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ON THE RELATION BETWEEN GRAMSCI AND MACHIAVELLI

City University of New York

Ph.D. 1986

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ON THE RELATION BETWEEN GRAMSCI AND MACHIAVELLI

by

BENEDETTO FONTANA

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Political
Science in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of
New York

1986

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Political Science in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Acknowledgement

The views and ideas set forth in this dissertation have been shaped and reshaped through the continual exchange of ideas with my colleagues and teachers at the Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York.

But particular thanks are offered to the members of my dissertation committee, Professors Marshall Berman, John Cammett, Young Kun Kim, and Melvin Richter, for taking the time and the interest to offer helpful suggestions and constructive criticism. Professor Cammett was kind enough to act as my guide one summer during my stay in Rome.

In addition, I am specially and profoundly grateful to Professors Robert Abrams, Martin Fleisher, and Richard Styskal, without whose help and encouragement--both intellectually and socially--this work would not have been completed. Throughout our long association they have acted as teachers, guides, and friends, who taught me the meaning of intellectual activity and scholarly endeavor. Such an association, I believe, exemplifies the conversation and the discourse that Fabrizio undertakes with his friends in the Orti Oricellari, an intellectual enterprise conducted among friends and equals--"amici tutti amati."

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Chapter I

The purpose of my thesis is two-fold: it will argue that the Gramscian interpretation of Machiavelli as the "democratic philosopher" and the "Italian Luther" is the vehicle through which he elaborates a fundamental and radical critique of bourgeois and liberal thought as expressed in Italy by the idealist philosophy of Benedetto Croce; and, it will further argue that such an interpretation identifies Machiavellian thought as an "anticipation" or "prefiguration" of Gramsci's notion of hegemony.<1>

Interpreters of Gramsci have rightly noted that his political philosophy is fundamentally humanist. Man, for Gramsci, is not a "given" whose nature is immutable and fixed: he is not an "essence" whose existence is already determined. He is a "becoming," ineradicably rooted in the historical process. Indeed, man is history, both as an actor who through his practical activity makes history, and as a thinker who contemplates himself in history.<2> Gramsci's political theory, therefore, is a discourse upon the genesis and formation of the historical subject. It is precisely this view of "political man" as an agent who posits himself and creates himself in and through historical action that led Gramsci to reject contemporary interpretations of Marxism which he criticized as mechanistic and deterministic.<3> In such a view of Marxism,

he believed, the historical subject is suppressed, and is no longer seen as an active agent, but rather as a passive object at the mercy of historical contingency and economic forces. In this respect, Gramsci attempted to rescue Marxism from the determinist and revisionist encrustations with which the Second International had surrounded it.<4> Thus his theoretical and political positions were developed and formulated in reaction to a Marxism he perceived had lost its revolutionary and critical core.<5>

Most of the literature on Gramsci subscribes to this view, and it attempts to discover and identify the theoretical, political, and historical conditions which may have influenced Gramsci in his project to reconstruct a revolutionary political theory from his critique of the Marxism of the Second International (noteworthy are the essays found in Studi Gramsciani,<6> Gramsci e la cultura contemporanea,<7> La citta' futura,<8> as well as the works by Salvadori,<9> Nardone,<10> Cammett,<11> and Piccone).<12> On the other hand, when it comes to the problem of specifically identifying the nature and sources of Gramsci's theoretical work--especially on the question of hegemony--agreement ceases and a veritable plethora of antagonistic interpretations prevails throughout the field of Gramscian studies. What makes matters worse is that Gramsci's writings have not only been sanctified by the Italian Communist Party into an official body of dogma, but they have also become the political and ideological weapons

used by disparate groups in Italy in their struggle for power. In either case, what should have been a point of departure for fruitful and critical research is transformed into mere hagiography or political propaganda.

But whether the literature is critical or hagiographical, there seem to be as many views on Gramsci as there are interpreters. Batteries of quotations and references gleaned here and there from Gramsci's works have been amassed to support this or that interpretation: the Crocean^{<13>} or Hegelian Gramsci,^{<14>} the Leninist Gramsci,^{<15>} the Jacobin Gramsci,^{<16>} the democratic-spontaneist Gramsci,^{<17>} the voluntarist Gramsci,^{<18>} and so on ad nauseam.

It is possible, however, to classify the literature on Gramscian thought into three major schools of interpretation. There is, first, an orthodox or Leninist school that views Gramsci as a mere footnote to Lenin (to use Togliatti's words), or as a Leninist who translates the Bolshevik experience in Russia into the different conditions obtaining in Italy.^{<19>} Here Gramsci is the Italian Bolshevik who simply amplified the theoretical work of Lenin and enriched it with his knowledge of Italian culture and history. Such writers as Togliatti, Spriano,^{<20>} Macciocchi,^{<21>} Buci-Glucksmann,^{<22>} Ottino, Anderson,^{<23>} and Cammett^{<24>} are representatives of this school. In effect, they equate Gramsci's egemonia with Lenin's

dictatorship of the proletariat. A second group of interpreters is composed of basically anti-Marxist writers (such as Nardone,<25> H.S. Hughes,<26> and Lichtheim)<27> who see Gramsci (especially in his notion of hegemony as an all-encompassing conception of the world) as a typical Marxist totalitarian. It is interesting to note that both of these schools, though issuing from different intellectual traditions and having different theoretical concerns, nevertheless converge in their view that Gramsci is a Leninist. And finally, there is a school that occupies a middle position between the first two. These authors (such as Williams, Matteucci, Garin, Bobbio, Piccone, Davidson, and the contributors to La citta' futura) assert that Gramsci has made an original contribution to Marxist revolutionary thought, and deny that he represents a mere Italian version of Leninism. In general, this school stresses the moment of consent and moral-intellectual leadership (that is, hegemony) in Gramsci's thought, and at the same time de-emphasizes or neglects the moment of force or domination (dictatorship).

Although many students of Gramsci (representing all three schools of thought) have noted the role that Machiavelli assumes in Gramsci's project to formulate a Marxist revolutionary political theory, no attempt has yet been made to conduct a textual and comparative study of the relation between Gramsci and Machiavelli.<28> Studies have been limited to a mere exposition and repetition of

Gramsci's writings on the Florentine secretary found in his Note sul Machiavelli, sulla politica e sullo Stato moderno, Il Risorgimento, and in Gli intellettuali e l'organizzazione della cultura. All three schools of interpretation point out the importance of Machiavelli's notion of the "new prince" to Gramsci's concept of the revolutionary party: what determines the political and theoretical attitude of each school to Gramsci's transformation of the Machiavellian prince into the "modern prince" represented by the revolutionary communist party depends upon the position taken by each interpreter regarding the question of Gramsci's Leninism or totalitarianism.<29>

The liberal bourgeois interpretation presents a Gramsci who understands Machiavelli through the political and theoretical prisms constructed by the Leninist and Bolshevik experience of 1917 and civil war Russia. In this view it is asserted that Gramsci envisions Lenin as a modern Machiavelli who develops and brings to fruition a revolutionary theory founded upon the principles of realpolitik and force.<30> Their opposite number--the orthodox Marxists and Leninists--agree that Gramsci sees Machiavelli through the figure of Lenin, but, of course, conclude that the liberal bourgeois critique is spurious and self-serving, for the rejection of the Leninist party is equivalent to the rejection of revolution and the construction of a new society.<31> The third school--which in this case includes both left critics of the Italian

communist party, and various democratic and social-democratic intellectuals--finds an unfortunate duality or ambivalence within the Gramscian political and theoretical enterprise: on the one hand, he is admired for his notion of hegemony as a conception of the world which is elaborated by organic intellectuals that are to emerge from within the life of the lower classes, and, on the other hand, he is criticized and taken to task for accepting Croce's interpretation of Machiavelli as the discoverer of the "autonomy of politics," which to this school represents the reversal of what it takes to be the Marxian assertion of the supremacy of the "social" and the "material" life of man over the merely "political" and "ideological."<32>

In any case, what is crucial to each of these interpretations is that they are all based upon a negative or positive orientation towards the Leninist version of revolution and revolutionary transformation, such that the relation between Gramsci and Machiavelli is mediated by the figure of Lenin and by the Soviet revolutionary experience. Thus all three schools of thought take the Gramsci/Machiavelli relation outside the Italian historical and cultural context, where it is assumed that Gramsci, in attempting to construct an interpretation of Machiavelli that could be employed towards the development of a revolutionary theory of action, necessarily and blindly accepted the revolutionary problematic that confronted Lenin in Russia. In effect, analyses and discussions of the

nature and role of Machiavellian thought within the Gramscian political and theoretical enterprise have failed to turn--or to return--to the original sources. What must be done is to present the Gramscian text in relation to the Machiavellian text in order to discover whether or not Gramsci is himself faithful to the direction and substance of Machiavelli's works. Such a procedure, however, does not assume that each text exists in a "pure" or unadulterated state: both the Gramscian and Machiavellian texts are permeated by the socio-cultural and socio-political environments to which they reacted and from which they emerged. But precisely because the text is immersed within the social and cultural life of the respective historical periods an analysis of the relation between Gramsci and Machiavelli requires that account be taken of Italian cultural, political, and ideological developments that shaped the thought of both Gramsci and Machiavelli.

In effect, no student of Gramsci has related his interpretation of Machiavelli to the latter's writings.<33> Nor has any one attempted to compare the major Machiavellian ideas--such as virtu/fortuna, the nature of political knowledge, the new principality, the concept of a people, the relation between thought and action, etc.--to what the literature considers to be Gramsci's original and most significant contribution to Marxist political theory--namely, his concept of hegemony and the notion of moral and intellectual reform.<34> The overwhelming majority

of the literature merely concentrates on the Leninist problematic regarding the nature and role of the political party. Whether one accepts or rejects the Bolshevik perspective, these debates reveal a reductionist tendency that transforms the political and theoretical question regarding the creation of a revolutionary subject and a revolutionary theory into a technical and instrumental problem revolving around various notions of organization--all of which merely translates into Marxist terminology the capitalist preoccupation with technique and the liberal reduction of politics to economic utility.

What I intend to do, however, is to attempt a study that will look at the relation between Gramsci and Machiavelli in a novel and hopefully more fruitful way. Instead of looking at the Gramsci/Machiavelli relation in terms of the traditional and accepted perspective which locates Gramsci's reading of Machiavelli within a problematic circumscribed by the sterile and hackneyed polemics centered around the nature of the political party--debates which merely reproduce, and thus never escape, the liberal and bourgeois assumptions that underlie the relation between those who rule and those who are ruled, and between "those who know" and "those who do not know"--what my study proposes is to re-direct the analysis of Gramsci and Machiavelli into an inquiry that will explore the relation between Machiavelli's political thought and Gramsci's concept of hegemony as the unity of knowledge and

action, ethics and politics, where such a unity through its proliferation and concretization throughout society becomes the way of life and the practice of the popular masses. What I most definitely do not intend is a study that parallels, in the manner of so many others, a scholastic exercise where the Gramsci/Machiavelli relation is conflated into the Marxist-Leninist equivalent of the sic et non.

Whatever the differences that exist among the various schools of Gramscian interpretation, there is general agreement on the over-all political and theoretical thrust of Gramsci's thought: Gramsci set out to formulate and elaborate a theory of political action which is at once a radical and uncompromising critique of the pre-existing structures of Italian life and history (both as thought and as practice) and, concurrently, which would identify a political and historical subject, located within this established reality, that would be the carrier of this political theory.<35> The Gramscian enterprise is an attempt to uncover the cultural and political conditions that will either retard or contribute to the creation and development of an actor who, though existing as a subordinate entity within the existing socio-political reality, nevertheless possesses within itself the seeds or potential that will enable it to move beyond the given reality. The formulation of a revolutionary political theory to Gramsci constitutes two simultaneous, and mutually related, activities: the uncovering of the ideological, cultural, and moral

structures of the established system, and the development of a political subject whose consciousness is itself the new political theory whose embodiment and concretization within the subject is also the uncovering and undermining of the established social structure.

What such a project requires is that there exist within the existing reality elements the uncovering and critique of which will lead to a transformation of what is the accepted reality. Such a transformation demands that the new political theory emerge from within the very system this theory is attempting to negate and to over-come. The Gramscian revolutionary theory, as the negation of the established and prevailing system of thought and practice, must be given, and presupposed, by what it seeks to contradict and eventually to destroy. The opposition between the revolutionary theory and the established system of thought and practice cannot be one which is posited abstractly and mechanically, such that the relation between the two is merely formal and external. The opposition must be one which occurs within the system which is to be over-come, for such a transcendence can only be realized through the unfolding and movement of elements that, precisely because they arise from the tensions internal to the system, represent the logical and necessary fulfillment of the established reality but which at the same time negate and transform it.

It is for this reason that Gramsci, as he writes in one of his letters to Tatiana,<36> intends to undertake a study and critique of the cultural, moral, and philosophical bases of Italian life and society. In so doing he hopes to identify the elements and factors which have contributed to what he believes to be the crisis of Italian politics and society. To Gramsci "il reale presente"--the established and given reality of Italian society--is represented and encompassed by the towering figure of Benedetto Croce. The Crocean formulations regarding the nature of philosophy, politics, and history are taken by Gramsci to constitute the fullest and most complete expression of liberal and bourgeois thought in Italy.<37>

Whether such an evaluation of the status and merits of Croce's thought is valid, or whether Gramsci attributes to Croce such a status because he is merely making a parallel between his own position in relation to Croce and the reaction of Marx to Hegelian thought, is not relevant to the issue. The point is that Gramsci perceived Croce as the intellectual figure whose work summarized both the best and the worst of liberal thought and philosophy, a work that represented the culmination of liberal culture and politics. Such a belief is what brought Gramsci to attempt a thorough-going critique of liberal philosophy and liberal politics through the analysis and investigation of Crocean philosophy.<38> If this philosophy is the highest expression of bourgeois philosophy and culture in Italy, Gramsci

reasoned, then any attempt to construct a radical theory in opposition to the prevailing forms of thought and culture necessarily demanded a simultaneous attempt to analyze and to confront the figure of Croce. The over-coming and transcendence of liberal thought and politics as posited by Croce is thus the formulation and elaboration of a new and radical form of thought. The new political theory therefore emerges as the logical and necessary continuation, though in a higher and more universal form, of the established system of thought.

Some authors, especially Piccone, Garin, and the contributors to La citta' futura, have discussed and analyzed the relation between Croce and Gramsci, a relation that is generally recognized to assume a significant role in Gramsci's thought. Such a relation is particularly emphasized by those writers who interpret Gramsci as an idealist and an Hegelian who attempted to escape the mechanistic and positivistic notions of science and philosophy that prevailed at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. My position on the relation between Croce and Gramsci agrees with that of these authors. It is simply not possible to arrive at a proper reading of Gramsci without locating him within the political, moral, and intellectual atmosphere of an Italian culture whose points of reference and whose terms of discourse were set and fixed by the idealist philosophy of Croce.<39>

My argument, however, will address itself to a much more specific and concrete area of inquiry. It will limit itself to the issue of the Gramscian reading of Machiavelli and it will attempt to elaborate and elucidate particular notions and concepts that flow from such a reading. But since the influence of Croce on Gramsci is crucial to the understanding of the Gramscian theoretical and political enterprise, and since this enterprise is formulated and developed both as a critique and as a transcendence of Crocean thought, Gramsci's interpretation of Machiavelli also emerges as a counter-reading of the interpretation of Machiavelli put forth by Croce.<40> The Gramscian Machiavelli is a figure that stands in radical opposition to the Crocean Machiavelli. What this means is that to understand the Gramsci/Machiavelli relation it is also necessary to understand the Croce/Gramsci relation; and, further, any discussion of Gramsci's interpretation of Machiavelli necessarily presupposes a discussion of Croce's reading of Machiavelli. Thus the relation between Gramsci and Machiavelli can only be understood when it is located within the Gramscian critique of Crocean thought and Italian culture. And the interpretation of Machiavelli developed by Gramsci is a reading that issues from, and which (at the same time) attempts to negate, the Crocean and liberal interpretation of Machiavellian thought.<41>

These two sets of relations--Gramsci/Croce and Gramsci/Machiavelli--embody what to Gramsci has become the major and fundamental problem that defines the politics and history of the modern world. The modern world--whose advent was anticipated in the thought of Machiavelli and whose birth historically was signaled by the American and French revolutions--is characterized by the emergence and development of the popular masses as a socio-political and socio-cultural force.<42> Both Croce and Gramsci (though from different perspectives that lead to radically divergent conclusions) see Machiavelli as the thinker who first understood and who first theorized the necessity for a politics that would recognize the presence of the "mass" as a new factor in the power equation. Machiavelli understood that the nature of rule must be re-defined such that a new form of politics could be constructed, a politics that must now be founded upon the "people." Thus in Machiavelli, and in the world since the French Revolution, all forms of rule must now be based on "mass" politics, and power must now issue, or at least must seem or appear to issue, from the "people."

It is in this context that we are to understand the purpose and direction of Crocean thought. The philosophy of Croce posits a total and radical break between politics and ethics, between thought and action, and between philosophy and ideology.<43> The emergence of the masses in history--indeed, the very presence of the masses as a

significant factor in society--will transform philosophy into ideology, and "thinking" into "feeling" unless the distinction between politics and philosophy, and between the culture of those who think (philosophers and intellectuals) and the culture of the popular masses (the "simple people" who merely "feel") is maintained and preserved. Since, in the modern and post-feudal world, politics is necessarily involved with the life and activity of the people, the preservation of the integrity and purity of thought requires that political activity and philosophical activity be kept within separate domains. This is the basis and meaning that underlie the Crocean interpretation of Machiavelli as the thinker who was the first to discover the "autonomy of politics" and who attempted to formulate a theory of politics independent of ethics and philosophy. To Croce Machiavelli theorized a form of political knowledge that understood politics as pure power and technique, a knowledge which reduces itself to the elaboration of means and instruments by which power could be attained and maintained.<44> The autonomy of politics is thus a concept that posits an absolute disjunction between ethics and philosophy, on the one hand, and politics and power on the other. The latter are simply instrumentalities that are employed to pursue ends and goals posited by philosophy and ethics. In effect, if political knowledge--the knowledge of the Centaur who teaches the "methods and rules" of the lion and the fox--is a "value-free" methodology, and if politics

is a mere instrument and technique that addresses the proper use of "pure" power, then the political is a subordinate form of knowledge, and politics is a utilitarian and particularistic form of activity, whose nature and function are given by the necessity to maintain the strict distinction between philosophy and ideology, and between thought and socio-political activity.

But what does it mean to assert that these distinctions must be maintained in order to preserve the purity of thought from the "contamination" of action and from the "vulgarization" of the popular masses? What, further, does it mean to assert that politics is autonomous--that is, that politics is utility? These are precisely the questions that Gramsci addressed in his critique of Croce's interpretation of Machiavelli--or, which is the same thing, Croce's notion of the political. The concept of knowledge as "pure" thought, when it is linked (as it must be, given its premises) to the notion of the political as pure power and pure utility, postulates a radical distinction between action and thought, between the concrete and the universal, such that what is given by philosophy can only be realized in thought, and what is given by politics can never attain the level of philosophical "truth." What this means is that the particular will always remain immersed within its own concrete and "factually" given objectivity, and the universal will always remain an abstract entity which exists only through its contemplation by philosophy. If politics

is indeed utility, if political knowledge is reduced to a technique, then the notion of the political defined by a free association of equals--where the universal which is posited by ethics and philosophy is realized within the political community--becomes absurd and meaningless (or at best utopian), and society is reduced to a sphere dominated by the clash of particular interests and particular "utilities," a never-ending struggle for brute advantage, escape from which is possible only for those who can rise to the level of philosophy and to what Gramsci calls alta cultura (the culture of intellectuals and of the dominant groups).<45>

In Croce, the interpretation of Machiavellian thought as the "autonomy of politics"<46> reduces the political to the level of the particular and the level of the economic--what is more, the political can never escape this level, only philosophy and ethics can ascend to the level of the universal. But if this universality can be attained only through the preservation of the purity of thought, then this amounts to saying that the overwhelming majority of the people are condemned to the realm of the particular, subject to the clash and competition of economic and utilitarian necessity, while a select few--those groups defined by the alta cultura and whose rule Croce calls an "aristo-democracy"<47>--may enter the realm of the universal and of freedom.

Croce assumes a typical posture towards the nature and character of the popular masses--what he calls the "volgo."<48> Such an attitude exemplifies the liberal aversion to the emergence of the masses into history and into politics. The masses exist both as a weight and as a threat, and the political is seen as the method by which the "revolt of the masses" may be controlled and directed into channels that will not destroy the alta cultura of the ruling groups. The nature of the masses is such that they will never attain the level of moral and intellectual discourse necessary to transform them into a free and purposive subject whose activity in history will realize the universal realm of freedom given by ethics and philosophy. As a consequence, the purpose and function of the political is to render (or to keep) the masses passive and malleable; the political encompasses the means and methods through which the people are brought to accept the rule of the "aristo-democracy." Thus politics is the activity that maintains the distinction between those who rule and those who are ruled, an activity whose goal is to maintain the people in their subordinate condition as an amorphous collection of isolated individuals rooted within the realm of particular interests. And political knowledge, rather than teaching the people, and rather than uncovering the causes and conditions that maintain the distinction between ruler and ruled, alta cultura and cultura popolare, is an instrument employed to mask and to cover the reality of

power and of domination.

