışıldığından, günümüzde de değinilmesi gereken bir şey olduğu aşikardır.

Otorite artık olmadığından, ve iyi otoritenin insan tarihindeki en üst düzeyde politik düzeni sağladığı iddia edildiğinden, günümüzde başka hiçbir şeye otoriteye duyulduğu kadar ihtiyaç duyulmamıştır. Klasik Batı kimliğini oluşturan eski mihenk taşı artık inanılır olmadığından yeni bir mihenk taşına ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Şimdi, “Doğu” ve “Batı” arasındaki karşıtlık üzerine kurulu bir kimliğin yıkılması gerektiği çağrısı yapılmaktadır. Durumun adil bir resmi için gereken dersler, bunun tarihi, ve sivil bir dinin deneyimi, hatalı saldırganlık, savaş ve terörizm üreten yanlış illüzyonların ötesinde, mevcut küreselleşme durumunda yapısal bir mihenk taşı olabilir.

İnsan hayatında daha yüksek bir mükemmellik seviyesini geliştiren, politik, sosyal ve kültürel düzen için liderlere olan ihtiyacımızdan kaçınamayız. Ancak, zayıfın güçlüye yetki verir gibi görüldüğü bir sistemimiz var. Güç otoriteye yetki verir. İlk olarak Nietzsche tarafından değinilen şu soru karşımıza çıkar: “dünyanın efendileri olmayı kim hak ediyor?” Machiavelli dolaylı olarak bu büyük soruyu herkesten daha muzafferane cevaplar. Bu onun “başkaları tarafından yürünmemiş yol”unun, bilinmeyen yerler ve denizler araştırma” çabasının önemli bir parçasıdır (Machiavelli 1965: 190).

Teknoloji çağında, modern bilimsel mantığın dışında ayrı bir bilinç hissi oluşturmak gereklidir. Mevcut durumun anlayışının yeniden formüle edilmesi için yeni bir sanatsal bilincin kökleri Rönesans’ta başladı. Nihilizmin tanınmasından başlayan, ki bu şeylerin gerçekliklerini kabul etmek için gereklidir, bu sanatsal bilincin – sanatsal devrimin – canlılığı mevcut zamanda tekrar hayata dahil etmek amacıyla sanatsal yaratı ortaya koymak için oluşturulmasında Machiavelli etkili olmuştur. Bu unsurlara odaklanmak, bunlar hayati önem taşıdığından, bu çalışmaya benim katkım olan kısımdır.

Eğitim üzerine olan bu dersler ve alıntılar, Machiavelli düşüncesindeki bu yaklaşımın yönünü şekillendiren önemli parçalardır, ki bunlar da, Machiavelli’nin günümüz için önemini ortaya çıkarır. Machiavelli bir mihenk taşının üzerinde duran atlama taşı gibidir. Eğitimsel yaklaşım sanatsal yorumun yokluğunu reddeder, ve nihilist politik düzensizliklerde yaratıcı eğitilebilirliğe çağrı yapar. Eğitimsel amaç analizin ötesindedir; bu, tarihin yeniden formüle edilmesiyle, yeni bir dindarlık formuyla, gücün doğru kullanıldığı çağdaş bir otorite formuyla bezenmiş, modern bilinçten farklı yeni bir politik “hareket” ile mümkündür. Üretken çağdaşlıkta, “yenilik” geçmişin derslerinden yeni edinilmiştir, ki bu ironik görünen ama sadece modern bilinçte olan bir idraktır. Yeni bir bilince ihtiyaç vardır, ki bu antıklara “yeni” bir dönüş demektir. Bu “antıklara dönüş” Rönesans sırasında sağlıklı sivil İtalyan toplumunda kısmen gerçekleştirilmiştir. Şu anda, *bizim de “yeni bir Rönesans’a” ihtiyacımız var.* Eğer, çalkantılı zamanlar da bile, tarihten bir şeyler

öğrendiysek, gerçek bir ustalık yükselebilir. *Ve bizim tarihteki diğer her zamandan çok ustalara ihtiyacımız var.*