It is within this liberal problematic--the Crocean frame of reference that posits an absolute antithesis between knowledge and the people, between the freedom of chi sa (those who know) and the necessity of chi non sa (those who do not know)--that we should insert the Gramscian reading of Machiavelli's thought. Gramsci attempts to create a form of discourse and a form of knowledge whose very existence, and whose internal structure, are based upon the emergence of the masses, not as a mere aggregation or "volgo," but as a body capable of moving from the particular to the universal, from the realm of private interests to that of universal interest. The figure of Machiavelli assumes extreme importance in this attempt. Gramsci begins with the Crocean Machiavelli and re-translates him into the prototype of what he calls the "democratic philosopher," a thinker and a man of action who theorizes and formulates a new political knowledge and a theory of action whose foundation and whose object is the people as a collective and coherent entity.<49> The conception of Machiavelli as the figure who creates a knowledge whose very embodiment and realization is the people is a radical critique of Crocean and liberal thought. It is the negation of the Crocean Machiavelli, the "pure scientist" whose political knowledge is the science of a "pure politics" independent of all other spheres of thought and action. In Gramsci Machiavelli is not the "neutral" or "amoral" scientist, without passion and

without commitment. Machiavelli is the politico in atto--the active man of politics--an actor who takes part in the struggle to create a new people and a new politics. The knowledge of the Gramscian Machiavelli, therefore, is a knowledge that cannot exist without the people; it is a knowledge that is created and developed as it simultaneously creates and develops the subject--the popular masses--to which it is addressed.

To Croce Machiavelli expresses the separation between thought and action, philosophy and politics, knowledge and people, while to Gramsci Machiavelli is the figure who embodies the unity of thought and action, knowledge and people. It is precisely this synthesis between politics and philosophy, I will argue, that characterizes the Gramscian conception of the political as the activity that transcends the given reality--the divorce between alta cultura and cultura popolare, the people as the "volgo" who "do not know" and the educated rulers "who know"--and transforms this given into a new and superior reality. This conception of the political as the unity of knowledge and people which in their mutual interaction creates a conscious and free subject that will move from the particular to the universal is precisely what characterizes the notion of hegemony as a conception of the world that has become the life and activity of the people.

Notes

<1>See Giorgio Nardone, Il pensiero di Gramsci (Bari: De Donato, 1971), pp. 67-94; Carl Boggs, Gramsci's Marxism (London: Pluto Press, 1978), pp. 90-94, 100. And see Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1973), henceforth cited as SPN, pp. 264-265, 268-269.

<2>A.R. Buzzi, La teoria politica di Gramsci (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1973), pp. 6, 167-171. And see Gramsci, Il materialismo storico e la filosofia di Benedetto Croce (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), pp. 4, 29, 31. Also, Joseph V. Femia, Gramsci's Political Thought: Hegemony, Consciousness, and the Revolutionary Process (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), pp. 113-115, 120-125.

<3>See Gramsci, Il Grido del popolo, October 19, 1918, in Scritti giovanili, 1914-1918 (Torino: Einaudi, 1974). Also, see Leopold Labedz, ed. Revisionism: Essays in the History of Marxist Ideas (New York: Praeger, 1962); and George Lichtheim, Marxism: A Critical and Historical Study (New York: Praeger). And see John Merrington, "Theory and Practice in Gramsci's Marxism," in The Socialist Register (London: Merlin Press, 1968), pp. 145-176. In addition, see R. Mondolfo, Il pensiero politico nel Risorgimento italiano. Milano: Nuova Accademia, s.d., pp. 43-56, 123-144.

<4>Andrew Arato, "The Second International: A Reexamination," Telos 18 (Winter, 1973-74), pp. 2-52; and see Lucio Colletti, From Rousseau to Lenin, trans. John Merrington and Judith White (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972).

<5>See Gramsci's article, "The Revolution Against Capital," Avanti, December 24, 1917, in Antonio Gramsci: Selections from the Political Writings, 1910-1920, selected and ed. Quintin Hoare, trans. John Mathews (New York: International Publishers, 1977), pp. 34-37. And see Paul Piccone, "Gramsci's Marxism: Beyond Lenin and Togliatti," Theory and Society III, 4 (Winter, 1976), pp. 485-512; and Leonardo Salamini, "Gramsci and Marxist Sociology of Knowledge: An Analysis of Hegemony-Ideology-Knowledge," The Sociological Quarterly 15 (Summer, 1974), pp. 359-380. In addition, see John Cammett, Antonio Gramsci and the Origins of Italian Communism (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), pp. 65-95, 190-192; and Femia, op. cit., pp. 92-94; and Massimo Salvadori, Gramsci e il problema storico della democrazia (Torino: Einaudi, 1973), as well as Giacomo Graziano, "Alcune considerazioni intorno all'umanesimo di Gramsci," in Studi gramsciani, Atti del convegno tenuto a Roma nei giorni 11-13 gennaio 1958,

Istituto Gramsci (Roma: Riuniti, 1973), pp. 149-164, and R. Mondolfo, "Intorno a Gramsci e alla filosofia della prassi," in his Umanesimo di Marx (Torino: Einaudi, 1968), and finally, see Giuseppe Tamburrano, "Fasi di sviluppo del pensiero di Gramsci," in La città futura: Saggi sulla figura e sul pensiero di Antonio Gramsci, a cura di Alberto Caracciolo e Gianni Scalia (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1976), pp. 47-67 and Mario Tronti, "Tra materialismo dialettico e filosofia della prassi," in ibid., pp. 71-92.

<6>Studi gramsciani, op. cit.

<7>Gramsci e la cultura contemporanea, Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi gramsciani tenuto a Cagliari il 23-27 aprile 1967, a cura di Pietro Rossi (Roma: Riuniti, 1975), vols. I and II.

<8>La città futura: Saggi sulla figura e sul pensiero di Antonio Gramsci, op. cit.

<9>Massimo Salvadori, Il problema storico della democrazia, see the essay "Gramsci e il rapporto tra soggettività e oggettività nella prassi rivoluzionaria," pp. 208-261.

<10>Nardone, pp. 21-36, and 261-287.

<11>Cammett, see pp. 96-136.

<12>See Piccone, op. cit., and his "Gramsci's Hegelian Marxism," Political Theory 11 (Jan.-Feb., 1974), pp. 32-45, and his Italian Marxism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 111-126, 154-166, 165-200.

<13>Gramsci, Sotto la mole (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), pp. 145, 365. And see Benedetto Croce, Quaderni della critica, III, 8 (July, 1947), "Gramsci era uno dei nostri," p. 86, in which Croce argues that Gramsci shared with him a basically similar philosophical and intellectual orientation. See also Croce's Terze pagine sparse (Bari: Laterza, 1955), vol. II, pp. 252-253. And Walter L. Adamson, Hegemony and Revolution: A Study of Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Theory (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 26-36; Giancarlo Bergami, Il giovane Gramsci e il marxismo 1911-1918 (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1977); Leonardo Paggi, Gramsci e il moderno principe (Roma: Riuniti, 1970), pp. 15-16; Eugenio Garin, "Gramsci nella cultura italiana," in Studi gramsciani, pp. 398-399; Agazzi, "Filosofia della prassi e filosofia dello spirito," in La città futura, pp. 95-175. In addition, see Alastair Davidson, "Gramsci and Lenin, 1917-1922," in The Socialist Register (London: Merlin Press, 1974), pp. 125-150, see especially pp. 125-128, and his Antonio Gramsci: Towards an Intellectual Biography (London: Merlin

Press, 1977); and Guido Morpurgo-Tagliabue, "Gramsci tra Croce e Marx," Il Ponte IV, 5 (maggio, 1948), pp. 429-438; and Maurice A. Finocchiaro, "Gramsci's Crocean Marxism," Telos 41 (Fall, 1979), pp. 17-32.

<14>See Piccone, "Gramsci's Hegelian Marxism," op. cit., pp. 32-45; and Norberto Bobbio, "Gramsci e la concezione della societa' civile," in Gramsci e la cultura contemporanea, I, pp. 75-100; and Adamson, pp. 4-6; and Leonardo Paggi, "Gramsci's General Theory of Marxism," Telos, No. 33 (Fall, 1977), pp. 27-70.

<15>Giorgio Bonomi, Partito e rivoluzione in Gramsci (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1976), pp. 13-31, 33-50; and C.L. Ottolino, Concetti fondamentali nella teoria politica di Gramsci (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1956); and Palmiro Togliatti, Gramsci (Roma: Riuniti, 1967).

<16>See Cammett, pp. 41-58, and 209-212, 214-222; Buzzi, pp. 149-154. See also, Davidson, "Gramsci and Lenin, 1817-1922," pp. 140-145, and especially p. 141. And Gramsci, Scritti giovanili (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), pp. 271-273.

<17>Giuseppe Tamburrano, Antonio Gramsci: la vita, il pensiero, l'azione (Manduria: Lacaita, 1963); R. Orfei, Antonio Gramsci, coscienza critica del marxismo (Milano: Relazioni sociali, 1965); Nicola Matteucci, Antonio Gramsci e la filosofia della prassi (Milano: Giuffre', 1951); A. Garosci, Pensiero politico e storiografia moderna (Pisa: Nistri-Lischi, 1954), pp. 193-257. In addition, see Tamburrano's "Gramsci e l'egemonia del proletariato," in Studi gramsciani, pp. 277-286, and his "Fasi di sviluppo nel pensiero di Gramsci," in La citta' futura, pp. 117-136, and see p. 131; and Serafino Canbareri, "Il concetto di egemonia nel pensiero di Gramsci," in Studi gramsciani, pp. 87-94.

<18>see Neil McInnes, "From Marx to Marcuse," Survey XVI, 1 (1971), pp. 147-147; and see Adamson, pp. 202-207. And Leonardo Salamini, "Gramsci and Marxist Sociology of Knowledge: An Analysis of Hegemony-Ideology-Knowledge," pp. 359-380.

<19>Palmiro Togliatti, Gramsci (Roma: Riuniti, 1967); and Gian Carlo Jocteau, Leggere Gramsci (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1975); and see also Eric J. Hobsbawm, "The Great Gramsci," The New York Review of Books, 4 April 1974, pp. 39-41.

<20>Paolo Spriano, Storia del partito comunista italiano (Torino: Einaudi, 1967), vol. I.

<21>Maria Antonietta Macciocchi, Per Gramsci (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1974).

<22>Christine Buci-Glucksmann, Gramsci et l'Etat: pour une theorie materialiste de la philosophie (Paris: Fayard, 1975).

<23>Perry Anderson, "The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci," New Left Review 100 (Nov. 1976-Jan.1977), pp. 5-78.

<24>See Cammett, pp. 196-197. But see Gwyn A. Williams, "The Concept of 'Egemonia' in the Thought of Antonio Gramsci: Some Notes on Interpretation," Journal of the History of Ideas XXI, 4 (Oct.-Dec., 1960), pp. 586-599, and see pp. 588-589.

<25>Giorgio Nardone. Il pensiero di Gramsci.

<26>H. Stuart Hughes, Consciousness and Society: the Reorientation of European Social Thought 1890-1930 (New York: Vintage books, 1961), pp. 96-104.

<27>George Lichtheim, Marxism: A Historical and Critical Study (New York: Praeger, 1970), pp. 368-369.

<28>Cammett, pp. 209-211; Nardone, pp. 20-24; Adamson, pp. 47, 184, 203-204; Femia, pp. 133-134, 254-256; Merrington, pp. 152-153; Eugenio Garin, "Gramsci nella cultura italiana (Appunti)," in Studi gramsciani, pp. 9-10, and his "Gramsci nella cultura italiana," in ibid., pp. 404-405, 413-416. And see Buzzi, pp. 149-165; Matteucci, Antonio Gramsci e la filosofia della prassi, pp. 56-57; and Boggs, pp. 106-109.

<29>See Boggs, pp. 163-165; Adamson, pp. 202-228; Anderson, pp. 67-72; Salvadori; and Togliatti, "Gramsci e il leninismo," in Studi gramsciani pp. 419-444.

<30>See Lichtheim, op. cit.; and H. Stuart Hughes, op. cit.

<31>See the essays by Togliatti in Studi gramsciani; and see Ernesto Ragionieri, "Gramsci e il dibattito teorico nel movimento operaio internazionale," in Gramsci e la cultura contemporanea, pp. 101-147; and Bonomi. op. cit.

<32>See Boggs, Gramsci's Marxism, (London: Pluto Press, 1978), pp. 11-20; and Nicola Matteucci, "Partito e Consigli di fabbrica nel pensiero di Gramsci," Il Mulino (1955), pp. 350-359. Also, see Adamson, pp. 229-246, and pp. 237-242; Femia, pp. 245-250; and Davidson, Antonio Gramsci, pp. 197-203.

<33>Alastair B. Davidson, "Gramsci and Reading Machiavelli," Science and Society 37, 1 (Spring, 1973), pp. 56-80; Buzzi, pp. 149-165; Gennaro Sasso, "Antonio Gramsci, interprete di Machiavelli," Lo spettatore italiano III, 4 (aprile, 1950), pp. 91-93. In addition, see Nicola Matteucci, Antonio Gramsci e la filosofia della prassi (Milano: Giuffrè, 1951), pp. 58-65; and Saveria Chemotti, Umanesimo, Rinascimento, Machiavelli nella critica gramsciana (Roma: Bulzoni, 1975), pp. 87-110; and Leonardo Paggi, "Machiavelli e Gramsci," Studi storici X, 4 (1969), pp. 856-866.

<34>Adamson, pp. 170-179; Williams, pp. 586-599; Femia, pp. 22-60; Tamburrano, Antonio Gramsci: la vita, il pensiero, l'azione, pp. 266-267; Cammett, pp. 204-206; Bobbio, "Gramsci e la concezione della società civile," in Gramsci e la cultura contemporanea, I, pp. 75-100; Garin, "Politica e cultura in Gramsci (il problema degli intellettuali)," in Ibid., pp. 37-74; Buzzi, pp. 309-323; Boggs, pp. 37-42. But see H. Stuart Hughes, pp. 101-102.

<35>On this point, the sources and commentators, though engaged in different intellectual and theoretical endeavors, and though departing from different political and philosophical orientations, are in substantial agreement. See Buzzi, pp. 172-178; Nardone, pp. 11-36; Bonomi, pp. 13-31; Agazzi, in La città futura, pp. 104-107; and Carlo Cicerchia, "Il rapporto col leninismo e il problema della rivoluzione italiana," in La città futura, pp. 19-43.

<36>Gramsci, Lettere dal carcere (Torino: Einaudi, 1955), pp. 132, 186, 466.

<37>Gramsci, Sotto la mole (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), pp. 145, 365; Scritti giovanili (Torino: Einaudi, 1974); and Selections from Political Writings 1921-1926, trans. and ed. Quintin Hoare (New York: International Publishers, 1978), pp. 447-462; and see MS, pp. 199-200. See note 1, chapter II, below.

<38>Garin, "Gramsci nella cultura italiana," in Studi gramsciani, pp. 395-418, and his "Antonio Gramsci nella cultura italiana (Appunti)," in ibid., pp. 6-11; Boggs, pp. 43-44; Nardone, pp. 261-287; and H. Stuart Hughes, pp. 103-104.

<39>See Garin, and Piccone, Italian Marxism, pp. 194-197; Buzzi, pp. 323-335; M. Abbate, La filosofia di Benedetto Croce e la crisi della società italiana (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), pp. 8-13; Agazzi, in La città futura. And see Gramsci, Lettere dal carcere, pp. 132, 192. In addition, see Edmund E. Jacobitti, "Labriola, Croce, and Italian Marxism 1895-1910," Journal of the History of Ideas XXXVI, 2 (April-May, 1975), p. 298; and Salamini, pp.

364-367; and Finocchiaro, "Gramsci's Crocean Marxism," op. cit.; as well as Massimo Salvadori, Gramsci e il problema storico della democrazia, pp. 259-260.

<40>Benedetto Croce, Etica e politica (Bari: Laterza, 1931), see "Machiavelli e Vico. La politica e l'etica," pp. 251-255; and "Cio' che il Machiavelli fece e cio' che lascio' fare," in Terze pagine sparse (Bari: Laterza, 1955), vol. I, pp. 217-218, as well as "Teoria e politica," in Terze pagine sparse (Bari: Laterza, 1955), vol. II, pp. 129-140, and "Un giuoco che ormai dura troppo," in ibid., pp. 252-253; "Il Machiavelli volta al morale," in Conversazioni critiche (Bari: Laterza, 1951), vol. IV, pp. 14-15, and "Un detto di Machiavelli," in Ibid., pp. 17-20; and "La quistione del Machiavelli," in Indagini su Hegel e schiarimenti filosofici (Bari: Laterza, 1952), pp. 164-176; "Moralita' del Machiavelli," in Nuove pagine sparse (Napoli: Ricciardi, 1949), vol. I, pp. 238-239.

<41>Garin, "Gramsci nella cultura italiana," in Studi gramsciani, pp. 416-418; Buzzi, pp. 334-335. Also, see Felice Alderisio, "Ripresa machiavelliana. Considerazioni critiche sulle idee di A. Gramsci, di B. Croce, e di L. Russo intorno a Machiavelli," Annali dell'Istituto universitario di Magistero di Salerno, I, (1949-1950), pp. 231-246, and see pp. 205-206, in which Alderisio asserts that Gramsci's notes on Machiavelli added nothing new, original, or substantial to Machiavelli studies. See Croce, "Un giuoco che ormai dura troppo," in Terze pagine sparse, II, pp. 252-253.

<42>Nardone, p. 21. And see Sheldon S. Wolin, Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960), pp. 228-235; and J.G.A. Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 181-182, 212-213. And see Croce, Etica e politica, pp. 224-227.

<43>See Croce's Etica e politica; and his My Philosophy: Essays on the Moral and Political Problems of our Time, selected by R. Klibansky, trans. E.F. Carritt (New York: Collier Books, 1962); and his History as the Story of Liberty, trans. Sylvia Sprigge (Chicago: Gateway Editions, 1970); and see Wilden Carr, The Philosophy of Benedetto Croce (New York: Russell and Russell, 1969). See also Benedetto Croce, Philosophy, Poetry, History: An Anthology of Essays, trans. with an introduction by Cecil Sprigge (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), the Introduction by Sprigge, pp. ix-lxx.

<44>Croce, "Machiavelli e Vico," in Etica e politica, pp. 250-256.

<45>Ibid., p. 251.

<46>Croce, My Philosophy, p. 93.

<47>Croce, Etica e politica, passim. And My Philosophy, the section entitled "Philosophy of Politics," and Terze pagine sparse, passim.

<48>Gramsci, Gli intellettuali e l'organizzazione della cultura (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), pp. 3-19, 21-27. And Selections from the Prison Notebooks, pp. 5-23, 323-336, 389-399.

<49>Gramsci, MS, p. 27; SPN, p. 350.

Chapter II

Croce represents to Gramsci both the apex and the summation of liberal and bourgeois thought in Italy. Such thought posits a radical and total opposition between philosophy and action, "thinking" and "feeling," and culture and politics--an opposition which is translated within socio-political reality and within history into the opposition between the culture of those who rule (alta cultura) and the culture of those who are ruled (cultura popolare).^{<1>} In Croce these distinctions are expressed and elaborated by means of a speculative and metaphysical system that posits philosophy as the universal realm of "truth" whose "purity" and integrity would be violated and compromised were such a realm of pure thought to come into a close and intimate contact with the world of action and socio-political struggle. Gramsci sees Croce as the organizer and proliferator of a highly elaborate and highly complex philosophical system whose political and social expression assumes a thorough-going antipathy towards political action on the part of the popular masses, and whose cultural and intellectual basis reveals a profound antipathy towards the cultura popolare of the masses. In both instances, Crocean thought posits the necessity for the exclusion of the people--that is, the lower classes--from the cultural and political life of the society. To Croce, and to most liberals of the late nineteenth and early to middle twentieth centuries, the subordination and passivity

of the masses are both necessary and desirable.<2>

What to Gramsci is the central reality of history and politics of modern Italy--the emergence of the masses and their exclusion from the life of the nation such that a "national-popular"<3> culture and politics failed to emerge--is seen by Croce as a non-problem that "true" philosophy and "high" culture cannot possibly recognize, let alone address. Gramsci, however, points out that the very fact that Crocean thought defines the people out of existence is in itself a telling indication that such a system is both cause and product of the liberal-bourgeois distinction between knowledge and practice, culture and people. The attempt to deny the masses, and their role in politics and history, is itself a revelation that the masses cannot any longer be denied. The denial itself is an affirmation that in the modern world--especially after the French and American Revolutions--the popular masses emerged as a social and political factor whose presence must be addressed. This affirmation of the importance of the masses, and the necessity for their participation in history and in politics, are implicit in the very distinction that Croce makes between alta cultura and cultura popolare, and between philosophy and practical action in society. This system would be rendered meaningless, and its construction would not have been attempted, without the recognition of the role the masses have come to assume.

The assertion that the masses are not able to attain the level of philosophy and thought achieved by the creators of culture and knowledge (intellectuals), and the notion that any connection of philosophy to the people will transform the former into "opinion" and "error," are transposed by Gramsci into a critical inquiry into the nature of philosophical thought, where he attempts to describe the social origins and the social character that such assertions presuppose.<4> If popular thought and mass culture are inherently "political" and ideological, then the thought of the intellectuals and the culture of the "educated" are similarly political and ideological--indeed, doubly so, for the latter deny to themselves such a character while attributing it to the thought and culture of the people. The distinction between theory and practice, thought and action, that is presupposed and required by Crocean philosophy, is a political and ideological position, one that tends towards the maintenance and preservation of the real and concrete contradiction between the subordinate popular masses and the dominant groups.