APPENDIX-B

CURRICULUM VITAE

**Name and Title: Nevio Cristante,
MA. Distinction, Political Science**

1. Personal Data

- 1.1 Date and Place of Birth: 8 September 1959, San Giovanni di Casarsa, Italy.
(Canadian and Italian: Dual Citizenship)
- 1.2 Office Address: Instructor, English Literature Department
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2. Education

- 2.1 **2003-2008:** Doctoral Studies towards the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.
Political Science and Public Administration Department,
Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.
- 2.2 **1987-1990:** Master of Arts Study. Political Science Department, Faculty of Public, Affairs, Carleton University, Ottawa Ontario, Canada.
- 2.3 **1986-1987:** Qualifying Year, Master Political Science. Political Science Department, Faculty of Public Affairs, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

- 2.4 **1984-1985:** Special Student, Faculty of Public Affairs, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- 2.5 **1978-1979:** Bachelor of Arts, Non-departmental student, Faculty of Social Sciences, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- 2.6 **1979-1984:** Bachelor of Arts Honours, Geography Department, Faculty of Social Sciences, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- 2.7 **1973-1978:** Secondary Education, St. Charles College, Sudbury, Ontario, Canada.
- 2.8 **1965-1973** Primary Education, Our Lady of Fatima Elementary School, Naughton, Ontario, Canada.

3. Academic Titles and Degrees

- 3.1 **PhD. completion (2008):** Political Science and Public Administration Department, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.
(Dissertation submitted for PhD. Degree: ***History, Religion, Power, and Authority: The Relevance of Machiavelli's Educational Approach in Contemporary Political Thought.***)
- 3.2 **Teaching Certificate (1997):** Canadian Global TESOL Training Institute, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- 3.3 **Master of Arts (1990):** Political Science Department, Faculty of Public Affairs, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
(MA Thesis (distinction): ***Modernity in Decline: Politics and the Modern Novel.***)
- 3.4 **B.A. (1984):** Geography Department, Faculty of Social Sciences, Carleton Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

4. Employment

A. Academic

- 4.1 2003-present:** Instructor, English Literature Department, Faculty of Letters, International Relations Department, Faculty of Economics & Administrative Sciences, Hacettepe University, Beytepe Campus, Ankara, Turkey. Lecturer and Instructor for Speaking and Writing classes. Third-year Literary Theory and Criticism course, and Fourth-year Comparative Literature course. In the other department, lecturer for three required courses. Personally formulated the main text in “The History of Civilizations,” for the 1st year students. Instructed the “Introduction to Political Science,” a first-year course, and “The History of Political Thought,” a second-year course. Lately, instructor in “KAY 135 Sociology,” from the Political Science and Administrative Sciences Department, and “ECO 128 Political History” from the Economics Department, both within the same faculty, as a contribution to the interdisciplinary approach. Preparation of other related courses.
- 4.2 2000-2002:** Instructor, Cankaya University, Preparatory School, Ankara, Turkey. Instructor in the 1st year Proficient Academic English and Content. Main academic content evaluation, transcriber, and Testing Assistant.
- 4.3 1999-2000:** Instructor, Bilkent University, English Unit Department, Faculty of Humanities and Letters, Ankara, Turkey. Instructor of a full two-semester year. The second semester course personally formulated content: “Imperialism: Devastation in the Ancient and Modern World.”
- 4.4 1998-1999:** Instructor, Bilkent University, (part-time) Political Science Department, Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences, Ankara, Turkey. Lectured in second-year undergraduate course, “The History of Political Thought.” Personally added much of the essential material to the main text on the main thinkers, from Plato to Nietzsche.

B. Other Related Employment

- 4.5 1997-1999** Teacher: Turkish American Association: Cinnah Cadessi, 20 Ankara, Turkey. Teaching English-As-A- Second Language to beginners and the advanced. Use of all four main categories: speaking and listening, reading and writing.