Croce's position on the relation between knowledge and action, philosophy and politics, and culture and people, is concisely summarized in a review he wrote on Il Risorgimento, a selection of Gramsci's prison notes published twelve years after Gramsci's death. In this review Croce says: "It is both wearisome and annoying to listen to infinite restatements of the formula of the young

Marx, one of several rash formulas both bizarre and adventurous that were improvised during the years 1840 and 1848, a period that saw the burning out [estinguisce] of the great philosophical blaze which for about a century or so brought from Germany light and heat to the human mind, and which was followed by the corrupt philosophy characterized by a practical, political, and instrumental orientation [la corrotta filosofia di uso pratico e politico], a philosophy accepted and welcomed by amateurs but which disgusts and repulses all those who respect the dignity of thought...."<5> Here we see the specifically Crocean attitude to Marx and his enterprise, one closely related to his concepts of philosophy and culture. Croce continues in the same review with a more specific reference to Gramsci and to his notion of hegemony as the elaboration within the popular masses of a coherent and autonomous structure of thought: "...Gramsci, consistent with the premises from which he started, confused and mistook for philosophy and for culture the project he had long worked for: the formation in Italy of a party for which he already felt himself responsible as leader." And Croce, "consistent with his own premises" that lead him to posit an antinomy between politics and philosophy, politics and culture--concludes his review with a formulation that identifies and focusses to a sharp point the major difference between liberal thought and the Marxian thought of Gramsci: "Gramsci, therefore, is totus politicus, and not philosophus: such was his real and

effective ideal--an ideal which was given the 'bourgeois' name of 'philosophy' and 'culture.'" (Terze pagine sparse, 138-139).<6>

Croce identifies "the formula of the young Marx" with the "corrupt philosophy" that asserts the necessity of praxis, that from his stand-point asserts the primacy of action over thought. The date 1840-1848 is significant. For the rise of such a philosophy is paralleled in Croce's mind by the fall of German philosophy (Kantian and Hegelian idealism) during a period of intense revolutionary and mass activity. The fall of German philosophy is linked to the rise of popular and mass movements that occurred throughout the European continent: from the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies to Milan to Paris to the German states.<7> The term improvviste ("improvised") is revealing, for it suggests that such a "corrupt philosophy" emerged not full-blown from Zeus' head, like Athena, but rather from the on-going, practical struggles that Europe experienced during that time--struggles and conflicts that gave birth to a form of thought and a conception of the world that offend the "dignity of thought." The "great blaze" of German philosophy was extinguished by the irruption and the intervention of the masses into the socio-political arena, an intervention which to Croce is fundamentally and inherently destructive of all thought and all philosophy. This review of Gramsci's Il Risorgimento, rather than attempting to debate and rebut the Gramscian analysis of the Risorgimento as a liberal and

bourgeois movement that excluded the workers and peasants and which rejected their participation in the social and political life of the newly-created state, accepts the underlying position put forth by such a critique by restating the thesis that posits a radical and irreconcilable opposition between philosophy and culture on the one hand, and politics and practical activity on the other. Croce reiterates his fundamental antipathy towards any kind of democratic mass movement: the ideas and concepts that emerge from this movement and that give it form and direction are to Croce mere "corruptions" from which philosophy, and those who respect it, will maintain a safe and antiseptic distance. Politics is "passion" and "feeling," not thought and philosophy, and the masses are naturally and intrinsically unable to arrive at the kind of cultural and philosophical activity necessary for thinking.<8>

It is important to point out that Croce is reversing the Marxian formulation that the victory of the proletariat is simultaneously the realization and concretization of classical German philosophy.<9> What Hegel had achieved in thought, Marx asserted, could only be achieved socially and materially through an understanding of social forces in history and through the political and ideological organization that such an understanding makes possible. Such a consciousness of society and history is but the practical and concrete expression of a historical subject

whose social and political condition gave rise to that very consciousness: thus the subject that is rooted materially within the structure of society and the consciousness that is the thought and the memory of this subject together form a unity where objective conditions and subjective actor are inextricably interwoven in such a way that the internal movement between object and subject creates new forms of consciousness, new forms of thought, and the opposition between object and subject is resolved through praxis and through critical activity. To Marx philosophy is realized when the conditions that give rise to the subject whose consciousness is both the product and the negation of these conditions are transcended by the political and practical activity that the very consciousness of this subject reveals.<10> The proletariat is such a subject which contains within its practical life the seeds of a genuine universality, where the development of the proletariat as a universal class becomes equivalent to the development of reason and philosophy. The victory of the proletariat--that is, the proletarian revolution--is the realization of philosophy in action, and not merely in thought.

Croce attacks this formulation and asserts that the development of the proletariat--or of the masses in general--represents the fall and the "corruption" of philosophy, and not its realization. What Gramsci identifies as the period of the birth of the "philosophy of praxis"--that is, Marxian theory--the philosophy that is

linked to the emergence of the masses as a political force, is identified by Croce as the period that marks the beginning of the degeneration of philosophy, the death of thought and of the dignity of thought--the rise of ideology, which is the corrupt philosophy. Yet Croce fails to notice, in the above quoted passage and in his historical works, the influence and effect the French Revolution and Napoleon wielded on German philosophy, an influence that both the young Hegel and Marx recognized.<11>

Croce accuses Gramsci of confusing philosophy and culture with politics, with the practical and concrete activity that goes into the founding of a political party or a political organization.<12> The Gramscian enterprise, which is the formation and development of a mass social movement, and the creation of a concrete historical subject capable of expressing and representing the philosophy of praxis in practice, is viewed by Croce as anti-philosophy and anti-culture. What to Croce signaled the death of philosophy to Gramsci represented the beginning of the realization of philosophy. Thus Croce in a review of Gramsci's Gli intellettuali e l'organizzazione della cultura in 1949: "It is a cause of wonderment that a man of such gravity and nobility as Gramsci let himself be lured by sophisms to such an extent that he concealed [velare] to himself the evidence [of the truth] which his mind and experience must have discerned. Because in the striving towards a truth, there is within the very nature of this act

a necessary detachment from all other human interests, so that only the interest for the truth itself remains the dominant and ruling consideration of the mind. Even the smallest truth is the natural outcome of this detachment and over-coming. And if an other and different interest prevails, either mediately or immediately, thought--do you know what happens to it [sapete che cosa fa]?--it does not think." (Terze ecc., 137-138)<13> Here we find Croce's response to the Gramscian formulation that the relation between intellectuals and culture is not an immediate, but rather a mediated one (Int, 9)<14>--that is, intellectual and cultural activity is not socially and politically autonomous. Intellectuals are a social group that organize and elaborate culture in its widest sense, and the function of intellectuals is precisely to formulate and proliferate a culture and a system of thinking and valuing throughout society.

Croce believes that "l'interesse per la verita'" presupposes and demands a "detachment and separation [distacco] from all other human interests"--by which he means social, economic, and political interests. Such a distacco is necessary to the very act of thinking, for without it there is no thought, no thinking, and no verita'. But the problem with such a way of posing the question, as Gramsci points out,<15> is that the subject that thinks, that performs the "act of thinking," is "thought" itself: "Il pensiero pensa"--not man or social men rooted within

space and time. Thus what Croce creates is a disembodied subject abstracted and reduced to pensiero and to the activity of the individual philosopher isolated and divorced from "all other interests." The verita' that Croce believes is the object of thought requires the distacco from social and historical reality; yet to Gramsci such a verita' is the product and object of a thought which emerges from the very social reality that it expresses and attempts to grasp. It is this dialectic between social reality and thought that to Croce has led to the rise of "la corrotta filosofia di uso pratico e politico."

It is interesting to note that both Gramsci and Croce accuse one another of each engaging in a process of velare. Gramsci is attempting to construct a political and social knowledge that will svelare (uncover or reveal) the ideological and political character of the ideal activity of pensiero. On the other hand, Croce says that Gramsci has become ensnared by sofismi--i.e., the "corrupt philosophy"--"to such an extent that he has concealed within himself the evidence" that shows thought must be autonomous from the social and the political. The difference in each accusation lies in the fact that Gramsci criticizes Crocean thought because it sees itself as "true philosophy" while it functions to mask socio-political interests: the velare refers to social and historical reality. In the second case Croce identifies Gramsci's error within Gramsci himself, such that this self-deception is one which is completely

isolated from external reality, and the "veiling" occurs within Gramsci's own mind. Thus the critiques that each launches against the other are faithful to their respective methods: the first to discover ways by which the distacco between intellectuals and masses may be over-come, the second to preserve the integrity and the "dignity" of thought, which in practice requires the subordination of the masses to the intellectuals.<16>

This distinction in the identification of precisely what is being veiled and how it is being veiled--the method is also a means of evaluating the distance between the two thinkers, for velare to Gramsci is the separation of pensiero from reality, while in Croce velare means the interpenetration of the two--corresponds to the differences the two have regarding their notions of "reality" and "truth." Gramsci often employs the term realta' effettiva to emphasize the transformative effects of human action on socio-political and historical reality, a term which is closely related to Machiavelli's notion of verita' effettuale, a term that describes a constantly changing reality perceived as the product of political action (of the "uomini virtuosi").<17> Both Gramsci and Machiavelli use their respective terms as critical theoretical tools to unmask and to uncover a "truth" and a "reality" which are not simply in "error," but rather which are products of a belief system and a moral-intellectual construction whose function within this verita' effettuale is to veil this very

reality, so that the accepted and perceived reality becomes a function of these systems of thought. We should recall what Croce said of Gramsci, that he "confondeva con la filosofia e con la cultura l'opera" to establish in Italy "un partito del quale gia' si sentiva capo e responsabile." Gramsci's self-delusion lies in the fact that he attempted to create within history and society a social and political movement whose activity and practice would change the existing structure of society. As a political actor in contact with the workers and peasants, therefore, Gramsci and his movement could not attain the realm where "thought thinks" and "truth" dwells. Such an engagement, this very immersion in the material world of the "flesh," cannot but be the degeneration of thought and culture. It would seem that to Croce the "word" cannot become flesh and simultaneously retain its integrity as the logos. Nor, for that matter, can the Spirit recognize itself in the world, let alone incarnate itself in a man on horseback. Croce's creator spiritus is an intellectual and mental entity, whose "march" in history takes place within the heads of intellectuals,<18> and the veritas to which it aspires and attains is simply the spiritus regarding its own reflection as in a mirror. It is the self-contemplation of the mind thinking as pure thought.<19> But to Gramsci such a position substitutes the ideal and "disinterested" category of Truth for the material and historical realta' effettiva and verita' effettuale.

Thus Croce on Gramsci: totus politicus, and not philosophus, an antinomy that Gramsci rejects and synthesizes into the concept of egemonia. Hegemony is the formulation and elaboration of a conception of the world that has been transformed into the accepted and "normal" ensemble of ideas and beliefs that interpret and define the world. Such a process is immediately political, for such a transformation cannot be accomplished without the people viewed as a social force. Hegemony is thus, in a very real and concrete sense, the moment of philosophy as politics, and the moment of politics as philosophy. In Gramsci's words, "Ideologies...are the 'true' philosophy, because they are those philosophical 'vulgarizations' that bring the masses to concrete action and to the transformation of reality. That is, they are the mass and popular aspect of every philosophical conception, which in a 'philosopher' assumes the character of a universal abstraction outside of time and space, a character specifically literary and anti-historical in origin..."(MS, 217-18)<20> And if this is the case, if hegemony is constituted by the unity of politics and philosophy, then it must also follow that hegemony implies the unity of philosophy and history, for "concrete action" and the "transformation of reality" (which are the object of politics) presuppose a social reality and a conception of the world which are anchored within "time and space." But whereas to Croce history is the history of philosophy (the ethico-political), to Gramsci history is the

history of egemonia--that is, the history of the unity of philosophy and politics, thought and action.

The unity of philosophy and history (or what Gramsci calls "absolute historicism")<21> is made concrete hic et nunc through political action, where "political" is here understood in its "integral" (and classical)<22> sense of the unity of theory and practice. The Crocean totus politicus, therefore, is re-translated into the Gramscian political subject constituted as the totality of memory, philosophy, and action. The Gramscian totus politicus may be compared to the notion of the politikos in Greek politics where the distinction between philosopher and statesman had not yet attained prevalence, nor yet desired as a positive result. The classical politikos represents the philosopher-actor that elaborates the socio-political institutions and the moral-intellectual practices of the city, where he incarnates the moral and political knowledge of the conditions necessary not just for life but for the good life.<23> It is this politicus that Gramsci has in mind in his critique of Croce and his idealist philosophy. As Gramsci often points out,<24> the foundation of a state is in itself a philosophical action. For if, as Croce would have it, the state should be seen as an ethico-political entity, then the "work" necessary for its coming to be is not simply "practical," nor is it entirely the result of the activity of the Spirit, but is rather the result of the formation and elaboration of a conception of the world which

has become "life," which has become the "practice" of the people, so that this life and this practice are the concrete, specific expression of the moral and intellectual totality which it incarnates.<25>

To Gramsci il politico is an actor who "philosophizes" to the extent that he organizes and forms the disparate impressions of reality into a unified and stable totality--this totality understood as being in a dynamic and active relation to the world. In the most fundamental sense il politico is the actor whose reality is being created constantly in the very process of acting, where this acting is itself a unity of thought and practice.<26> Thus politicus + philosophus = the political subject, which in its active engagement with the world founds and creates a realta' effettiva, where this reality is constituted not by discrete elements of thought and action, philosophy and politics mechanically related to each other, but by the active movement of thought and action, so that reality is constitutive of thought, and thought is inherent in the action that constitutes reality. Hegemony thus addresses the problem posed by the relation between politics and philosophy, a relation necessary to the formation and development of a historical and political subject. And, moreover, to address such a problem is at the same time to address the antinomies that obtain between culture/intellectuals and the people.<27> This is the sense of the proposition (MS, 217)<28> that the German proletariat

is heir to classical German philosophy; and this, too, is the problematic which is raised by the Eleventh Thesis on Feuerbach--that philosophers have only interpreted the world differently, but the point is to change it.<29> The interpretation of the world--which is a function of the prevailing conception of the world--and the transformation of the world presuppose each other and in their mutual interaction resolve themselves into historical praxis, into political action "in space and time." What this means is that the transformation of reality is a historical process which engages the political subject.

Therefore "il politico" is necessarily "an historian...not only in the sense that he makes history [fa la storia], but also in the sense that he interprets the past by acting in the present [operando nel presente]" so that "the historian" is also "a political actor [un politico] and in this sense...history is always contemporary history--that is, politics." Such a formulation identifies history with politics and therefore ideology with philosophy, whose combined elements, of course, constitute a conception of the world as a totality.(MS,218)<30> If the politico (the historical subject) "fa la storia" then he is also filosofo for "by acting in the present he interprets the past." The interpretation of the past (as well as the present) and the acting in the present, though it is always possible to differentiate them analytically and abstractly, are necessary moments or aspects of one and the same "event"

or phenomenon. These two moments together constitute the event as a total and concrete "act," which is in itself an aspect of the realta' effettiva. Fare la storia is operando nel presente, and this operando is simultaneously interpretando il passato (interpreting the past)--all of which converge to create the Gramscian politica. History and philosophy, politics and history, philosophy and politics, acting and interpreting: Gramsci stresses the profound and unbreakable relation (MS,216)<31> between these apparently opposite moments of one concrete and unified totality. In effect, fare la storia is the transformation of the world, an activity that assumes the existence of a historical subject possessed of a conscious and purposive political will, which in its consciousness acts in the world, and which in its activity is conscious of itself in the world.

As Gramsci writes, "The active man of politics [politico in atto] is a creator, an innovator [suscitatore]. But he neither creates from nothing nor does he move in the turbid void of his own particular desires and dreams. He bases himself on the effective reality, but what is this effective reality? Is it something static and immobile, or is it not rather a relation of forces in continuous movement and change of equilibrium? To apply one's will to the creation of a new equilibrium among the forces which really exist and are operative...one moves within the terrain of effective reality...in order to dominate and transcend

it..."(NM, 39)<32> This is a task that requires a new subject and a new notion of politics. Politica is storia in atto and filosofia in atto.<33> Such a notion represents in real and concrete terms the essential and defining characteristics of what Gramsci calls the philosophy of praxis. The philosophy of praxis is "absolute historicism" in the above sense of the unity of acting in the present and of interpreting the past.<34> The formulation posits an absolute and total identity between acting and interpreting: thus philosophy = history = politics. As a consequence, "tutto e' politica" (everything is politics)(NM),<35> where politics is now understood as the action which springs from the unity of theory and practice in order to "dominate and transcend" the realta' effettuale. And, since this reality is in "continual movement," politics is the activity by which reality is continually created and re-created. The Gramscian concept of the political implies an innovative, activist, and "prefigurative" orientation towards the world and towards history.<36> To the extent that action is purposive and directed towards an end that is anticipated but not yet in existence, such action presupposes and embodies "in concretezza" philosophy and thought. Furthermore, to the extent that what is anticipated and made purposive by thought and philosophy is not yet a reality--to the extent that what ought to be has not yet been transformed into what is--then philosophy, in order to become realta' effettuale, in order to "creare il

reale,"<37> must translate itself into action and become politica. The political in Gramsci therefore assumes a purposive and prefigurative character (which is related to the notion of egemonia). And to the extent that such a prefiguration necessitates the engagement of the conscious will within a world-in-becoming, the political is an innovating and creative form of activity. (All this, however, does not deny the "restorative" and "conserving" forms of historical action: the point is that politica assumes within its praxis the dyads history/ philosophy, philosophy/politics, and politics/history; what is not politica Gramsci calls diplomazia, a form of political action that leads to the preservation, as opposed to the transformation, of the historical structure of forces).<38>

"To apply one's will" "to forces really existing and that are operative" is to "operate and act in the present," which is simultaneously "to interpret the past"--all of which is concretely embodied in the fare la storia. Thus the equation: politico in atto = politicus + philosophus. The transformation of the world is in itself a philosophical and moral act in that it presupposes a coherent and rational prefiguration of an "ought to be" rooted within a material and concrete "is" of the present and the past. Moreover, to interpret the world differently--that is, to present a conception and view of the world in opposition to the prevailing and established ones--is to discover in nuce within the existing reality the germs and seeds, "forze

realmente esistenti ed operanti," whose growth and development will lead to the over-coming of the present, and to the creation of a new structure of forces and a new reality.

The Gramscian concept of politica brings us back full swing to the problem posed by the emergence in history of the people. Gramsci poses this problem in terms of his concept of riforma morale e intellettuale (moral and intellectual reform).^{<39>} Riforma is directly related to egemonia and to the political viewed in the dual sense discussed above: as moral and intellectual activity (philosophy), and as practical and concrete engagement in society and in history (politics). The philosophy of praxis--Marxism--is envisioned in terms of a modern and popular reform of the totality of socio-cultural and socio-political relations. More particularly, the philosophy of praxis is the conception of the world that expresses the life and experience of the subordinate groups in society. The subordination of the workers and peasants is due to their inability to develop a type of intellectual and a type of culture independent from those of the ruling groups. Intellectual and moral reform is the movement of the popular masses towards the creation of such an intellectual and such a culture. Such a development is necessary to the masses if they are to achieve a conception of the world that is not a mere reflection of, and based upon, the ideas and values of the dominant groups.

Riforma is thus the concrete process that connects politics and culture, alta cultura and cultura popolare, people and intellectuals. It is the concrete, practical mediation that transforms the opposition between politics and philosophy, history and thought, into a socio-political and socio-cultural subject materially and historically embodied in a mass movement guided and possessed by a collective moral-intellectual will. The philosophy of praxis is the animating and directing conception of the world that gives the emergence of the masses political and moral force. Philosophy and movement together are seen by Gramsci as the cumulative result of a lengthy and difficult process of reform, both in theory and in practice. The origins of such a reforming process Gramsci locates in the Machiavellian enterprise in Italy and in the Lutheran Reformation in Germany, and he sees it progress through the religious Reformation throughout northern Europe, the later Enlightenment and Revolution in France, up through classical German philosophy, and finally reaching its theoretical and practical synthesis in Marx.<40>

As Gramsci writes, "The philosophy of praxis presupposes all of this cultural past--the Renaissance and the Reformation, German philosophy and the French Revolution, Calvinism and English classical economics, laic liberalism and the historicism which is the base of the entire modern conception of life." (MS, 86)<41> It is the "fulfillment" of this process of cultural, moral, and

intellectual reform, which it perceives and embodies dialectically in the relation and in the opposition between cultura popolare and alta cultura. (MS, 86-87) <42> Thus the philosophy of praxis is the thought of the popular masses. As such it is a cultural and moral movement directed towards the achievement and realization of two related ends: to launch a critical attack on the established modern conception of the world--that is, on those ideologies and thought systems "piu' raffinate" (MS, 84) <43> that express the most sophisticated and complex interpretations and representations of the modern world (in fact, on the liberal-bourgeois alta cultura, of which, as we have seen, Gramsci sees Croce as the most important and the most acute philosopher.) Such a critique is necessary in order to lay the groundwork for the task of constructing and developing a group of intellectuals that are independent both of the established system of thought and values, and also of the established power structure around which the "reigning" and "magisterial" intellectuals of the Crocean type revolve and receive their gravitational balance. <44> Secondly, and simultaneously with the the critique of modern thought and the unveiling of the social and political bases of the "pure intellectuals," <45> the philosophy of praxis is to assume the political and cultural education of the masses. Both of these projects presuppose and imply each other. To the extent that the masses are educated, to that extent will the popular masses create an independent culture and an

independent view of the world in opposition to the existing ones and thus be able to eventually replace the alta cultura of the established intellectuals by a new and different one. To the extent that the people are educated--to the extent that the cultura popolare assumes an autonomous and self-directing character--to that extent will they elaborate and organize a type of intellectual internal to themselves, and an intellectual and cultural apparatus whose socio-political activity is the continual and on-going elaboration and transformation of the culture and thought of a subordinate group into a system of thought and a conception of the world which become increasingly ruling and hegemonic. The process by which a subject and derivative system of thought possessed by a subordinate group becomes autonomous and innovating is precisely the process by which such a system is transformed into a hegemonic conception of the world, a system of thinking and interpretation that permeates throughout society and permeates all areas of social, economic, and political life.

What this means is that the "andare al popolo" (going to the people) (MS, 8, 222)<46> is viewed by Gramsci as a pedagogic and educational relation between the philosophy of praxis and the cultura popolare of the peasants and workers. Such a relationship, however, should not be conceived in terms of what Gramsci calls an abstract and "strictly scholastic" (MS, 26)<47> posture. The relationship "between teacher and student is an active relation, reciprocal, and

thus every teacher is always a student and every student is always a teacher [my italics]." (MS, 26)<48> This formulation is a commentary on the Marxian thesis in "Feuerbach," where Marx says that the educator himself must be educated. (SPN, 350, note)<49> Such a problematic suggests that the relation between the popular masses and the philosophy of praxis, between the intellectual that arises and is individuated from within the social and cultural matrix that locates the masses in time and in space, and the masses whose thought and culture he expresses and reflects, is inherently a hegemonic, and consequently, political relationship. "Every relationship of 'hegemony' is necessarily an educational relationship," and "every educational relationship is a political relationship." (MS, 26)<50> The relationship is political and hegemonic not simply because the teacher-student relation is reciprocal and mutually interacting, but also because each emerges from, and gives rise to, the other, and because each is informed by the interests and culture of the other. The environment (constituted by the life and activity of the masses) is the teacher of the educator philosopher. (MS, 26)<51> Gramsci envisions a new type of intellectual and a new type of philosopher: a "'democratic philosopher'--that is, a philosopher who is convinced that his personality is not limited to himself as a physical individual, but is rather an active social relationship of modification of the cultural environment." (MS, 27)<52>

The "democratic philosopher" is equivalent to the "organic intellectual." The latter term is more familiar and more widely known than the former. Yet the former more adequately and more fundamentally captures the substance of the relation teacher/student that forms the core of the Gramscian concept of egemonia. The organic intellectual is precisely that intellectual who is in close and intimate contact with the people, a type defined by a relationship between the two which is reciprocal and dialectical, where intellectual and people mutually define each other, and where the relationship is precisely pedagogic, hegemonic, and political in the sense described above. (See Croce EP, 171 on philosopher and the "volgo")<53> The organic intellectual or the democratic philosopher is the teacher and the educator whose knowledge and activity are constantly modifying, and being modified by, the "environment"--most especially the people--such that the educator and the people become engaged in a process of self-definition and self-overcoming. The notion of the democratic philosopher is precisely a notion of a type of intellectual that Croce would look upon as a self-contradiction, a philosophical and theoretical absurdity. For the relation in Croce between thought and society, as we have seen, is one of a categorical distacco, where thought is given an independent role such that the teacher/student relation that Gramsci ascribes to the intellectual/masses relation is always frozen and mechanical. In Croce, the student--the

people--has nothing to teach the educator philosopher; and the educator has nothing to learn from the student. The philosopher issues not from the student, but from other philosophers, and thought issues not from the environment, but from thought.

The Gramscian intellectual-philosopher is thus diametrically opposed to that envisioned and represented by Croce. What Gramsci calls the "traditional intellectual"<54> is that philosopher who posits an independence and autonomy from the environment and the people. The traditional intellectual describes a particular social structure and socio-cultural relations where 1) intellectuals represent a conception of the world and a way of life whose proliferation and acceptance as verita' and as "science" are a function of the intellectual and moral activity of intellectuals organized into a social group or category, where as a result of such activity the conception has come to be perceived as "universal" and has thus become political and hegemonic; 2) the independence of thought from social and political practice is asserted; 3) the traditional and customarily accepted distinction between the colti and the semplici is not simply taken as a given, but is also socially and culturally reproduced; and 4) consequently the traditional philosopher or intellectual legitimates and masks the contradictions and anomalies within society by means of the generation and reproduction of the values and the way of life of the dominant and ruling

groups. The traditional intellectual not only is not able to "create an ideological unity between the bottom and the top, and between the 'simple' [semplici] and the intellectuals"(MS, 8)<55> but it also generalizes and freezes the distinction into an ahistorical principle, such that the thought of the intellectuals is perceived as "philosophy," whereas the thought of the "semplici" is seen as "common sense" and "prejudice." But to accept such a distinction is "to maintain the 'simple people' within their primitive philosophy founded upon common sense."(MS, 11)<56>

On the other hand, the democratic philosopher-organic intellectual describes a social relation and a political-cultural orientation where philosophy and knowledge are envisioned as the ever-changing product of an on-going practical interaction between people and philosopher. Such an interaction is the motive force that propels into movement the moral and intellectual reform necessary to the development of hegemony. The new type of intellectual uncovers and reveals the power and social bases of thought and knowledge while at the same time this process of uncovering creates a critical type of knowledge. The philosophy of praxis reveals that "tutti sono filosofi" (all men are philosophers), (MS, 3, 9)<57> that all men engage in a philosophical activity which is not merely literary, but social and material. As such the philosophy of praxis recognizes the necessity to forge close links between the intellectual and the semplici in order not to "restrict

scientific activity and preserve unity at the low level of the masses, but precisely in order to construct an intellectual-moral bloc which will make politically possible the intellectual progress of the mass, and not only that of small and restricted intellectual groups." (MS, 11) <58>

Gramsci employs the politics and thought of the Catholic Church to exemplify and to emphasize the differences between the traditional and organic intellectuals. Gramsci points out that the Church has always attempted to maintain a link between its priests (intellectuals) and the "faithful." Historically it has strived to achieve "the doctrinal unity of the entire mass of the 'faithful'" to insure that "higher intellectual strata do not become separated from the lower." For "the Roman Church has always been the most vigorous in the struggle to prevent the 'official' establishment of two religions, one of the 'intellectuals' and the other of the 'simple souls.'" (MS, 7-8) <59> The clerical intellectual functions to integrate the intellectually sophisticated and complex theology of the Church with the beliefs and rituals of the common people in order to prevent the emergence of a "popular religion" in opposition to the official doctrine of the hierarchy. The integration of these popular beliefs and practices into the Catholic theological and educational systems is what accounts for the continuity and stability of the Church as a political and social entity: the power of the Church is derived from the intellectual and moral force

it can generate by means of its "l'unione" with the ordinary people of the faith. Thus the Church is the embodiment of the "unity" between the hierarchy and the faithful, and this unity is maintained by the religious intellectual who adapts to each other the faith of the people and the theology of the hierarchy. By means of such a moral and intellectual adaptation the latter is able to assert and maintain its hegemonic supremacy over the "community of the faithful." (MS, 10) <60> But such a hegemony, Gramsci points out, is achieved not by developing within the people a new form of knowledge and by raising them to the level of the church intellectual, but rather by preserving the difference between the consciousness of the faithful and that of the cleric. This is precisely what the traditional intellectual does in the secular world; and this is precisely what the new organic intellectual attempts to uncover and to overcome. The popular beliefs, the traditions, the customs, and the past usages which together form the "common sense" of the masses, and which tend to preserve the supremacy of the ruling groups, are to be transcended into a new philosophy and a new knowledge defined by a critical self-consciousness, a "comprensione critica di se stessi." (MS, 11) <61>

The organic intellectual, as the product of the relation teacher/student, represents the unity of theory and practice, and as such is the embodiment of the interactive process that obtains between politics and culture. This

process sparks within the masses the self-awareness and the self-consciousness that is the philosophy of praxis. The self-consciousness is a critical and active orientation towards the totality of what is given, which in turn makes possible a cultural, moral, and intellectual reform "which moves to replace common sense and the traditional conceptions of the world," (MS, 17)<62> and which acts to "elevate intellectually ever larger strata of the popular masses--in other words, to give a personality to the amorphous mass element. What this means is to work towards the emergence [suscitare] of elites of intellectuals of a new type which arise directly from within the masses, and who will remain in contact with them to become, to use a metaphor, the whalebone in the corset." It is important to note that the new intellectual springs "directly" from the people in the same way that the teacher springs directly from the student. Gramsci continues: "The adhesion or non-adhesion of the masses to an ideology is the real critical test [critica reale] of the rationality and historicity of ways of thinking [modi di pensare]." (MS, 17-18)<63> Such a "real critique" can only be undertaken and realized through the "andare al popolo," through the real participation and active involvement of the masses--all of which is but another way of saying that the philosophy of praxis realizes itself concretely in and through the masses, which realization is itself the "critica reale dei modi di pensare" and of the ways of acting. To the extent,

therefore, that the philosophy of praxis develops organic intellectuals who emerge from within the popular masses, who are constantly in contact with them, and from whom the former derive their meaning, goals, and inspiration, to that extent does it concretize and realize itself. Moreover, to the extent that the "modi di pensare" are simultaneously products and carriers of the activity and experience of the masses, to that extent have they become "rational" and necessary, and not mere results of individual whims and desires. The criterion or "mode" by which the historical and socio-political import of a way of thinking and a way of perceiving is evaluated is through its ideological and political--that is, hegemonic--character. The "modi di pensare" must be such that they encompass the life and experience of an entire people; thus these modi are nothing if not the totality of the social and cultural practice of the people.

Such a notion is related to Vico's famous formula: verum est factum--that is, reality is that which is created and made by man, or knowledge can only comprehend that which it itself has created. Gramsci compares this statement to his conception of the realization of "rationality" in history. The "modi di pensare" are rational and historically necessary when they embody and express the concrete activity of the people; conversely, the consciousness of the people engaged in action is the "modi di pensare." The "historicity" and the "rationality" of the

"modi di pensare" may be seen as Gramsci's re-translation of the Vichian formulation into Hegelian language.<64> Vico's factum is not the posited and empirical given of the existing reality, but is rather what is constantly becoming, a reality conceived as the product of social activity. The philosophy of praxis, and the organic intellectuals located within the popular masses, are the conscious and individuated self-reflection of such an activity--a becoming which springs from the mutual and reciprocal interaction between the "modi di pensare" and mass action, where the movement between organic intellectuals and popular masses generates the critical consciousness of the people as a collective and social force. In a sense the factum is this very reciprocity and mutuality between theory and practice, and between cultura and politica. Therefore, "what is" is the historical product of social action, and it is constantly produced and created by the active intervention of a particular subject whose activity, and whose consciousness of such activity, together form the verum. The democratic philosopher is the new type of intellectual, which is central to the emergence and development of a people as a collective and moral force that fulfills itself in history and that creates its own reality and its own "truth"--that is, its own factum. The unity between the democratic philosopher and the people is precisely the philosophy of praxis as it seeks to realize itself as factum through its concrete activity within history. The

intervention of the popular masses into history and politics, and the generation by the people of its own particular social facta, are equivalent to the "critica reale" of the established and prevailing "modi di pensare." This intervention is signaled by the formation of the democratic philosopher within the collectivity that is the people. The masses, once "amorphous" and undifferentiated, initiate the long and arduous process of coming to know themselves as a political and moral subject, and as a determinate and purposive actor, able and competent to "operare nel presente" and to "interpretare il passato" in order to "creare il reale."

The democratic philosopher is a popular intellectual who does not exist in solitary isolation, one who recognizes that thought becomes real and historical when linked to the people (and thus becomes politics). The democratic philosopher is an innovator, and he attempts to modify (MS, 270)<65> the social reality through the organization and proliferation of a new type of knowledge and a new type of culture. The latter are the products of the philosophy of praxis, which in turn is the expression and consciousness of the dyad democratic philosopher/popular masses. In a very real sense the democratic philosopher is the hegemon of the people, the teacher and guide that leads the people to a new way of life and a new practice. The characteristic element that defines hegemony is this quality of moral and intellectual direzione (leadership).<66> The "organization

of culture" and the "organization of permanent consent" are the products of the hegemonic activity of the democratic philosopher.<67> The process by which the subordinate groups become hegemonic and ruling is a process that, as the coming-to-be of the people as a self-directing and self-determining subject, presupposes the generation within and among the masses of the new type of intellectual. Such a process means that the people, as a hegemonic force and a moral and intellectual entity that exercises leadership, is itself transformed into the democratic philosopher, a collective and national-popular philosopher.<68>

"Critical understanding of self takes place therefore through a struggle of political 'hegemonies' of opposing directions, first in the ethical field and then in that of politics, in order to arrive at the creation and elaboration at a higher and superior level of one's own conception of reality."(MS, 11)<69> This elaboration of a new view of reality is the creation and "modification" of social facta through the moral and intellectual conflicts of opposing conceptions. In this process the democratic philosopher attempts to elaborate a new social reality by educating and instilling within the people a new conception of the world which he derives from the praxis and life activity of the people from which he springs: "The consciousness of being a part of a determinate hegemonic force (that is to say, political consciousness) is the first stage towards a further and progressive self-consciousness in which theory

and practice will finally unite."(MS, 11)<70> Political consciousness is the self-consciousness of being in an active and purposive engagement with society and with history--an engagement which is both the product of such consciousness and the ground which gives rise to it. Philosophy becomes "real" when it develops into a "determinate hegemonic force," that is, when it has become the consciousness of the people who as a consequence feel and perceive themselves as a determinate force. The realization of philosophy, the consciousness of being a political force, is the transformation of a subordinate, particularistic mass of disaggregated individuals into a leading and hegemonic subject whose thought and values have become the prevailing conception of the world.

Thus the generation of the democratic philosopher, and the coming-to-be of a subaltern group into a popular hegemonic force, demand the "political development of the concept of hegemony," which is equivalent, in opposition to the Crocean notion of the "corrupt philosophy," to "a great philosophical advance as well as a political-practical one. For it necessarily presupposes and involves an intellectual unity and an ethic in conformity with a conception of reality that has moved beyond and over-come the common sense [of the established "modi di pensare"] and which has become, if only within narrow limits, critical thought."(MS, 11)<71> This developmental process whereby a group assumes a hegemonic and leading role in society is one that requires

the emergence of an organic intellectual within the masses themselves such that the relation intellectual/people adumbrates and summarizes the meaning of the democratic philosopher. (MS, 12)<72> The relation intellectual/people is given by the teacher/student paradigm where the unity resulting from the interaction of the two entities is transformed, and resolves itself, into the unity of the two moments theory/practice, or philosophy/politics: thus "filosofico oltre che [as well as] politico-pratico." It is this totality constituted by the interacting moments of thought and action, philosophy and politics, that describes the Gramscian concept of hegemony. This totality implies the "absolute historicism" and the "absolute laicism"<73> of the philosophy of praxis, an orientation aptly and concisely summarized in Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach."

The relations of hegemony created by the intellectual/people dyad spark a movement that aims at ever higher and ever wider cultural, moral, and intellectual spheres of action, where the people's action on its intellectuals produce a more historically rooted and more critical knowledge of the world, and where the intellectuals' action on the people results in the raising and widening of the cultural level of the people. Such a movement describes a process of innovation and modification that can be pictured as a system of never-ending and open-ended concentric circles, where each ring of the circle delineates a stage or level of consciousness, such that each

outer ring represents a higher and broader sphere of consciousness. The outer rings, as they represent a higher stage of culture and knowledge, encompass the inner rings. Consequently, the over-coming and the transcendence of the inner spheres do not imply their total destruction and complete annihilation: rather, what is over-come is preserved and retained as a more profound and critical sense of the past, and of the consciousness of the past. The interaction between the people and their intellectuals cannot be schematic and mechanical, nor can such a relation be super-imposed upon the people: it must be organic and dialectical--in the sense that the movement from one sphere to a higher one is seen and experienced by the popular masses as an unfolding and a flowering from within the body of the people. The movement is a result of the growth of a knowledge and a consciousness which are present hic et nunc within the people; the process is an elaboration and an individuation in practice and in history of what is already recognized and germinating in nuce within the life activity and praxis of the people.<74>

The democratic philosopher is an organic intellectual because he is, precisely, an "organ" of the people that is in intimate and practical contact with the people. Any break in such a relation will lead to the "crystallization" of culture that Gramsci analyzes with regard to the traditional type of intellectual represented by Croce. The movement from the inner to the outer rings, in an

ever-expanding series of circles, is an open-ended process that demands innovation and the critical transformation of social reality. The task of the democratic philosopher is to "determine and to organize a moral and intellectual reform, that is, to relate and adjust culture to practice." On the other hand, those intellectuals that have created an ossified and crystallized culture, such as the traditional intellectuals of the ruling groups, perform a conservative and legitimating function that covers the power structure of society. (MS, 149) <75> Thus we have the necessary elements for the formulation: transformation of reality presupposes moral and intellectual reform, which presupposes the development of hegemony, which in turn presupposes the emergence of the democratic philosopher, which embodies the relation organic intellectual/popular masses. In effect, the democratic philosopher is "an historian who interprets the past," and "a political actor [politico] who acts within the present." <76> The development of a hegemonic conception of the world is the transformation of reality, which translates into the moral and intellectual reform of the existing society, so that we have riforma = storia in atto + filosofia in atto = the philosophy of praxis. The philosophy of praxis is riforma in atto, the critical transformation of social reality and social facta (which process, of course, is itself a social factum) through the active and dynamic interaction between teacher and student, between the culture of intellectuals and popular culture,

where teacher/student, culture/people, together form a conscious and determinate political subject, and where this subject is a hegemonic force because it is "una filosofia che e' anche una politica e una politica che e' anche una filosofia [a philosophy which is also politics, and a politics which is also philosophy]." (MS, 87) <77>

Notes

<1>For Gramsci's evaluation of the intellectual and cultural influence of Croce's philosophy in Italian history and society, see Antonio Gramsci, Il Materialismo storico e la filosofia di Benedetto Croce, (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), pp. 172-173, 199-200, 221, 246, 250, 252, henceforth cited as MS. See also Gramsci's Passato e presente, (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), p. 26, henceforth cited as PP; and his Lettere dal carcere (Torino: Einaudi, 1955), pp. 132, 186, henceforth cited as LC.

Gramsci's statement in MS, pp. 199-200, should be noted: "io ero tendenzialmente piuttosto crociano;" as well as Gramsci's letter to Tatiana, 17 August 1931, where he writes "mi pareva che tanto io come il Cosmo [Gramsci's professor at the University of Turin] come molti altri intellettuali del tempo (si puo dire nei primi 15 anni del secolo) ci trovassimo in un terreno comune che era questo e partecipavamo in tutto o in parte al movimento di riforma morale e intellettuale promosso in Italia da Benedetto Croce" (LC, p. 466). One should also note, in Scritti giovanili (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), that Croce is "at the present time the greatest thinker in Europe." But in 1926--that is, during the period that fascism was consolidating its power and dismantling the parliamentary system--Gramsci sees Croce as "the most important figure of Italian reaction," and as "the most significant reactionary in the peninsula," in "Alcuni temi della questione meridionale," in Socialismo e fascismo (Torino: Einaudi, 1976), also in Gramsci, Selections from Political Writings (1921-1926), trans. and ed. Quintin Hoare, (New York: International Publishers, 1978), pp. 447-462. And finally, in his Prison Notebooks, Gramsci returns to his original position and distinguishes Croce from the fascists, writing that Croce is "the national leader of liberal democratic culture." (MS, pp. 199-200). See H. Stuart Hughes, Consciousness and Society: the Reorientation of European Social Thought 1890-1930 (New York: Vintage Books, 1958), pp. 19, 60-65; and Giancarlo Bergami, Il giovane Gramsci e il marxismo 1911-1918 (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1977), p. 81.

For a discussion of Gramsci and Croce, see Eugenio Garin, "Antonio Gramsci nella cultura italiana," in Studi gramsciani (Roma: Riuniti, 1973), Atti del convegno tenuto a Roma nei giorni 11-13 gennaio 1958, Istituto Gramsci, pp. 3-14; and Garin's "Politica e cultura in Gramsci (il problema degli intellettuali)," in Gramsci e la cultura contemporanea (Roma: Riuniti, 1975), Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi gramsciani tenuto a Cagliari il 23-27 aprile 1967, a cura di Pietro Rossi, pp. 37-74. And see Maurice A. Finocchiaro, "Gramsci's Crocean Marxism," Telos, 41 (Fall, 1979), pp. 17-32; and Paul Piccone, Italian Marxism (Berkeley: University of California Press,

1983), Part III and Part IV; and Leonardo Salamini, "Gramsci and Marxist Sociology of Knowledge: An Analysis of Hegemony-Ideology-Knowledge," The Sociological Quarterly 15 (Summer, 1974), pp. 359-380.

On the distinction between alta cultura and cultura popolare see Gramsci, MS, pp. 3-19.

<2>Gramsci, MS, pp. 184-186, 219. And Benedetto Croce, Etica e politica, (Bari: Laterza, 1931), "Elementi di politica," pp. 213-229; and see H. Stuart Hughes, pp. 215-229.

<3>Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, (New York: International Publishers, 1973), pp. 130-132, 421-422, henceforth cited as SPN.

<4>Gramsci, MS, pp. 148-149, 252-253, 174-175, 186; and his Note sul Machiavelli, sulla politica, e sullo Stato moderno (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), pp. 12-13, henceforth cited as NM.

<5>Benedetto Croce, Terze pagine sparse (Bari: Laterza, 1955), vol. II, pp. 132-139.

<6>Ibid., p. 139. Croce's understanding of Gramsci is comparable to his statement on Marx: "Marx was an active and intelligent politico, or rather he was a revolutionary genius whose work gave coherence and importance to the workers' movement, arming it with an historiographical and economic doctrine...." in "Come nacque e come morì il marxismo teorico in Italia (1885-1900). Da letture e ricordi personali," La critica, Napoli, Anno 36, 1938, pp. 35-52, and 109-124, found in his Historical Materialism and the Economics of Karl Marx, trans. C.M. Meredith, with an introduction by A.D. Lindsay, (New York: Russell and Russell, 1966), see p. 229. On this, see Giuseppe Tamburrano, Antonio Gramsci: la vita, il pensiero, l'azione, (Manduria: Lacaita, 1963), p. 195; and H. S. Hughes, pp. 82-90; as well as Serge Hughes, The Fall and Rise of Modern Italy (Minerva Press, 1967), pp. 37-58.

<7>In MS, Gramsci notes that Croce's historical writings describe those periods of Italian and European history characterized by the absence of revolutionary change or structural transformations. Thus, the Storia d'Italia nell'eta' barocca discusses developments occurring during the counter-Reformation, the Storia d'Italia analyzes Italian events after the struggle for unification is completed, and the Storia dell'Europa nel secolo decimono looks at European history after 1815, that is, after the defeat of Napoleon and his revolutionary armies. See pp. 184-184, 241.

<8>Croce, Etica e politica, "Elementi di politica." See Gramsci, NM, pp. 14-15; and MS, pp. 114-115.