- 4.6 **2000-2001** Teacher: Karaca Language School, Karanfil Sokak, 20, Ankara, Turkey. Teaching English-As-A- Second Language to beginners and the advanced.
- 4.7 **1992-1993** Research Assistant: The Senate of Canada, Senator Heath Macquarrie, House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Summarization of articles from academic journals and government publications on international affairs, native affairs, foreign policy, development of trade, and cultural relations. Coordination of research, publication and promotion of Senator Macquarrie's book, *Red Tory Blues*.
- 4.8 **1991-present:** Professional Editor: Canadian editor of *Kritika & Kontext*, a Canadian-Slovakian, international journal. Editor for *Diplomat Canada*, a magazine for international affairs published in Ottawa, Canada. Private editing for scholars in Canada. Editor 2002: *Human Rights in Turkey and the World*, Hacettepe University, Centre for Research and Application of Philosophy of Human Rights, UNESCO Chair for the Philosophy of Human Rights, Prof. Ioanna Kuçuradi, Main Editor. Editing for scholars in Hacettepe and Middle East Technical Universities.
- 4.9 **1998-1990:** Sessional Lecturer/Teaching Assistant: imparting course material in introductory and second-year courses on the "Introduction to Political Science" and "The History of Political Thought": Political Science Department, Faculty of Public Affairs, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada.

5. Areas of Academic Interest

- 5.1 Political Thought on Global Politics:** a study on the relations of political thought and/or philosophy on the current arguments of globalization. It involves the combination of historical political thought and theories with their concrete examples in contemporary events, generally the relations of the 'east' and 'west' generated in the latest academic works which circumvent these traditional identities. The direction is towards a new set of international relations theories:
- a) The Loss of Authority: Present-Day Sole Reliance on Power Politics
 - b) Globalization of Justice and Authority: Adopting to International Judicial Necessities
 - c) Psychological Analysis: Religious and Ideological Abuses in Friend-Enemy Identities
 - d) Environmentalism: Ancient-Contemporary Initiatives.

5.2 Turkish Politics with Its Comparative Survey of the Middle East: a further analysis of the uniqueness and difficulties of Turkish politics:

- a) The Geographical Importance of being between ‘East’ and ‘West’.
- b) A Study of Civil Society and the State.
- c) A Comparative Study on the Conditions in Neighbouring Nations of the Middle East.

5.3 Spiritual and/or Psychological Crisis: an analysis of the roots of growing political downfall, violence, and terrorism from an interdisciplinary combination of political thought, literature, with religious and psychological studies. This includes a return to the ancient in lessons from paganism, shamanistic religions as a means for understanding the contemporary predicament:

- a) Use or Abuse of Religion
- b) Study of Ancient Paganism and Politics.
- c) Psychological Analysis of Terror Politics.
- d) The True Meaning of “The End of History”

5.4 Politics and Literature: another combination of historical study of political and social events in relation to great literary works. The well-chosen literary works will demand concrete historical study of relevant material in time and space, with reference to the different historical periods, the history of political thought through a comparative educational approach. The topics will range from various literary genres and historical periods:

- a) Ancient (Classical) Literature
- b) Literary and Political Works of the Renaissance
- c) Literary Theory and Criticism
- d) Comparative Literature
- e) Modern and Contemporary Literature

5.4 Sub-fields in Graduate Studies: 1) Political Sociology, and 2) Culture, Ideology and Mass Communications

6. Courses Taught: (This is a list of the courses taught)

International Relations Department, Economics and Administrative Sciences, Hacettepe University: INR 101 & 102 Introduction to Political Science, INR 161 & 162 History Of Civilization, INR 207 & 208 History of Political Thought, KAY 135 Sociology, ECO 128 Political History.

English Unit, Faculty of Humanities and Letters, Bilkent University: PS 207: The History of Political Thought; 2nd Term “Imperialism: Devastation in the Ancient and Modern World.”

Instructor, Çankaya University, Preparatory School: Courses teaching the English language within the main text, and other lessons added.

Private Instructor: Courses teaching the English language with a focus on speaking and listening, reading and writing.

7. Research and Publications

7.1 PhD. Dissertation:

***History, Religion, Power, and Authority:
The Relevance of Machiavelli's Educational Approach in
Contemporary Political Thought*** 2008 (publishable)
Political Science and Public Administration Department,
Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences,
Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.
Circa 266 pages. PhD Advisor, Prof. Mehmet Okyayuz.