<9>Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question," Karl Marx: Early Writings, ed. T.B. Bottomore, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), pp. 1-40; and note also Marx's "Contribution to a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction," in the same volume, pp. 43-59, and see especially pp. 58-59.

<10>Karl Marx, The German Ideology (New York: International Publishers, 1968), Part I, and the "Theses on Feuerbach," pp. 197-199; and Poverty of Philosophy (New York: International Publishers, 1967), pp. 190-191. Also, Herbert Marcuse, Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), pp. 287-295, 314-319. In addition, see Sidney Hook, From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1968).

<11>See Georg Lukacs, The Young Hegel: Studies in the Relations between Dialectics and Economics, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1976), pp. 501-507; Shlomo Avineri, Hegel's Theory of the Modern State (London: Cambridge University Press), pp. 3, 7-8, 47-52, 74; and Marcuse, pp. 3-16. See also G.W.F. Hegel Political Writings, trans. T.M. Knox, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 159-164, 281, and his Hegel's Lectures on the History of Philosophy, (New York: Humanities Press, 1974,) trans. E.S. Haldane and Frances H. Simson, Vol. III, p. 409. Gramsci, in MS, cites this work, and quotes Hegel's statement that "the philosophy of Kant, Fichte, and Schelling expresses and contains in thought the revolution," whereas the "new principle" theorized abstractly in Germany is expressed in France "as effective reality," p. 66.

<12>Croce, Terze pagine sparse, p. 252.

<13>Ibid., pp. 91-92, 137-13; H.S. Hughes, pp. 210-211; and see Emilio Agazzi, "Filosofia della prassi e filosofia dello spirito," in La citta' futura: Saggi sulla figura e sul pensiero di Antonio Gramsci, a cura di Alberto Caracciolo e Gianni Scalia (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1976), pp. 95-175, especially pp. 99-107.

<14>Gramsci, Gli intellettuali e l'organizzazione della cultura (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), pp. 9-14, henceforth cited as Int. And Agazzi, pp. 111-113.

<15>Gramsci, MS, pp. 41-42, 43-44, 190-191. And see Croce, Terze pagine sparse, pp. 83-84.

<16>Croce, Etica e politica, pp. 207-210; and see his History as the Story of Liberty, Part IV, "Historiography and Morals," pp. 207-226, especially pp. 227-234.

<17>Machiavelli, Il Principe, chapter XV, in Opere. The question of velare and svelare recurs throughout Gramsci's critique of Croce. It is precisely this very relation velare/svelare that determines the nature and character of a given philosophy or a given form of knowledge: whether it reveals and uncovers the foundations of established reality, or whether it masks and mystifies them. This, of course, is the burden of Marx's assertions in The German Ideology and in the Theses on Feuerbach. See also Gramsci, NM, pp. 14-16.

<18>Gramsci, MS, pp. 22-24, 32-36.

<19>Ibid., pp. 215-216. And Benedetto Croce, Saggio sullo Hegel (Bari: Laterza, 1913), p. 60.

<20>Gramsci, MS, pp. 217-218; in addition, see Giorgio Nardone, Il pensiero di Gramsci, (Bari: De Donato, 1971), pp. 127-145, 165-170, 173-179.

<21>Gramsci, MS, pp. 217-229; and see Agazzi, op. cit., and Mario Tronti, "Tra materialismo dialettico e filosofia della prassi," in La città futura, pp. 71-92; as well as A.R. Buzzi, La teoria politica di Gramsci (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1973), pp. 304-305.

<22>See T.A. Sinclair, A History of Greek Political Thought (Cleveland: Meridien books, 1968); as well as Sir Ernest Barker, The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle (New York: Dover, 1949). See also Victor Ehrenberg, From Solon to Socrates: Greek History and Civilization During the 6th and 5th Centuries BC (London: Methuen, 1973).

<23>Sinclair, op. cit.; Ehrenberg, op. cit.; and also Friedrich Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, (New York: Vintage), for the concept of philosopher-actor, one who creates and generates values, and embodies them within a given social and cultural space.

<24>Gramsci, MS, pp. 32, 39; NM, p. 83-84.

<25>Gramsci, MS, pp. 5-12.

<26>Tronti, op. cit. And see Marx, "Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy," in Robert Tucker, ed. The Marx-Engels Reader (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1972), and the "Theses on Feuerbach." In addition, see R. Mondolfo, Il pensiero politico nel Risorgimento italiano. Milano: Nuova Accademia, s.d., pp. 133-144.

<27>Buzzi, pp. 316-317. See Gramsci, MS, pp. 7-11, and Int., pp. 6-10.

<28>Gramsci, MS, p. 217; Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, pp. xii-xiii, 258-262.

<29>Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," in The German Ideology. And, Sidney Hook, From Hegel to Marx, pp. 272-307.

<30>Gramsci, MS, p. 218.

<31>Ibid., p. 216; and his Il Risorgimento, (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), p. 114.

<32>Gramsci, NM, p. 39.

<33>Gramsci, MS, pp. 32, 92-96.

<34>Ibid., pp. 221-222. And see Nardone, Il pensiero di Gramsci.

<35>Gramsci, MS, p. 32, and 217.

<36>Nardone, op. cit.; and see MS, p 237, where Gramsci approvingly quotes Croce that "la filosofia della prassi 'e' storia fatta e in fieri." The citation is from Croce's Il materialismo storico e l'economia di Carlo Marx, p. 118, here cited in its English translation.

<37>Gramsci, NM.

<38>On "restoration" and diplomazia (or what Gramsci also calls piccola politica), see NM, pp. 210-211 (note on Guicciardini); and MS, pp. 221-222, and see SPN, section on "The Modern Prince;" and Buzzi, pp. 128-130. Gramsci establishes an opposition between diplomazia and politica, and piccola politica and grande politica, where the former terms represent the conserving, restorative activity that occurs within a given historical structure, and the latter signify transformative, creative activity that leads to a new structure.

<39>On the notion of moral and intellectual reform, see Gramsci, NM, pp. 8, 10-15; MS, 84-89, 224-229; and SPN. See Nardone, Il pensiero di Gramsci. And see Croce, Etica e politica, pp. 192-196. See chapter 3, below.

<40>Gramsci, pp. MS, 85-87; SPN.

<41>Gramsci, MS, p. 86.

<42>Ibid., pp. 86-87.

<43>Ibid., p. 84.

<44>See Walter L. Adamson, Hegemony and Revolution: A Study of Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Theory, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), and Joseph V. Femia, Gramsci's Political Thought: Hegemony, Consciousness, and the Revolutionary Process, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1981); and Davidson, Antonio Gramsci: An Intellectual and Political Biography. And, Eugenio Garin, op. cit., in Gramsci e la cultura italiana, vol. I, pp. 65-67. In addition, see Wilden Carr, The Philosophy of Benedetto Croce (New York: Russell and Russell, 1969); and Piccone, op. cit., pp. 1-43, 117-126.

<45>Gramsci, Int, pp. 4-5, 138-140; MS, pp. 92-96.

<46>Gramsci, MS, pp. 8, 222.

<47>Ibid., p. 26.

<48>Ibid.

<49>SPN, p. 350, note; and Marx, Third Thesis on Feuerbach, in The German Ideology, pp. 197-198.

<50>Gramsci, MS, p. 26; and SPN, p. 350.

<51>Ibid.; LC, p. 620. See also Adamson, op. cit.; and Lamberto Borghi, "Educazione e scuola in Gramsci, in Studi gramsciani, pp. 212-214. See also Antonio Labriola, Scritti di pedagogia e di politica scolastica, Roma, 1961, cited in Borghi.

<52>Gramsci, MS, p. 27; and SPN, p. 350.

<53>Croce, Etica e politica, p. 171, for his views on the relation between the philosopher and the volgo. Also, see Gramsci, MS, pp. 3, 8, 182, 197, and 226, note 1. Croce, in his Conversazioni critiche, (Bari: Laterza, 1950) vol. II, p. 61, writes, regarding the "dissemination of culture" and the education of the masses, that "the appropriate and concrete method to disseminate and to proliferate culture...may sometimes be governed by the formula Odi profanum vulgus, [as well as by] the violent and forceful barring of the people from the temple of science, compelling them to remain outside its gates until they become worthy [to enter]." Cited in Borghi, op. cit., p. 216.

<54>Gramsci, Int, pp. 4-8, 21-25, 36-40; SPN, p. 7.

<55>Gramsci, MS, p. 8.

<56>Ibid., p. 11.

<57>Ibid., pp. 3, 9.

<58>Ibid., p. 11.

<59>Ibid., pp. 7-8.

<60>Ibid., p. 10.

<61>Ibid., p. 11.

<62>Ibid., p. 17.

<63>Ibid., pp. 17-18.

<64>For Gramsci on Vico, see MS, pp. 38, 101-102, 241-242. See also Sir Isaiah Berlin, Vico and Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas, (Middlesex: Punguin Books, 1977), pp. 12-21, 25-29, 37-41; and Berlin's Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas, ed. and with a bibliography by Henry Hardy, introduction by Roger Hausheer (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1982), essay on Vico, "Vico's Concept of Knowledge," pp. 111-119.

<65>Gramsci, MS, p. 270.

<66>On direzione, see Adamson, op. cit., and Carl Boggs, Gramsci's Marxism, (London: Pluto Press, 1978), pp. 36-54. See Gramsci, SPN; LC, pp. 481, 616; R, p. 70, NM, pp. 6-8, 121. Gramsci opposes direzione to dominio, see Gramsci, Passato e presente (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), p. 38, LC, p. 481; Int, pp. 6-10. Also, see Norberto Bobbio, "Gramsci e la concezione della societa' civile," in Gramsci e la cultura contemporanea, pp. 88, 90, 95-96. Bobbio's article is translated into English in Gramsci and Marxist Theory, ed. Chantal Mouffe, (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), pp. 21-47. In this volume also see the essays by Chantal Mouffe, "Hegemony and ideology in Gramsci," pp. 168-204; Massimo Salvadori, "Gramsci and the PCI: Two Conceptions of Hegemony," pp. 237-258; Jacques Texier, "Gramsci, theoretician of the superstructures," pp. 48-79; and Biagio de Giovanni, "Lenin and Gramsci: state, politics, and party," pp. 259-288, for the standard PCI interpretation of direzione and egemonia.

<67>Gramsci, Int, p. 7.

<68>Gramsci, SPN, pp. 40,, 332-333, 334-335, See also Adamson, pp. 144-145.

<69>Gramsci, MS, p. 11.

<70>Ibid.

<71>Ibid., p. 11, and see pp. 8-9, 39-40; Int, pp. 97-104, 116-118.

<72>Gramsci, MS, p. 12

<73>Ibid., p. 159; see also MS, pp. 44-45, 190-191, 231-232; and LC, pp. 313-314, 585, 619.

<74>Gramsci, MS, p. 25; SPN.

<75>Gramsci, MS, p. 149.

<76>Ibid., pp. 217-218, and also see pp. 38-38, 133.

<77>Ibid., p. 87, and see pp. 199-200. Also, Nardone, op. cit. p. 209.

Chapter III

It is sometimes suggested that the Gramscian notion of intellectual and moral reform is one taken from the work of Renan.<1> However, whatever its immediate antecedents, there is no question that Gramsci makes a historical and political parallel between the riforma that the philosophy of praxis is to undertake, and the Lutheran and Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.<2> The intellectual and moral renovation that was initiated by the Reformation is critical to Gramsci because it described a type of movement that attempted to bridge the gulf between the church hierarchy and the faithful in a way that embodied a practical and thorough-going critique of the Roman Church. Such a movement was interpreted by Gramsci as the ideological and socio-political renovation that led to the transformation of the medieval and aristocratic conception of the world.<3> The Reformation destroyed the unity of the medieval world by attacking, on the one hand, the "universality" of the Roman interpretation of religion, and, on the other hand, by discovering and harnessing the political and social forces whose eventual awakening and mobilization transformed the socio-political structure of Europe.

The critique of the Roman Church, and the demand for its reform, became equivalent to the transformation of the "modi di pensare," which, once having become "operanti,"

involved the radical re-interpretation of the past and the radical re-structuring of the present. In their critique of the present (Roman and papal) interpretation of Christianity, Luther and Calvin presented a conception of the faith as the re-discovery and the restoration of the truths and the values of the original founders. The interpretation of the texts, and the critique of the commonly accepted tradition, together meant the appropriation of the past, the re-creation of the past, a task necessary to carry forward the critical transformation of the present by creating a new religious and cultural vision. In turn, this vision is enunciated and taught by the religious reformers in terms of a past that has been "re-translated" in light of the new vision, such that a new past and a new vision are now contrasted and opposed to the traditio that supports and represents the power of the established Church. The debates and controversies that revolved around the nature of the sacraments, the relative value and weight to be assigned to "faith" and to "good works," were in essence struggles over the definition or re-definition of the nature of the term "church." To accomplish such a re-definition required the transformation of the tradition and past of the Roman Church into the tradition and past of a corrupt and self-serving hierarchy whose teachings and practices deviated from those of the original founders, Jesus Christ and St. Paul. The hierarchy represented a past and a present antithetical and

irremediably opposed to the truly Christian notion of the community of the saved--the people as the community of the faithful. Luther and Calvin created a new vision of what this community meant and what it represented, and they opposed it to the power structure and to the practice of the Roman Church, a critique embodied in the radical attack on the validity of the sacraments and hence on the sacred and sacramental character of the priestly caste.<4>

The attack on tradition, and the re-capturing of the past in terms of the re-translation--both literally and exegetically--of the sacred texts were also the revealing and the exposing of the Church as the negation of the Christian mission. Such an undertaking stressed the gulf that separated the culture of the priests from that of the people in order to eliminate and replace it with the new conception that saw the unity and community of the congregation of the faithful. The new conception saw the relation between reformer and people as one of reciprocity and mutuality: the people as a congregation and as a community assume the educative and pedagogical--that is, hegemonic--activity of the new type of "priest," which, in turn, assumed the real possibility of a people that would "adhere," and actively consent, to the new teaching. The retranslation and the redefinition of Christianity brought into relief the role and nature of the people as a community of the faithful during the process of reformation and renovation. In theological and religious terms the

salvation of the soul--which is the meaning, purpose, and end of Christianity--is no longer seen as dependent upon the intervention and mediation of the priestly caste and of the sacraments it administers. The purpose of the ecclesiastical organization, separate and distinct from the ordinary lay Christians, was to provide, by means of the sacraments it controlled, the necessary intercession through which the individual soul would attain spiritual "grace" and ultimately salvation.<5> The reform, however, by eliminating the sacred character of the priest, and by stressing the notion of salvation through faith, established a new relation between the church and the faithful which re-defined the meaning and practice of the Christian church. The church as an organization of power, whose mediation between God and the community ensured grace and salvation, was abolished and destroyed. The agent of salvation now became the individual believer united with his fellows. This agent was therefore the community of the faithful organized into a congregation that expressed within itself the dyad minister/ congregant.

The new role that the people assumed in the Christian soteriological enterprise is concretely and culturally exemplified by the Lutheran and Calvinist translations of the sacred texts. These new translations are indicative of the transformation of the Christian world from one political and socio-cultural system into another. The translations involved the movement from a language that was the exclusive

possession of the ruling castes into one that was the natural vernacular of the people. There is a very definite and "organic" relation between types of language and the Gramscian notion of hegemony. The development of a new hegemonic conception of the world simultaneously requires the development of a language different from the prevailing one.<6> Moral and intellectual reform implies the use of a new and different language in order to express and proliferate the new "modi di pensare" and the new "modi di operare." The new version of the sacred texts was both a presupposition and a result of the new conception of the world that the riforma was undertaking. The vernacular was thus at one and the same time a critical instrument in the undermining of the established conception, and a necessary means by which the new conception would become "life" and assume a central place in the practice and experience of the people.<7>

The vernacular does not simply make the texts more accessible and more understandable to the community; more importantly, it is intrinsic to the very notion of the community as the carrier and repository of the faith. As such the vernacular symbolizes and embodies the people qua community, for it assumes and captures a past and a tradition different from those of the ruling groups--a tradition embedded in the very syntax and structure of the language spoken by the lower classes. The struggle over the sacred texts, therefore, involved more than a simple

scholastic and theological controversy regarding the nature of the scriptures that had occupied the medieval and traditional culture. The texts were a focal point that concentrated in themselves a manifold and many layered conflict, where each layer implied and reinforced the other. The opposition between the Latin of the priestly castes and of the ruling elites, and the vernacular tongues of the majority of the "faithful," finds its parallel in the antithesis between the alliance of aristocratic, princely, and ecclesiastical groups and the lower classes--an antithesis which is further reproduced by the contradictions between the conception of the world entertained by the dominant groups and that held by the subordinate groups. Therefore the translation of the Bible into the various vernaculars does not possess solely a religious significance; it represents in addition a political, social, and cultural transformation of the existing social and historical reality.<8>

Gramsci's discussion of the nature and role of language is instructive. "Language means also culture and philosophy....we may say that every being who can speak has his own personal language, that is to say, his own way of thinking and of feeling." (MS, 26)<9> The conflicts over the sacred texts are thus struggles concerning different ways of thinking and of experiencing the world. Since language expresses the thought-structure and value-structure of a social group, the conflict over language is the "cultural

struggle to transform the popular 'mentality' and to disseminate philosophical innovations"--innovations which are themselves seen by Gramsci as conceptions of the world. (MS, 3-4,25)<10> The cultural struggle is determined by the interaction between the "popular mentality" and the innovating philosophy: the language of the people assumes a new character and becomes enriched as the new conception of the world is diffused and expanded throughout the lower classes. Moral and intellectual reform, in effect, assumes the reform and appropriation of a language capable of expressing the new conception of the world, a language able to embody and transmit the new philosophy. The transformation of social reality demands the elaboration of a language which is capable of becoming hegemonic and leading such that it becomes the national-popular language of the over-all society.

Since "every language contains elements of a conception of the world or of a given culture," then "it is possible to judge the greater or lesser complexity of someone's conception of the world from his particular language. Whoever speaks only a dialect...necessarily partakes in an intuition of the world which is more or less restricted and provincial." (MS,4-5)<11> Latin as a universal language was the possession of a medieval and cosmopolitan "culture of a small intellectual aristocracy" (MS,85)<12> which produced and expressed the wide disparity between the "modo di pensare e di sentire" of the ruling groups and that of the

lower classes. What Luther and the Reformation accomplished was the formation of a hegemonic and universal conception of the world which was itself expressed in the language of the people, where the "form" of the language and the "content" of the new way of thinking and acting informed each other within a unified totality that challenged and eventually supplanted the traditional conception of the world. The challenge to the universality of Latin and to the cosmopolitanism of the Roman church and the medieval intellectuals resulted in the creation of a political and social movement that led to the formation of the modern European system of nation-states.<13>

For Gramsci the Reformation is the "classical model" that underlies his notion of moral and intellectual reform because it signaled a radical rupture from the traditional ways of thinking about and experiencing the world. The transformation of the existing world, and the emergence of an innovating philosophy, Gramsci saw as the result of a process grounded on the interaction between the new type of thinker (such as Luther and Calvin) and the community of the faithful. What is significant is that Gramsci introduces his concept of the democratic philosopher in the section that deals with the relation between language and "common sense." Here he discusses the democratic philosopher as the popular educator, and the people as the critical and educative matrix that forms and elaborates the new type of philosopher.(MS, 26-27)<14> Gramsci, of course, does not

intend to say that Luther and Calvin are "democratic" or "philosophers" in any modern sense of the term: what he wants to do is to discover and establish parallels between past conceptions of the world that have become politica and thus "reality"--that is, that have carried forward a social and cultural transformation of the world--and the philosophy of praxis whose present tasks make it similar to the movement that contributed to the birth of the modern world. In the same way that the Reformation engendered a broad national-popular movement resulting from the innovating and mass-mobilizing activities of the new religious teachers, so too the philosophy of praxis is to initiate a moral and intellectual reform of modern bourgeois society by means of the dialectical and active relation between the popular masses and the democratic philosopher. The motive force that will propel this enterprise is the dialectical unity formed by the democratic philosopher and the people which embodies itself in a national-popular movement that will galvanize and mobilize the masses into a hegemonic force directed towards the reform and renovation of Italian society and culture.

It is to be noted that the concept of moral and intellectual reform put forth by Gramsci finds its parallel in passages from Croce's work on the history of the baroque age in Italy. In his Prison Notebooks Gramsci refers to the Crocean interpretation of the Renaissance and the Reformation and attempts to retranslate it in terms of the

problems and needs of the philosophy of praxis.<15> Croce sets up a distinction between the Renaissance and the Reformation which typically exemplifies the basic structure of Crocean idealist philosophy: the opposition between thought and action, and between thought and politics. In his Storia dell'eta' barocca in Italia Croce writes: "The Renaissance had remained an aristocratic movement that occurred within certain elite circles; and in Italy, which was the mother and germinator of this movement, it did not move outside the courtly circles, it did not penetrate down into the people, and did not become custom and 'prejudice,' that is, collective conviction [collettiva persuasione] and faith. On the other hand, the Reformation was able in fact to effect a popular penetration but payed for it through the delay and interruption of its intrinsic further development," an interruption that impeded the maturation of its "vital germ." (MS, 85)<16> The Renaissance was the product of the cultural and intellectual activity of a narrow, aristocratic, and "courtly" stratum far removed from the life of the majority of the people, a movement of re-birth and renewal separated and distanced from the "common sense" and "faith" of the people. The Reformation, however, was able to establish itself among the people, and become part of the life of the masses. The Renaissance retained its cultural and intellectual integrity precisely because it was a movement that acted within the alta cultura of the princely and aristocratic courts; whereas the very

success of the Reformation in the penetration and transformation of the life of the people inhibited and stunted its intellectual and cultural development, and thus "corrupted" its inherent intellectual potential. The Crocean refrain that thought as such ought not to come into contact with the "custom" and "faith" of the people is evident, and becomes the main standard of the interpretation of the Reformation. Thus Croce on Luther: "And Luther, just as the humanists, deprecates sadness and celebrates happiness, condemns idleness and demands labor; but, on the other hand, he is diffident and hostile against literature and scholarship so that Erasmus was able to assert: ubicumque regnat lutheranismus, ibi litterarum est interitus; and certainly, if not solely and simply due to the original aversion of its founder, German Protestantism for a few centuries was nearly sterile in scholarship, in criticism, and in philosophy." (MS, 85) <17> The contrast is between the Renaissance, the expression of a sophisticated cultural and intellectual movement, and the Reformation, a popular renovation of religion and morality. The sterility of the Reformation is the result of the popular and mass "penetration" of the reformer-founder and his followers. On the one hand, there is the scholarship, critical thinking, and philosophy generated by the alta cultura of the Renaissance; and on the other, there is the custom, prejudice, faith, and collettiva persuasione that exist within the masses.

Gramsci is critically alive to these distinctions posited by Croce, and he attempts to assimilate them in order to employ them for his own political purposes and integrate them into his own political and theoretical project. What is immediately striking is the theoretical continuity and similarity these statements have with the critique that Croce offered on Gramsci almost half a century later (see above). Luther and the Reformation represent the death and sterility of philosophy, in the same way that Marx and the workers' movement marked the decline and corruption of philosophy. Luther and Marx attempted to penetrate into the people, a project which to Croce can only result in the decay and in the vulgarization of thought and culture. Gramsci accepts the distinction between the Renaissance and the Reformation, but in the process he re-defines the relationship between the two, and with this re-definition presents not only a critique of the Crocean view of the Reformation and all similarly popular movements, but also outlines his own interpretation which points towards the integration of these Crocean opposites.

If Luther and the Reformation represent the interruption of the progress of spirit and philosophy, and if Marx and the socialist movement similarly represent the "corrupt philosophy" that penetrated to the people after the 1840's, then, it is relevant to ask, what is it that Croce and his philosophy represent? If Erasmus could say that Lutheranism signaled the death of learning and of culture,

then are not Croce and his school repeating the same statement but directed against a more radical movement that basis itself upon the life and experience of the people? All of which is to say that Croce sees the political and popular element as the main problem and the basic characteristics of both movements--thus: ubicumque regnat marxismus, ibi litterarum est interitus. If Luther, therefore, is equivalent to Marx, then Croce must be equivalent to Erasmus, and "Croce's position is that of the man of the Renaissance against the Protestant Reformation." (MS, 224) <18> Gramsci points out, however, that "from the primitive intellectual coarseness of the man of the Reformation there nevertheless gushed forth classical German philosophy and the vast cultural movement from which the modern world was born." <19> The philosophy of praxis embodies within it an historical process whose contours are similar to those of the Reformation: both are founded upon the principle of the people as an aware and responsible actor. Gramsci compares the philosophy of praxis to the liberalism of Croce, a theoretical and political position that reproduces the narrowness and the limited particularity of the Renaissance into a small stratum of intellectuals. In addition, such a position has demonstrated its political and moral-intellectual weakness in its confrontation and eventual capitulation to the forces of Roman Catholicism and later to the acquiescence to the advent of fascism. (MS, 225) <20> Croce, in a manner similar to that of the humanists

of the Renaissance, cannot establish any relation with the people and with politics. Croce's Erasmian position makes it impossible that his liberal philosophy would become the "faith" of the people and an educative and moral force in the life of the people. While Luther and the Reformation effected the generation, by means of its national and popular character, of a group of intellectuals linked to the people and to the community, what Croce and the liberals accomplished is the re-creation and reproduction of a cosmopolitan intellectual analogous to that of the Middle Ages. In this sense, Croce is the typical Italian intellectual, one without any connection to the national and popular bases of his society, a cosmopolitan who in the pre-modern world would enter the service of the international Church, and who in modern times maintains himself aloof in his self-described intellectual and cultural superiority. Culturally and politically Gramsci compares the Crocean type of intellectual to the intellectual-cleric of the medieval and "universal" Church so that the former become the modern and secular equivalent of the latter. (MS, 247) <21>

It is in this sense--in the nature of intellectuals and in the nature of philosophy and culture as they interact with society and politics--that Gramsci interprets Italian history and politics. The history of Italy is characterized by the failure and inability to generate and to develop a specifically "popular" and "national" group of

intellectuals. From the cosmopolitanism of the ancient Roman empire, to the "catholicism" of the medieval Church, to the secular humanism of the Renaissance, and finally to the European liberalism of Croce and his school, Italian intellectuals have gravitated between the two poles of provincialism and parochialism on the one hand, and internationalism and cosmopolitanism, on the other. Both, it should be understood, are a function of the social, cultural, and political fragmentation that determined the major part of Italian history. Both the fragmentation, and the special nature of the intellectuals that is its reflection and product, are to be traced to the absence of the national-popular element, to an aversion to, and fear of, the people.<22>

The mutually exclusive distinctions--Renaissance/Reformation and Erasmus/Luther--that are employed by Croce as means to criticize the mass and socialist movements of the modern world are appropriated by Gramsci in order to uncover and criticize the political and social role of intellectuals in modern and bourgeois Italy. What results from the appropriation of these opposite forces is the Gramscian polarity between "l'intellettuale cosmopolito" and "l'intellettuale nazionale-popolare." The first is the equivalent of the traditional intellectual discussed earlier, and the second to the organic intellectual or to the democratic philosopher: I say equivalent, but it should

be noted that these terms, which describe types of intellectual, are aspects or moments which in their historical and concrete reality define the particular type.<23>

Now the distinction described by Renaissance/Reformation is the dyad through which Gramsci sees the movement of Italian history, and especially the development of those European states that managed to create a national and popular basis for their culture and politics. In its Italian context, the thought and culture of the Renaissance remained within the ambit of a narrow and closed circle, a situation that reproduced itself in nineteenth and twentieth century Italian society: in both historical periods the thought and activity of the intellectuals failed to develop into the "collettiva persuasione" and into the "common sense" of the people. Thus Gramsci gives a new and different meaning to the original Crocean polarities, and assigns a new cultural and political value to each pole of the dyad. What in Croce represents the pinnacle of cultural and intellectual life in the Renaissance is transformed in Gramsci into the product and result of the disintegration and degeneration of Italian life and politics.<24> What is regarded in Croce as the flowering of literary and aesthetic sensibility is translated in Gramsci into the stagnation and death of Italian politics, into the subjection of the Italian cities to the external power of Spain and France, and into the reaction of the Counter-Reformation.<25> As

Gramsci puts it: "...while the progressive movement in Italy after 1000 was closely linked to the Communes, it was precisely in Italy that such a movement petered out--and that the Communes degenerated was due precisely to humanism and to the Renaissance. Whereas, in the rest of Europe, the general movement culminated in the emergence and rise of the national States, which was followed by the world expansion of Spain, France, England, and Portugal. In Italy, rather than having a national state as achieved by these countries, there existed the Papacy organized into an absolute state--a process begun under Alexander VI--an organization that destroyed the rest of Italy."(R, 13)<26> In addition, the northern Italian city-states--from which emerged the secularism and humanism of the Renaissance--could not jettison and free themselves from the cosmopolitan and medieval conceptions of the world expressed in the imperialism of the pope and cleric, and in the thought and culture of the humanist thinkers such as Guicciardini and da Vinci. (NM, 90-91)<27> The humanism of the Renaissance could not develop into a popular movement because the conception of the world it expressed could not transcend the artificiality of the alta cultura/cultura popolare distinction.

The Crocean equation of Lutheranism and Marxism (where both lead to a corrupted and sterile culture) is re-directed against Croce and against his interpretation of the Renaissance and the Reformation. Such an interpretation

leads Croce into a contradiction from which he cannot escape. For if the philosophy of praxis is the corrupt philosophy that issues from a social and democratic mass movement, and if similarly the Lutheran and Protestant Reformations resulted in the vulgarization of culture and philosophy, then it must be asked, what process, and under whose auspices, described the transition from a medieval to a modern socio-cultural and socio-political reality? If the Reformation unleashed social and political forces that led to the profound transformation of the world and of humanity's interpretation of that world, then to equate the Reformation with the socialist and proletarian movement would be to assign to the latter a similar and parallel transformative character. The "anti-intellectual" and "anti-cultural" elements of the Reformation as a socio-political movement blind Croce to the discovery and identification of the liberating and transforming seeds nascent within it. Without the popular and broad movement of the Reformation the process that culminated in the destruction of the feudal social order and of the feudal conception of the world could not have occurred; nor could such a process have prepared the ground for the birth of classical German philosophy and the Enlightenment. In effect, in political and historical terms, the liberal-bourgeois and idealist philosophy whose autonomy is so necessary to Croce is the product of a historical and socio-political process that originally issued from the

Reformation whose thought and culture are described by Croce to be sterile and vulgar. On the other hand, it is the Renaissance culture and humanism that are revealed to be sterile since their thought did not transcend its narrow socio-political base, nor did it transform its culture into a national-popular movement. Thus Gramsci writes: "That a mass of men be led to think coherently and in an unitary manner an existing reality [il reale presente] is a 'philosophical' fact much more important and 'original' than the discovery by a philosophical 'genius' of a new truth which remains the property [patrimonio] of small groups of intellectuals." (MS, 5) <28>

In the same way that the cultural achievements of the Renaissance remained the "property" of a small circle of clerics and courtly humanists, so too in modern Italian history the culture and thought of the liberals and their allies are the exclusive possessions of the educated and leading groups. The philosophy of praxis is that conception of the world that will lead the masses to the formulation of a coherent and rational view of "il reale presente;" and the unity of this conception with the masses is embodied in a modern version of the Reformation, which, by means of the new democratic philosopher that is created by this unity, will generate that "vast" movement necessary to the over-coming of the existing social reality.

Such a reform represents the negation of all Italian history up to the present, a history defined by the Erasmus/Croce relation: the people, mobilized and organized into a national-popular movement are not present in Italian history, and this absence is explained by the cosmopolitan and traditional nature of Italian intellectuals and Italian culture. Rome, the Empire, the medieval Church, the Renaissance, the Papacy as an absolute monarchy, the twilight and decline of Italy and its subjection to external powers, the counter-Reformation, the French Revolution and Napoleon, the Risorgimento, trasformismo, liberalism and nationalism, the philosophy and figure of Croce: the major and significant elements that characterize these successive stages of Italian history are given by what failed to occur, rather than by what did occur--the absence of the national-popular, the absence of the democratic philosopher, the absence of a riforma. The emergence of Europe into the modern age began with the transformation of the feudal cosmopolitan intellectuals into the national-popular and organic intellectuals who disseminated among the people a new conception of the world, which together formed the basis for a territorial and centralized state that developed eventually into the modern and bourgeois nation-state. This process presupposed and necessitated the emergence of a new type of intellectual who would "lead masses of men" to a coherent and integrated conception of existing reality in order to change and transcend it.

If, however, Italian history and Italian politics are the characteristic products of Croce's prototypical "distacco" between culture and people, and if they are described by the absence of a moral and intellectual reform such as that initiated by the Lutheran and Protestant Reformations, Gramsci nevertheless locates and identifies, within the very Renaissance which he has just interpreted as representing the degeneration and corruption of Italian politics and culture, an intellectual figure and a politico-theoretical project that encapsulate in nuce the potentiality inherent within the Renaissance, a potentiality that achieved its historical and political realization not in Italy, but rather outside it. This figure theorized and elaborated a conception of the world that attained a ruling and hegemonic supremacy not within its country of origin but rather in those very countries that underwent the socio-cultural and socio-political changes sparked by the Protestant Reformation. Such a figure is Machiavelli, and his project was to identify and to institute "new modes and orders" in order to over-come and to transform "il reale presente."

Gramsci's critique of the Crocean liberal philosophy, and of its underlying dyads--Renaissance/Reformation, Erasmus/Luther, philosophy/politics, and theory/practice--is resumed and summarized under his interpretation of Machiavelli and of his political thought. It is through Machiavelli that Gramsci carries forward the negation of the

Crocean position and formulates what he calls an "anti-Croce."²⁹ This "anti-Croce" is not a simple and mechanical opposition of Croce's philosophy to the philosophy of praxis. What Gramsci attempts to do is to generate a critique of Croce which originates and is located within the internal structure of Crocean liberalism, an "anti-Croce" that unfolds and flows from within Croce's own historical and philosophical formulations. To do this means to discover and locate within Italian history and culture a figure whose thought and project point to the over-coming of Croce. This transcendence, in turn, presupposes a figure whose work actively negates the fundamental antithesis of Italian history which, we have seen, is represented and embodied by Croce: the divorce between the people and the philosopher-intellectual, and between the people and culture.

In addition, to show that Croce is the modern equivalent of Erasmus, and to show that the philosophy of praxis is the contemporary parallel to the Protestant Reformation, Gramsci must present an alternative figure, and an alternative philosophy, derived not from sources external to the Italian experience, but rather which issue from the cultural, intellectual, and political dynamics of Italian history. It is not enough to equate the philosophy of praxis to the Reformation, and Marx to Luther (as indeed Croce does from his liberal and bourgeois perspective).³⁰ The refutation of Croce, and thereby the refutation of

Italian idealist thought, necessitates a specifically Italian figure to mediate the Erasmus/Luther, Croce/Marx, and Renaissance/Reformation antinomies. In the Crocean interpretation the first term represents culture or philosophy, and the second term politics or practice. Thus if the distinction is posited between "true" philosophy and a sterile or corrupt philosophy, then Gramsci must find a common term that will connect these dyads in such a way that will describe the historical and ideological parallels between Croce's position and his interpretation of Italian politics and history.

To Gramsci the figure of Machiavelli represents the negation of Croce's thought as well as the negation of Italian political practice. Machiavelli is the anti-Croce in the specific and precise sense that Gramsci looks at the Machiavellian enterprise as a project that attempts to initiate a moral and intellectual reformation in order to transform Italian society and politics. What is central to Gramsci is that the rinnovazione which defined Machiavelli's project is not seen as an abstract and narrowly "cultural" renovation, as a scholastic or literary exercise of the intellectual circles of the period. On the contrary, this Machiavelli proposes to accomplish what to Croce and to Erasmus would mean the death of culture and of learning--namely, to lead a "mass of men" to understand "il presente reale" and thereby to transcend it.<31>

To the cosmopolitan and traditional intellectual epitomized by Croce Gramsci opposes the national-popular and organic intellectual epitomized by the figure of Machiavelli. In Gramsci, the democratic philosopher that failed to emerge as a collective and social force within the actual history and politics of Italy is theorized and prefigured in the thought of Machiavelli. Machiavelli thus emerges as the democratic philosopher who engages in an educational relationship with the people, who educates the people and is in turn educated by them. He represents that element within the Renaissance and humanist tradition--especially that arising from the communal experience and practice of Florence--that recognizes and theorizes the necessity to transform the traditional categories of thought and the customary ways of acting into a new vision of society and politics, a vision that will transcend the stale and sterile culture that remained anchored within the traditional boundaries of Empire and Church.

Machiavelli to Gramsci is the representative of a specific humanism that was "politico-ethical, and not artistic," a humanism that inquired into the underlying "bases of an 'Italian State,' which should have been born simultaneously and parallel with the states of France, Spain, and England. In this sense Machiavelli is the most expressive and representative exponent of Humanism and the Renaissance. [Such a humanism] was 'Ciceronian'...that is,

it found its particular bases within the period [of Roman history] that preceded the Empire, the imperial cosmopolis...."(R, 17)<32> Here we have the contrast between the national-popular--Cicero who comes from the people, the vir novus who wants to preserve the "people's affair" (the res publica) from the military despots who want to destroy it--and the cosmopolitan, the intellectual who derives his existence and thought from the imperial structure of power in opposition to the people. Gramsci continues: "Machiavelli is the representative in Italy of the knowledge that the Renaissance cannot be such--a 're-birth'--without the founding of a national State. But as a man, he is a theorist of what occurs outside Italy, and not a theorist of Italian events." (R, 13)<33> The "founding of a national State" is contrasted with the cosmopolitan and international nature of medieval culture and politics as it is represented by the Holy Roman Empire and by the Catholic Church.(De Sanctis, 72)<34> In this sense, the Renaissance is a progressive movement to the extent that it destroyed the bases for the traditional society and the traditional world-view, and to the extent that it provided within Europe the elements necessary for the establishment of a new system of power and a new vision of the world. As a European phenomenon, therefore, Gramsci sees the Renaissance as a necessary and innovating movement that contributed to the formation of a new Europe composed of national and bourgeois states. This new Europe was envisioned by Machiavelli's

project to initiate a rinnovazione: he attempted to inquire into the political elements necessary for the reconstruction of a popular state, of a state that would be "Italian" and Ciceronian in character. This new political order would be neither "universal" in the feudal and Catholic sense, nor cosmopolitan in the imperial Roman sense.

The distinction that Gramsci makes between Cicero and Caesar--one which is made by de Sanctis in his discussion of Machiavellian thought(Ibid)<35>--is indicative of his understanding of the Machiavellian project. Cicero represents the national popular elements of Roman-Italian society who are opposed to the autocracy of Caesar, whose power base rests on the cosmopolitan and non-Italian groups that reside in the provinces of the Empire. Whether or not such an interpretation of the class and power struggles that preceded the fall of the Roman republic and the rise of imperial rule is historically accurate is not the issue.<36> The fact that Gramsci sees the rise of Caesar and the fall of the aristocratic republic in terms of the rise of a new cosmopolitan caste of bureaucratic-intellectuals that ruled the Empire, and the corresponding decline of a group of republican intellectuals that was rooted within the Italian peninsular society, becomes especially significant when this interpretation is related to Machiavelli's praise of the innovator who founds a vivere politico and to his condemnation of those who like Caesar destroyed this form of political life.(See below, where the nature of this life is

discussed)<37> To Gramsci Machiavelli represents the potential in Italian history to develop a group of organic intellectuals or democratic philosophers who, by mobilizing the people and by translating their knowledge into the "life and sense" of the masses, can generate a moral and intellectual reform of the existing social reality and achieve a superior conception of the world that will replace the established one. This is the nature of the "Ciceronian" aspect of Machiavelli's enterprise: it refers, not to the moralistic and aristocratic pretenses put forth by the defenders (one of whom was Cicero himself) of the optimates against the populares, but rather to the socio-political and socio-cultural links to the Italian municipalities. As such, the cosmopolitan/national-popular distinction which operates throughout Gramsci's works<38> is what should be taken as the defining characteristic of Machiavelli's Cicero. (See Skinner)<39> Machiavelli's romanitas and humanitas, therefore, are political and ethical aspects of an activist and dynamic conception of the world that envisions man as the "sensuous" and conscious creator of his own world; they are not in any way related to artistic and literary sensibilities, which are but the passive and uncritical reflections of a scholastic and courtly humanism whose notion of imitatio merely reproduces the cosmopolitan and anti-popular culture of the Empire and the Church. The Machiavellian type of humanism recognizes the hegemonic and leading--that is, popular and educative--character of the

Roman ruling groups as they constructed and expanded the Roman republic throughout the Italian peninsula.

Machiavelli is the product of a lengthy republican tradition characterized by bitter and intense communal struggles that pitted various social and political forces against each other: the ottimati against the popolo minuto, republicans against the medici, the rising communal bourgeoisie against the gentiluomini and the landed feudal lords, the partisans of papal Rome against the ultramontanists, and those who desired moral, political, and religious reform against those who supported the established order.<40> In each instance Gramsci recognizes within these socio-political antagonisms the problematic defined by the traditional intellectual/democratic philosopher dyad: the socio-political struggles of the competing social forces are at one and the same time moral and intellectual struggles between opposing conceptions of the world that seek to establish or to preserve a particular kind of political and ideological supremacy. Machiavelli's thought and work are the representative expressions of this antagonistic historical process. Machiavelli formulates from these struggles a new synthesis--a new conception of the world--that attempts to go beyond and to overcome the accumulated weight and baggage of the past. Thus this Machiavellian synthesis is, in Gramsci's words, "the knowledge that the Renaissance cannot be such...without the founding of a national State." What this means is that the

cultural, intellectual, moral, and social movement that is collectively known as the Renaissance cannot achieve the impetus and direction of a concrete and political reformation unless it becomes translated into a vision and conception of the world that encompasses the life and activity of the people.<41> If the Renaissance is to be a force capable of transforming social reality then it must address the problem of the founding of a state that embodies the new conception of the world put forth by the new ideas of the Renaissance. But the founding of a national State is at the same time a "philosophical event"<42>--that is, the creation of a new social and political order implies the generation and proliferation of a new conception of the world throughout the popular masses, or simply, hegemony.

It is in this sense that Machiavelli "as a man" is a theorist of "what happens outside Italy:" the Renaissance did not culminate in Italy in the creation of a national state. Because it remained the possession of a narrow circle of cosmopolitan intellectuals allied to the various princely courts, communal signorie, and to the universalist papacy, Machiavelli's new vision of the world took root and was historically realized in Northern and Western Europe rather than in his native "provincia." In Italy the new knowledge remained just that: a knowledge without political, social, and practical consequences. The divorce between Renaissance thought and culture, on the one hand, and the life and beliefs of the masses, on the other, meant

that the democratic philosopher necessary to the organization of culture and to the mobilization of the masses could not emerge. And the Italian masses, therefore, did not yet exist as a people, as a collective subject. Yet the knowledge that Machiavelli intended to introduce was a knowledge that could not be understood unless the popular masses--"l'universale"--are taken as the central and nodal loci within which that knowledge is anchored, and from which it acquires purpose and direction. The rinnovazione that was the intention of Machiavelli, and the moral and intellectual reform that is basic to Gramsci's notion of hegemony, together presuppose the people as the necessary force in the founding of a state or of a new social order. The penetration to the masses of a new knowledge constitutes the development of a hegemonic conception of the world, which is the proliferation of moral and intellectual reform, which is, finally, the constitution of an Italian state.<43>

Machiavelli, therefore, is the democratic philosopher who embodies in his thought and in his practical activity the fulfillment of the ideas of Renaissance thought; and, at the same time, such a fulfillment is also the negation of Renaissance humanism. He is its fulfillment because his work represents the consciousness that the new vision of man and the world put forth by Renaissance culture cannot develop further, cannot progress to a higher phase--indeed, it is not able to realize the very values and ends that it has posited for itself--unless there is constituted a

national-popular and collective movement directed towards the creation of a centralized and national political entity--a specifically "Italian" state. And Machiavelli is the negation of the Renaissance because this thought and this consciousness were realized outside Italy--and against the trends and forces that were intrinsic to the process during the period of the Renaissance that led to the decline and fall of the Italian communal republics and principalities. The national-popular movement, and the formation within it of a collective will, achieved socio-historical reality outside Italy. The teaching of Machiavelli remained an academic knowledge in Italy, whereas it flowered in that very soil where the civilization and the studia humanitatis of the Renaissance had not yet taken deep root. Hence the paradox: Machiavelli as the fulfillment of the Renaissance becomes realized in those countries removed geographically and culturally from the centers of the Renaissance and from the "school of Italy" (Florence). Machiavelli, the democratic philosopher of Italian politics and history, as the negation of the Renaissance, represents a political knowledge and a conception of the world that eventually become realized through a moral and religious Reformation whose socio-political and socio-cultural effects are the secularization and modernization of Europe.