7.2 M.A. Thesis:

Modernity in Decline: Politics and the Modern Novel.
(publishable) Political Science Department, Faculty of Public
Affairs, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario,
CANADA. 1990. 184 pp. M.A. Advisor, Prof. Tom Darby.

7.3 Articles (including extended and revised term papers and former submissions)

“Nietzsche’s Historical Confrontation with Hegel: ‘The End of History’?” Submitted to: Journal of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Hacettepe University, December, 2007.

“Reflection on Language In the Works of Martin Heidegger.”
Will be submitted shortly to SSCI or AHI. Former term paper for SOC 634 Advanced Issues in the Sociology of Knowledge, Sociology Department, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Prof. Unal Nalbantoglu, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey, 2005.

“Presence and Absence: The ‘Destining’ of Technology, according to Heidegger.” Presentation at the **XXIst World Congress of Philosophy**, August 10-17, Istanbul, TURKEY: Contemporary Philosophy Section, ICEC-S4. Will be re-submitted to *Interpretation: A Journal Of Political Philosophy*, Queen’s College, Flushing NY.

“A Re-Examination of ‘Judgement’ in Hannah Arendt’s Speculated

Completion of *The Life of the Mind*.” Former term paper for PS 534 Power and Authority, Political Science and Public Administration Department, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey, 2005.

“The Contest of Poetry and Political Philosophy: An Encounter During Nihilistic Times, with reference to Plato and Nietzsche.” Presentation at **Form and Discontent: A Symposium of the Problem of Categorizability**, The Third Annual Interdisciplinary Symposium, Bilkent University Program in *Culture, Civilizations, and Ideas*, Bilkent University, Ankara, Saturday, April 30, 2005.

7.4 **Books** (unpublished or awaiting publication)

New Youth: Friulian Poems of Pier Paolo Pasolini. Accepted (2001)

but later denied (2003) by Guernica editions, Toronto Ontario, Canada. Will be re-submitted to appropriate publisher. (2007)

Plato’s Gorgias: A Renewed Return. A careful interpretation of the dialogue, with its similarity to contemporary concepts and their use, as well as on the nature of education. Almost completed and will be submitted shortly. (2008)

Contemporary Politics: A Critical Introduction. To be co-authored with a colleague, Dr. Bican Şahin, Political Science and Public Administration Department, Economics and Administrative Sciences Faculty, Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey. (in process, 2008)

8. Memberships:

8.1 **Association of Liberal Thought**, Ankara, Turkey (meetings, conference for Middle East students) **present**.

8.2 **Centre For Liberal Arts Education and Public Affairs**, Carleton University Ottawa, Ontario, Canada (meetings, conferences, editing) **1988-90**

8.3 **Executive Director: Ottawa Independent Writers (OIW)** (Meetings, co- ordination, editing) Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, **1995-1997**.

8.4 **Publicity Coordinator: Editor's Association of Canada (EAC)**
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. **1995-1997.**

8.5 **Canadian Mediterranean Institute (CMI)** (Meetings, organization of conferences in Ottawa) Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. **1992-1997.**

9. Languages:

- 9.1 **English:** (excellent; fluent)
- 9.2 **Italian:** (advanced)
- 9.3 **Friulian:** (advanced)
- 9.4 **French:** (upper intermediate)
- 9.5 **Turkish:** (lower intermediate)

10. Hobbies:

10.1 **Sports:** Baseball, Basketball, Badminton, Squash, Tennis, Water-Skiing, Swimming, Jogging, Trekking

10.2 **Music:** Guitar, Blues, Jazz, Dance

10.3 **Films:** Educational films, Documentaries, Films of History, Shakespeare, Works of Art, (use of educational films in department lessons)

10.4 **Tourism:** ancient historical sites, accumulation of historical ornaments, books of historical knowledge, photography.

11. References

11.1 **Prof. Dr. Tom Darby**, Political Science Department, Faculty of Public Affairs, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada.
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