Notes

<1>Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, ed. and trans. Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1973), henceforth cited as SPN; and Gramsci, Il materialismo storico e la filosofia di Benedetto Croce (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), p. 86. See also Gramsci, Gli intellettuali e l'organizzazione della cultura, (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), pp. 43-44, "Il protestantismo in Italia."

<2>On this point, see A. R. Buzzi, La teoria politica di Gramsci (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1973); Walter L. Adamson, Hegemony and Revolution: A Study of Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Theory, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980) pp. 162-163; Joseph V. Femia, Gramsci's Political Thought: Hegemony, Consciousness, and the Revolutionary Process, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981) p. 122, see note 58 on p. 277; and Paul Piccone, "From Spaventa to Gramsci," Telos, 31 (Spring, 1977), 35-65, see p. 52. Note also Giorgio Nardone, Il pensiero di Gramsci, (Bari: De Donato Editore, 1971), the chapter "massa e cultura," especially pp. 206-215. In addition, see Gramsci, SPN, p. 395, and Quaderni del carcere, edizione critica a cura di Valentino Gerratana (Torino: Einaudi Editore, 1975), p. 1860 (1933); SPN, p. 396, Quaderni, pp. 1861 (1933); and SPN, p. 398, Quaderni, p. 1863 (1933).

<3>Gramsci, Gli intellettuali e l'organizzazione della cultura (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), pp. 37-38, henceforth cited as Int. And Buzzi, pp. 81-85. In addition, see Michael Mullett, Radical Religious Movements in Early Modern Europe, (Boston: George Allen and Unwin, 1980), chapter I, and the section "Documents and Commentary." And Lewis W. Spitz, The Protestant Reformation, (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1985), pp. 352-353, and 362-363. For an excellent discussion of the political and theoretical orientations of Lutheranism and Calvinism (as well as the Catholic Tridentine reaction to them in the form of a Thomistic revival in the counter-Reformation), see Quentin Skinner, Foundations of Modern Political Thought, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), Vol. II: The Age of Reformation. See also, J.N. Figgis, Political Thought from Gerson to Grotius: 1414-1625 (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960), the essays "The Conciliar Movement and the Papalist Reaction," pp. 41-70, and "Luther and Machiavelli," pp. 71-121.

<4>Skinner, pp. 3-19, 35-47, and 189-205. And Lewis Spitz, pp. 158-162. In addition see Karl Marx's observations in "Contribution to a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," in Karl Marx: Early Writings, ed T.B. Bottomore, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 53.

<5>Gramsci, MS, pp. 8-10. And Spitz, pp. 313-314, and Mullett, pp. 59-60, 71. Also, Skinner, 3-19, 34-41; and Sheldon S. Wolin, Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960), "Luther: The Theological and the Political," pp. 95-140, and "Calvin: The Political Education of Protestantism," pp. 165-194, especially see pp. 143-150, and pp. 169-176.

<6>Mullett, p. 69. And see Gramsci, Letteratura e vita nazionale, (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), p. 7, henceforth cited as LVN; as well as his Int, pp. 21-25, "La quistione della lingua."

<7>Gramsci, Int, pp. 21-23; LVN, p. 218; and MS, pp. 3-4, 5, 63-65, and especially pp. 25-27, "Il linguaggio, le lingue, il senso comune." Here Gramsci notes that "Linguaggio significa anche cultura e filosofia (sia pure nel grado di senso comune) e pertanto il fatto 'linguaggio' e' in realta' una poltepllicita' di fatti piu' o meno organicamente coerenti e coordinati: al limite si puo' dire che ogni essere parlante ha un proprio linguaggio personale, cioe' un proprio modo di pensare e di sentire." p. 26. See SPN, editors' notes and introduction.

<8>Gramsci, Int, p. 21: "i rapporti tra gli intellettuali e il popolo-nazione studiati sotto l'aspetto della lingua scritta dagli intellettuali e usata nei loro rapporti e sotto l'aspetto della funzione avuta dagli intellettuali italiani nella Cosmopoli medioevale per il fatto che il papato aveva sede in Italia (l'uso del latino come lingua dotta e' legato al cosmopolitismo cattolico....il latino letterario si cristallizza nel latino dei dotti, degli intellettuali, il cosi' detto 'mediolatino,' che non puo' essere in nessun modo paragonato a una lingua parlata, storicamente vivente...." "In ogni modo c'e' una frattura tra il popolo e gli intellettuali, tra il popolo e la cultura. [Anche] i libri religiosi sono scritti in mediolatino, sicche' anche le discussioni religiose sfuggono al popolo, quantunque la religione sia l'elemento culturale prevalente: della religione il popolo vede i riti e sente le prediche esortative, ma non puo' seguire le discussioni e gli sviluppi ideologici che sono monopolio di una casta." (Gramsci's citation of Gustave Lanson, Histoire de la litterature francaise, Hachette, 19 ed., pp. 160-161). And note Gramsci's statement: "i volgari sono scritti quando il popolo riprende importanza...." (p. 22), but note Gramsci's comments on p. 23, regarding the re-absorption of the vernacular into the traditional language of the dotti and the clerical-intellectual caste, a phenomenon which parallels the decline and collapse of the communal republics--that is, of the people--in northern Italy. In this regard, see Giuliano Procacci, Studi sulla fortuna del Machiavelli,

(Roma: Istituto storico italiano, 1965), pp. 27-28, on Antonio Brucioli, a friend and admirer of Machiavelli, who was condemned by the Church, and who was "a translator of the Bible into the vernacular, [and] had been a frequent participant in the literary and political conversations in the Orti Oricellari, during which he often had occasion to listen and to reflect upon the observations and discourses of the Florentine ex-secretary." See below, chapter VI.

<9>Gramsci, MS, p.26.

<10>Ibid., pp. 3-4, 25.

<11>Ibid., pp. 4-5; and Adamson, op. cit., pp. 149-151.

<12>Gramsci, MS, p. 85.

<13>Gramsci, Int, pp. 13-23, 38-39, 56-58. Also, see Herbert Marcuse, Studies in Critical Philosophy, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), essay "Luther and Calvin," pp. 56-78; and Skinner, pp. 81-89, 254-273. In addition, see Figgis, "Luther and Machiavelli," op. cit., pp. 71-121.

<14>Gramsci, MS, pp. 26-27.

<15>Emilio Agazzi, "Filosofia della prassi e filosofia dello spirito," in La città futura: Saggi sulla figura e sul pensiero di Antonio Gramsci, a cura di Alberto Caracciolo e Gianni Scalia (Milano: Feltrinelli Editore, 1976), p. 110; Buzzi, op. cit., p. 118. See Gramsci, MS, pp. 83-84, 203-204.

<16>Benedetto Croce, Storia dell'età barocca in Italia, (Bari: Laterza Editore), cited by Gramsci in MS, p. 85. And see Nardone, Il pensiero di Gramsci, pp. 36, and 49. In addition, see Saveria Chemotti, Umanesimo, Rinascimento, Machiavelli nella critica gramsciana, (Roma: Bulzoni, 1975), pp. 60-69. See also Figgis, "Luther and Machiavelli," pp. 71-79.

<17>Gramsci, MS, p. 85. See chapter I, note 53, and Lamberto Borghi, "Educazione e scuola in Gramsci," in Studi gramsciani, (Roma: Riuniti, 1973), Atti del convegno tenuto a Roma nei giorni 11-13 gennaio 1958, Istituto Gramsci, pp. 214-216. Compare Croce's position on the relation between the Renaissance and the Reformation to that of Friedrich Nietzsche: "The Italian Renaissance contained within itself all the positive forces to which we owe modern culture: namely, liberation of thought, disdain for authority, the triumph of education over the arrogance of lineage, enthusiasm for science and men's scientific past, the unshackling of the individual, an ardor for veracity and aversion to appearance and mere effect (which ardor blazed

forth in a whole abundance of artistic natures who, with the highest moral purity, demanded perfection in their works and nothing but perfection)....Despite all its flaws and vices, it was the Golden Age of this millenium. By contrast, the German Reformation stands out as an energetic protest of backward minds who had not yet had their fill of the medieval world view and perceived the signs of its dissolution--the extraordinary shallowness and externalization of religious life--not with appropriate rejoicing, but with deep displeasure. With their northern strength and obstinacy, they set men back, forced the Counter-Reformation, that is, a defensive Catholic Christianity, with the violence of a state of siege, delaying the complete awakening and rule of the sciences for two or three centuries, as well as making impossible, perhaps forever, the complete fusion of the ancient and modern spirit. The great task of the Renaissance could not be carried to its completion; this was hindered by the protest of the now backward German character (which in the Middle Ages had had enough sense to redeem itself by climbing over the Alps again and again)," in Human, All Too Human, trans. Marion Farber with Stephen Lehmann, introduction and notes by Marion Farber, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), pp. 146-147. For this interpretation Nietzsche relies on the work of Jacob Burckhardt, see his The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy: An Essay, trans. S.G.C. Middlemere, (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1965). Compare the statement from Nietzsche to that of de Sanctis in his Storia della letteratura italiana, a cura di Benedetto Croce, (Bari: Laterza, 1965), vol. I, p. 420, in which he says that Luther would have been regarded in the Italy of the Renaissance as simply another "medieval scholastic," and thus the Reformation could not have taken root there because "Italy...now no longer believed in anything except science." And note Gramsci's comments on the differences and similarities between de Sanctis and Burckhardt on the Renaissance: "De Sanctis paints in dark colors the political and moral corruption of the Renaissance; notwithstanding all the merits that may be attributed to the Renaissance, it destroyed Italy and rendered it subject to the foreigner....[And] Burckhardt sees the Renaissance as the point of departure for a new epoch in European civilization--progressive, and the cradle of modern man. [On the other hand], for De Sanctis, from the point of view of Italian history and Italy itself the Renaissance was the point of departure for a regressive movement...Nevertheless, Burckhardt and De Sanctis present a similar analysis regarding the particulars of the Renaissance, and are in agreement in showing as characteristic elements of the Renaissance the formation of a new mentalita', and the divorce of religion, authority, patria, and family from all medieval ties," in Il Risorgimento, p. 14.

<18>Gramsci, MS, pp. 186, 224. And Nardone, Il pensiero di Gramsci, pp. 170-173. In addition, see Eugenio Garin, "Antonio Gramsci nella cultura italiana," in Studi gramsciani, p. 410, note 3.

<19>Gramsci, MS, p. 224. See Wolin's comments on the legacy of the Reformation, Politics and Vision, pp. 192-193. In addition, see Figgis, "Luther and Machiavelli," op. cit., pp. 80-82, 86-91.

<20>Gramsci, Int, pp. 34-35, 38-39; and MS, p. 225. On Croce's position in Italy during the Mussolini era, and his relationship to fascism, see Serge Hughes, The Fall and Rise of Modern Italy, (Minerva Press, 1967).

<21>Gramsci, MS, p. 247; and LVN, p. 105.

<22>See Gramsci's citation of Gustave Lanson, Int, p. 22, and see Gramsci's references to Giuseppe Toffanin, Che cosa fu l'Umanesimo, (Firenze: Sansoni, 1929), pp. 36-37; and Gramsci, Il Risorgimento, (Torino: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1966), p. 15. In addition, see Buzzi, op. cit., p. 67; Nardone, op. cit., pp. 95-100, and p. 111, note 50.

<23>Nardone, pp. 95-106. And Femia, pp. 130-133, 273-274; and Adamson, 93-94, 142-146; and Carl Boggs, Gramsci's Marxism, (London: Pluto Press, 1978), pp. 75-79.

<24>Gramsci, Int, pp. 34-38, and LVN, p. 60. Also, see Buzzi, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

<25>Gramsci, Int, pp. 34-38, and MS, pp. 7-10, 84-85. In addition, see Lewis Spitz, The Protestant Reformation, pp. 300-308, on the efforts of the Catholic Church to regain the initiative and on the counter-Reformation.

<26>Gramsci, Il Risorgimento, p. 13.

<27>Gramsci, Note sul Machiavelli, sulla politica, e sullo Stato moderno, (Torino: Einaudi Editore, 1966), pp. 90-91.

<28>Gramsci, MS, p. 5.

<29>Ibid., p. 200. Also, see MS, pp. 190-191, 215, and 240-242.

<30>Nardone, Il pensiero di Gramsci, p. 172. And see Gramsci, pp. 85, 186.

<31>Gramsci, MS, pp. 23, 26.

<32>Gramsci, Il Risorgimento, pp. 16-17: "Puo' essere vero che l'Umanesimo nacque in Italia come studio della romanita' e non del mondo classico in generale (Atene e Roma); ma occorre allora distinguere. L'Umanesimo fu 'politico-etico,' non artistico, fu la ricerca delle basi di uno 'Stato italiano' che sarebbe dovuto nascere insieme e parallelamente alla Francia, alla Spagna, all'Inghilterra: in questo senso l'Umanesimo e il Rinascimento hanno come esponente piu' espressivo il Machiavelli. Fu 'ciceroniano,' come sostiene il Toffanin, cioe' ricerca' le sue basi nel periodo che precedette l'Impero, la cosmopolis imperiale (e in tal senso Cicerone puo' essere un buon punto di riferimento per suo opporsi a Catalina prima, a Cesare poi, cioe' all'emergere delle nuove forze anti-italiche, di classe cosmopolita)." On the Ciceronian concept res publica est res populi, see Sabine's introduction to Cicero, On the Commonwealth, (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill). See also Quentin Skinner, Machiavelli (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981). Note that Gramsci equates the rise of the military dictators with the destruction of the Italian societas created by the Roman republic. See Gramsci, Int, pp. 28-29, and Il Risorgimento, pp. 3-4, 13-15. It is evident that Gramsci is attacking both Russo and Burckhardt, the former for his vision of Machiavelli as an "artist-hero," and the latter for his aesthetic interpretation of the Renaissance--see Luigi Russo, Machiavelli, (Bari: Laterza, 1975), p. 24, and Jacob Burckhardt, The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, Part I, "The State as a Work of Art," and Part III, "The Revival of Antiquity." In addition, see the comments of J.H. Whitfield, Machiavelli, (New York: Russell and Russell, 1965), pp. 117-118, and especially Hans Baron, The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 47-54, 121-129, 146-167. Baron's analysis, which establishes an antinomy between Caesar and Brutus, Caesar and Cicero, imperium and res publica, as well as between Dante and Petrarch on the one hand (who praise Caesar and condemn Brutus and Cicero), and Salutati and Bruni, on the other, is similar to, and parallels, the discussion Francesco de Sanctis presents in his Storia della letteratura italiana, a cura di Benedetto Croce (Bari: Laterza, 1965) and in his "Machiavelli Conferenze," in Saggi critici, a cura di Luigi Russo (Bari: Laterza, 1965), II, pp. 329-338, in which de Sanctis establishes an opposition between Dante and Machiavelli, where the former represents the medieval idealization of the Empire (expressed both in the apotheosis of Caesar and in the struggle between Emperors and Popes), and where the latter represents the advent of a new conception of political space, one no longer bound and defined by the traditional poles of Empire and Church, but rather, emerging from the on-going, local struggles of the Florentine state, this new topos (both in thought and in action) re-directs and re-orientes the

traditional categories and the established ways of life into channels that will eventually lead into what Gramsci calls the "absolute laicism" of the modern world. Thus Dante-Caesar express the cosmopolitan, anti-popular character of the imperium and the cosmopolis, whereas Machiavelli-Cicero represent the national-popular, "pro-Italic" orientation of the res publica. As Gramsci notes, both in Il Risorgimento and in Gli intellettuali, the social and political struggles in Florence were expressed in Dante in a language and discourse defined by the imperial-papal antagonism, an antithesis that placed one kind of cosmopolis against another. On the other hand, in Machiavelli there is a movement away from these medieval antinomies, such that the opposition between Caesar and Brutus, Caesar and Cicero, is no longer presented in universal and cosmopolitan terms, but rather the opposition is now transformed into one between empire and republic, lords and people, popolo grasso and popolo minuto, and vivere politico e libero and vivere privato. See also Felix Gilbert, "The Concept of Nationalism in Machiavelli's Prince," Studies in the Renaissance, I (1954), pp. 38-48; and Franco Gaeta, "Machiavelli storico," in Machiavelli nel V centenario della nascita, AA.VV. (Bologna: Boni, 1973), pp. 139-153, and especially pp. 141-142.

<33>Gramsci, Il Risorgimento, p. 13. It should be noted that Gramsci's view of Machiavelli, which is also a critique of the Italian Renaissance and a critique of modern politics and society in Italy, is similar to Marx's view of German philosophy: what Hegel achieved in thought the French Revolution realized in action, and what Machiavelli had theorized in Italy, was realized in Europe, but not in Italy. Thus, compare Gramsci's statement to that of Marx, in "Contribution to a Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," (1843): "In politics the Germans thought what other nations did. Germany was their theoretical consciousness....If therefore the status quo of German statehood expresses the perfection of the ancien regime, the perfection of the thorn in the flesh, the modern state, the status quo of German political theory expresses the imperfection of the modern state, the defectiveness of its flesh itself." Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Collected Works, (New York: International Publishers, 1975), vol. III, p. 181, also found in Bottomore, op. cit., pp. 51-52. And in The Holy Family, Marx writes: "If Herr Edgar compares French equality with German 'self-consciousness' for an instant, he will see that the latter principle expresses in German, i.e., in abstract thought, what the former says in French, that is, in the language of politics and of thoughtful observation." Marx and Engels, Collected Works, vol. IV, p. 39. Finally, it is instructive to compare both Gramsci and Marx to Hegel: "In this great epoch of the world's history [the last quarter of the eighteenth century], two nations only have played a part,

the German and the French, and this in spite of their absolute opposition, or rather because they are so opposite....In Germany this principle [the principle of will, the principle of liberty] has burst forth as thought, spirit, Notion; in France, in the form of actuality." G.W.F. Hegel, Hegel's Lectures on the History of Philosophy, trans. E.S. Haldane and Frances H. Simson, (New York: The Humanities Press, 1974), vol III, p. 409. See also the Philosophy of History, trans. T.M. Knox, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), where Hegel says that in Germany the principle of abstract liberty remained a tranquil theory, whereas in France the attempt was made to translate the principle into practice, to act upon it, and realize it in history. See Gramsci, in MS, where he cites both Marx and Hegel, and where he connects these statements to Marx's Eleventh Thesis, p. 66.

<34>Francesco de Sanctis, Storia della letteratura italiana, a cura di Benedetto Croce, (Bari: Laterza Editore, 1965), vol II, p. 72.

<35>Ibid. In addition, see de Sanctis, "Machiavelli Conferenze," in Saggi critici.

<36>See Ronald Symes, The Roman Revolution, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), for an incisive and historically detailed account of the social, political, and cultural transformation that occurred during the Marius/Sulla and Caesar/Pompey struggles for supreme power that marked the fall of the Roman republic and its transformation into the Augustan Principate. In addition, for an analysis of class conflict and political institutions in the ancient world, see M. I. Finley, Politics in the Ancient World, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). For an analysis of political institutions and political technique during the rise of Caesar, see L. R. Taylor, Party Politics in the Age of Caesar, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961).

<37>See below, chapter VI, where the nature of this life is discussed.

<38>See especially, Il Risorgimento, pp. 3-4, 5-10, and pp. 11-26, section entitled "Riforma e Rinascimento." In addition, see Int, pp. 21-54, section entitled "Funzione cosmopolita degli intellettuali italiani." And, MS, pp. 3-10.

<39>See Skinner, Foundations of Modern Political Thought, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), vol. I, pp. 118-138, 152-185, and his Machiavelli, for a discussion of Machiavelli's use of the ancient writers and his "re-translation" of Ciceronian Stoicism. See also Hans Baron, "Cicero and the Roman Civic Spirit in the Middle Ages

and Early Renaissance," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, 22, (1938), pp. 72-97. See also Jerrold Seigel, Rhetoric and Philosophy in Renaissance Humanism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp. 17-21, 25-30.

<40>See Felix Gilbert, Machiavelli and Guicciardini: Politics and History in Sixteenth Century Florence, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), and J. G. A. Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition, (Princeton: Princeton Press, 1975), Part I; and Nicolai Rubinstein, "Politics and Constitution in Florence at the End of the Fifteenth Century," in Italian Renaissance Studies, ed. E.F. Jacob (London: Faber and Faber, 1960), pp. 148-183, and see especially pp. 151-152, 158-160, 172-173, 178-181.

<41>Nardone, Il pensiero politico di Gramsci, pp. 256-259; and see Chemotti, pp. 42-45.

<42>Gramsci, MS, pp. 32, 39.

<43>Francesco de Sanctis, "Machiavelli Conferenze," in Saggi critici, a cura di Luigi Russo, (Bari: Laterza, 1965), vol II, pp. 329-338, as well as de Sanctis' essay on Machiavelli in his Storia della letteratura italiana; and see Gramsci, NM, pp. 9, 14.

Chapter IV

The Gramscian formulation that the work and thought of Machiavelli is equivalent to the work and thought of the Protestant reformers--that the enterprise Machiavelli wanted to introduce into Italy was historically carried out and brought to fruition by the Reformation--sees Machiavelli not so much as the discoverer of an "objective" political "science,"^{<1>} but rather as the innovator who attempted to initiate a moral and intellectual reform of the beliefs and thought of his period, and who in turn wanted to create and proliferate a new conception of the world in opposition to the established view. Thus the Crocean position that posits a contradiction between the Renaissance and the Reformation is viewed by Gramsci to be one-sided and superficial. The contradiction resolves itself into a false polarity when the figure and thought of Machiavelli are introduced into it as a mediating middle term.

Now such an interpretation cannot be appreciated unless it is understood that the analysis put forth by Gramsci is derived, at least in part, from a reading of the Risorgimento historian Francesco de Sanctis. In his magisterial work on the history of Italian literature,^{<2>} de Sanctis contrasts the spirit and culture of the Middle Ages with the moral and intellectual "rinnovamento" which he believes Machiavelli represents. Such a comparison emphasizes the "disharmony"^{<3>} that prevailed during the

period that saw in Italy the end of the feudal order and the emergence of the Renaissance, a comparison that underlined the differences between the decadence and corruption of the ecclesiastical and princely courts, and the way of life and practices of the people, a contradiction expressed often by Machiavelli between "the depravity of the Italian, or rather Latin race, and the moral soundness of the German people." (SLI, II, 67) <4> In addition, the contradiction between thought and practice, ideal and reality, is highlighted in the sermons of the Florentine reformer Savonarola and in the critical activity of Luther. De Sanctis notes that "the Gospel always remained an undisputed ideal although it had no real effect in practical life: thought was no longer word, and the word was no longer action; [thus] there was no harmony in life." (II, 63) <5>

In de Sanctis' view the Lutheran Reformation could not have been a real and concrete possibility in Italy because "Italy had already passed through a theological period, and now no longer believed in anything except science. It would have necessarily perceived Luther and Calvin as new versions of the medieval scholastics. Thus the Reformation could not have taken root among us, and it remained alien and extraneous to our culture....Already liberated from theology, and embracing in a single sweep all religion and all culture, the Italy that gave birth to Pico and to Pomponazzi, seated on the ruins of the Middle Ages, regarded science, and not theology, as the basis for the new

edifice."(I, 420)<6> It should be evident from this quote that the Crocean distinction between Reformation and Renaissance is anticipated or prefigured in the antagonism that de Sanctis, a nineteenth century Hegelian liberal, posits between theology and science. The de Sanctian polarity, however, is quite different from that of Croce. The theology/science dyad represents an opposition between two conceptions of the world, two ways of life, two "ways of thinking and acting," such that the rinnovamento that de Sanctis attributes to Machiavelli contains within itself the revolutionary notion that man's thought and man's consciousness are independent of any transcendent and extra-historical authority, and that this consciousness is the self-knowledge of men acting in society and in history.(II, 421)<7>

Thus to de Sanctis Machiavelli is "the consciousness and the thought of the century, and of the society that looks into itself and that questions itself and [thereby] knows itself." Machiavelli represents "the most profound negation of the Middle Ages,"(I, 420)<8> and his innovative project and the new world that it expresses are together the products of the break-down of feudal society and feudal thought, products that will eventually develop into the modern conception of the world and into a modern notion of science and philosophy. To de Sanctis Machiavelli is the Italian Luther: "Lutero fu Niccolo' Machiavelli."(Ibid)<9> The Italian Luther constructed an innovating knowledge that

formed the basis for a new and modern conception of the world that eventually led to the transformation of European thought and European life, while the German Luther initiated a moral and religious Reformation whose transformation of traditional religion and established theology led to the foundation of a modern Europe. In both we have the beginning of a moral and intellectual process that revolutionized the thought and activity of European society: in the first case there is a critique of the "disharmony" between the accepted theoretical and political knowledge and the socio-political reality this knowledge attempts to understand, and in the second case there is a similar critique of the contradiction between the "word" of the sacred texts and the "action" of practical life.

Although Gramsci does not accept all of the conclusions that de Sanctis draws from his interpretation of Machiavelli,<10> he nevertheless recognizes in the de Sanctian Machiavelli a crucial element which is central to the formation and elaboration of his notion of the organic and national-popular philosopher.<11> To say that Machiavelli is the Italian Luther is to say that Machiavelli is the figure who theorized the necessity for the generation of a moral and intellectual reform that would penetrate to the people, become the life of the people, and that would thus assume the character of a popular movement. At the same time, such an interpretation provides a political and ideological critique of Croce and of Italian liberal and

bourgeois culture. For to envision Machiavelli as the Italian Luther^{<12>} is to deny the Crocean distinction between philosophus and politicus, and to argue for the elaboration of a philosophy and a culture that through their educative and directing activity have become a hegemonic force.

Now Gramsci accepts as a general principle the de Sanctian formulation that Machiavelli represents the consciousness and the self-knowledge of the age. But he historicizes and concretizes it by placing Machiavelli within the political and class context of Florentine history: the new world and the new consciousness discovered and expressed by Machiavelli failed to become the costume of Italian society, because this new knowledge of ruling did not become the knowledge of Italian social forces--most especially of the ruling groups--and did not become the hegemonic conception of the communal bourgeoisie, and thus did not become a state, "il reale presente."^{<13>} On the contrary, it is the religious and moral reformers--the Protestant Machiavellians--who are the true historical and political inheritors of the new knowledge. The equation Luther = Machiavelli undermines and uproots the liberal and bourgeois position that establishes the independence of philosophy from politics, knowledge from action, and the intellectuals from social and economic forces. Gramsci opposes the de Sanctian interpretation of Machiavelli as the Italian Luther to the Crocean distinction between Luther and

Erasmus. What such an opposition does is that it inserts within the latter antithesis a middle term--the figure of Machiavelli--such that a synthesis is achieved whereby the thought and philosophy represented by Erasmus (alta cultura), and the popular character and beliefs of Luther (cultura popolare), resolve themselves into a new and unified totality. It is in the figure of Machiavelli that the opposition is transcended. Such a synthesis may now be expressed by the formulation: Machiavelli = Erasmus + Luther.

But such a transcendence, of course, is regarded by Croce as an impossible self-contradiction, and would be anathema to his philosophical and political position. To posit a unity between Luther and Erasmus would mean the disintegration and collapse of culture and philosophy, and the concurrent elevation of politics and ideology to a level where the latter would become the standards and determiners of what Croce conceives as "Truth" and "Spirit." The elevation of ideology into philosophy, or "error" and "faith" into "truth" and "knowledge," means in fact the initiation of that process that began with the revolutions of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and which saw the emergence and spread of the "corrupt philosophy" (Marxian philosophy). Therefore, in order to maintain his position towards politics and the role of the masses, Croce is compelled to offer an interpretation of Machiavelli that denies the popular and democratic character

of the Machiavellian enterprise--that is, Croce must deny those elements within the thought and work of Machiavelli that pose the problem concerning the formation of a people and the formation of a way of life that forms and embodies a people. The opposition between Erasmus and Luther, and between the Renaissance and the Reformation, must be maintained, and each term of the relation must be posited as separate and distinct, if the Crocean position is to retain its political and philosophical integrity.

Croce first begins by repeating the de Sanctian notion that Machiavelli is a great revolutionary and initiator in the field of historical and political thought. He is the discoverer of a new political knowledge that established the independence and autonomy of his science from all theological, ethical, and philosophical systems.<14> To assert the autonomy of philosophy and culture, Croce must simultaneously assert the autonomy of politics, and he sees in Machiavelli the thinker who theorized and developed this autonomy of the political. Machiavellian thought is a science of politics that transcends any specific historical period and any particular socio-political class or group. Thus Croce: "...Machiavelli discovers the necessity and the autonomy of politics, of a politics which is beyond, or rather this side of, a moral good and evil, which possesses its own laws against which it is useless to rebel, a politics which holy water cannot exorcize and expel from this world. Such a concept permeates his entire works...a

profoundly philosophical concept which represents the true and actual foundation of a political philosophy." (EP, 251; contrast this to de Sanctis, 74) <15> The laws and categories of this new political philosophy are eternally and universally valid, as immutable and unrelenting as the physical laws of nature. They are consequently autonomous and independent from any other categories or concepts external to themselves, and from any concrete and historical subject who knows them and who knows how to employ them.

The Machiavellian "new modes and orders" constitute a system of thought radically different from the antecedent philosophy of feudalism that subordinated politics to ethics, and ethics to theology. Machiavelli is the discoverer not simply of political thought--for after all political thinking has had a long and durable tradition in European history--but also of the notion that such thought is a product of categories and concepts peculiar to itself, and which does not issue from ethical, religious, theological, and philosophical systems of which it is a mere part and constituent. Machiavelli signals the break-up of the unity of the Middle Ages, and he embodies the consciousness that this rupture requires a new way of thinking about power and politics. The de Sanctian notion that the Renaissance means the general awakening of the human spirit, the coming to self-consciousness of social man, <16> is interpreted by Croce in terms of the progress of the Spirit in history. Croce echoes the de Sanctian

observation about the role of Machiavelli: "Niccolo' Machiavelli is considered the pure expression of the Italian Renaissance; but at the same time he should be related in some way to the Reformation, to that general necessity that emerged during his age, both in and outside Italy, to know man and to inquire into the problem of the soul." (EP 251) <17> This need for man to acquire knowledge of himself is similar to the de Sanctian "nosce te ipsum," <18> but while Croce links it to the problem of the soul and of thought, de Sanctis understands self-knowledge not as a problem exclusively spiritual or philosophical, but rather as one intimately related to the concrete world, where self-knowledge presupposes "the knowledge of the world in its reality." (SLI, II, 76) <19> In Croce, to the extent that the age recognized "that general need" for self-knowledge Machiavelli may "in some way" be compared to the Reformation--but in what way? In the de Sanctian interpretation of the Italian Luther who initiates, not just an intellectual, but also an ethical and moral reformation, as one who attempted to construct a new conception of the world in order to change the real world? The operative term here is Croce's "anima" (soul): both the Reformation and Machiavelli posed the problem of consciousness and of self-knowledge in terms of "anima"--that is, in terms of pure thought. Thus the autonomy of politics, and the autonomy of political thought, express the general need for self-knowledge, and are located within the "problema

dell'anima." Machiavelli and the Reformation do not negate the moral and religious problems of their time, they each in their individual ways free them from their subordination to traditional authority and to established theology.

Following his conception of the "dialectic of distincts," Croce sees Machiavelli as the thinker who individuates and develops that moment or aspect of the universal Spirit that embodies and takes the form of political thought.<20> The distinction between philosophy and politics, and between culture and politics, is preserved because the revolution that Machiavelli initiates in politics, and the reform that the Reformation represents, occur not within the real world of social forces struggling against each other, but rather in the realm of the spirit and of the "anima." The Machiavellian enterprise is seen purely in terms of the problems of political philosophy and political science--that is, the subject of this knowledge is located within the moment of thought and culture. Thus the autonomy of politics is the autonomy of a political knowledge from the other moments of Spirit, an autonomy achieved by the individuation and differentiation of this knowledge within philosophy and culture.

Croce writes that "the art and the science of politics--of pure politics--which were developed and brought to maturity by Italians, had become an object of great pride to them, so that to Cardinal Rohan's statement that the

Italians did not know anything about war, [Machiavelli] replied that 'the French did not understand the nature of the State [and of politics]'. "(EP, 253)<21> But what is the substance of this pura politica, what form does it take, and what role does it play? Croce presents an entirely abstract and ahistorical discussion of the nature of politics: politica is an activity and an art whose particular sphere is the manipulation and the control of the appetitive and economic interests of self-regarding individuals. These interests make it necessary that they be directed into orderly and integrative channels that will preserve the over-all stability of society. Without the integrating activity of politics the egoistic nature of man will lead to the destruction and dissolution of societal order, where the society will degenerate into an Hobbesian bellum omnium contra omnes. It is the political art that provides the mechanism and the means through which the struggles obtaining among the various groups and individuals within society will be circumscribed within the established forms and institutions.<22>

Political knowledge, therefore, reduces itself to a technique and a means, which, by its very nature, does not contain within itself any ends or purposes: as instrument and technique it is ethically and morally neutral. Politics is a cold, purely scientific and logical activity detached from the passions, needs, and interests of conflicting and antagonistic men. The man of politics--il politico--is an

actor without passion and without emotion. As the practitioner of the political art he is pure calculation so that he embodies in his action this "pure politics," in the same way that he reflects in the calculating nature of his thought the limpid and stark objectivity of his science. Pura politica has no interests and no values except those necessary to its self-constitution and self-preservation as politics and as science. It defines itself and looks to itself: it is an instrumentality whose nature is given by its technique and by its "amorality."<23> "Detachment," "science," and "technique" are the operative and characteristic terms that constitute the Crocean notion of "pure politics," elements which underlie the liberal and bourgeois--and, as Gramsci points out,<24> fundamentally Giolittian--nature of Croce's politics.

Croce attempts to redeem such a notion from its Hobbesian and individualistic atomism through the appropriation of the Hegelian term "ethical" and transforming it into the "ethico-political." The ethico-political means that the "State" is neither pure force nor pure consent, but is rather an active and dynamic relation between the two, such that it becomes a synthesis of "power" and "morality." The actual state is this synthesis between the two moments of force and ethics--thus the state is ethico-political.(EP, 215-218, 241-245)<25> The state is a unity of these two moments: it is "pure [mera] politics, pure force or power or utility, and amoral; and it

is morality and ethical value."(EP,182)<26> The first Croce equates to the Machiavellian moment of pura politica, where Machiavelli is said to deny any ethical or moral character to the state, such that the state is pure power, and as such is autonomous from the "rules of Christian piety."(EP,181)<27> This is the "eternal truth" enunciated by Machiavelli, who opposed a "verita' politica" to the "verita' cristiana," a truth that was reclaimed and appropriated by Hegel and Marx when they attacked the moral and democratic character of the state as mere illusion and hypocrisy, and who together "reasserted the nature of the State and of politics in terms of authority and a struggle for power (the power of nations or the power of classes, as the case may be)."(EP,181)<28> Thus to Croce there is a common strand that links Machiavelli to Hegel and to Marx, and this strand is the conception of the state in terms of pure power, and the consequent interpretation of politics as pure technique and as a struggle for power.

When, therefore, Croce addresses Marx as the Machiavelli of the proletariat,<29> he is saying that the Marxian theory of proletarian revolution is the concrete historical form of that pura politica that was originally discovered by Machiavelli. Gramsci only partially<30> accepts such a formulation. For the Crocean equation Marx = Machiavelli implies that Marxism possesses no moral and intellectual content, that it reduces itself to mere political technique, and thus cannot represent the thought

and consciousness of a new historical subject whose activity will usher in a new socio-political and socio-cultural order. We shall see below why the Crocean form of this equation is radically unacceptable to Gramsci. Nevertheless, Gramsci appropriates it and redefines it in terms of moral and intellectual reform, so that Machiavelli = Marx = the democratic philosopher. Gramsci, like Croce and others,<31> opposes the virtu' politica of Machiavelli to the virtu' morale of medieval and Christian philosophy. But the meaning and content given to these terms are understood differently in Gramsci and in Croce. For the latter the nature of political virtu' is constituted by "prudence," "cunning," and "shrewdness," ("prudenza" and "avvedutezza") (EP,254)<32>--in other words, those very skills necessary to appetitive man. Such a notion of virtu' reduces itself to the technique that defines for Croce the nature of the political. Gramsci, however, points out that mere technique does not exhaust the full meaning of political virtu': the Machiavellian virtu' does not simply address the instrumental questions given by the metaphor of the lion and the fox; it is that, but it is also a concept of action that assumes and presupposes a moral and ethical posture toward the world. The virtu' that Machiavelli opposes to the established conception of ethics and morality contains within itself a view of life and a vision of the future, such that the opposition is not between power and morality, but rather between two radically opposed

conceptions of morality and ways of life.<33> Croce is not able to understand a moral and spiritual dimension unless it is posed in Christian terms: thus the Machiavellian attack on Christian and medieval notions of the ethical life is taken as a critique of morality and ethics in general.

It is indicative of Croce's interpretation of Machiavelli that the opposition between the power-state and the ethical-state is seen as an antagonism between two different spheres of action whose resolution can only be achieved in thought. The opposing terms must be made "pensabile"--"thinkable"--by means of what he calls a "dialectical movement," where the "parallel and juxtaposed duality" is resolved through a spiritual process in such a way that the "State poses itself in a first moment as pure power and utility, and thence it ascends to morality, but at the same time it does not repudiate its former character, but rather negates it--that is, it preserves it by transcending it."(EP,182)<34> This, of course, is a restatement in Hegelian language of the liberal distinction between state and society that has become the prevailing duality in political thought since the advent of bourgeois society. The Hegelian language is simply a superficial device that obscures the undialectical character of the analysis. It is significant that the dyads power/morality, force/consent are not seen by Croce in terms of a dialectical mutual penetration and reciprocity, but are rather posited within entirely separate realms, such that

one "ascends" to the level of the other. Such a positing simply reproduces the traditional antithesis between state and church, Reformation and counter-Reformation, the earthly city and the city of God (these opposing concepts permeate the whole body of Croce's Etica e politica).<35>

In effect, the Crocean notion of pura politica reclaims, and translates into a modern liberal discourse, the Christian and Augustinian distinction between the state conceived as the result and remedy of the earthly bellum omnium, and the spiritual-ethical realm seen as the sphere where "true" justice reigns. The Augustinian state is pure force, utility, and coercion. It issues from the sinful and irremediably unregenerate nature of man--a conception not very distant from the Crocean antipathy towards the popular masses. The Augustinian Christian kernel within the liberal Crocean notion of the political emerges quite clearly from the following statement: "political men, powerless to change rapidly the nature [lo stato d'animo] of the common people [volgo], are led to accept and to approve of them in their words and speech, and to deny them in their actions." (EP, 170)<36> The political can be nothing other than the technical method of the lion and the fox (force and fraud) employed to control and repress the nature of the people. Political men are powerless to transcend the necessary laws of socio-political reality. In a very profound sense politics is as amoral, and a question of technique, to Croce and to the liberal bourgeois

philosophers, as it is in Augustine and in Christian thought generally.<37> The moral and ethical nature of the state, in Croce as in Augustine, is a function of a spiritual and philosophical realm--of a level of being--external to what they consider to be properly political.

The Augustinian problematic appears in Crocean liberal thought under the guise of a secular and historical elaboration of philosophy and ethics. The state of grace--the civitas dei--in Augustine is transformed in Croce into the sphere of philosophy and culture; similarly, the earthly city--the civitas terrena--of the former is secularized by the latter into "lo stato d'animo del volgo:" in both cases, human and political activity cannot change the nature of reality, and the two realms must remain forever antagonistic and alien to each other. Thus the Crocean state: power, which is necessary to restrain and coerce the appetites and passions of the "volgo;" and ethics, a sphere of action to which the philosophers, but not the people, can aspire to attain. In Augustine and in Christian theology and philosophy as a whole, the political activity of men can have no transformative character, nor can it generate an educational and moral process by which "virtue" (in the classical and Aristotelian sense) may be attained. The political arises as a consequence of the fall and the unalterable nature of man, a nature which is corrupt and "morally" imperfect. What is crucial here is that Augustine posits the general and fundamental question

regarding the nature of activity and practice: men's action in this world is inherently and unchangeably value-less, men by means of their own will and their own virtus cannot rise to a higher and more meaningful level of existence. The undeserved and free grace of God becomes necessary to reform and to save the "animo" of man: there is a radical and profound gulf between man in the state of grace and man in the civitas terrena. The two realms are forever separate and distinct. Thus the Christian in the state of grace is a peregrinator and a stranger to this earthly life: he is in the world, but not for the world, he lives and moves in this life, but his ends and final destination are given by an entity external to the world. To be for this world--to entertain ends defined by the earthly city--is precisely to participate in the "corruption" and "amorality" that permeates the very character of human action. The political, which belongs properly within this earthly city, is thus a mere device for the attainment of "earthly peace" (or order and stability)--that is, the channeling and ordering of man's passions and interests through the institution of the state. The Augustinian dualism between the two kinds of civitates is transformed into the secular and Kantian dualism to which Croce subscribes: the noumenal world of ethics and morality is alien to, and "beyond," the phenomenal world of practical action.(EKM,110-113)<38> To the extent that the Crocean state is ethical, it is not for the world, though it is very much in it. This is how we

should understand the statement quoted earlier that "power is preserved and transcended." And the political--"pure power"--must be preserved in order to coerce and contain the nature of the common people. The "transcendence" into the ethical, therefore, means that the state creates an order, and a necessary integration, by means of which the spiritual activity of philosophy and culture may be conducted and constantly renewed and transcended. To Croce the philosopher and the intellectual are the "elect," the pilgrims who are in this world but not for it.

Notwithstanding Croce's attempt to attain a synthesis between the state as force and the state as morality, and transcend the duality into the state as ethico-political, the moments of the duality remain parallel and juxtaposed to each other, and the two polarities remain locked within their separate spheres of being. As Gramsci points out,<39> if a transcendence and synthesis are indeed achieved, then they occur solely within the realm of thought, within the abstract activity of the Spirit as it moves from one level to the other.(See EP, 220)<40> Croce himself notes that the transcendence is realized by means of a "spiritual process" which makes the synthesis "dialectically thinkable"--which is to say that the synthesis takes place within the sphere of philosophy and culture, a sphere, we should remember, which is distinct from that of politics and the "volgo."(EP, 182)<41> But if the resolution occurs within the moment of thought and philosophy, then the concept of the state as an

ethico-political entity, when inserted into the historical and socio-political reality, is a rationalization and legitimation of this reality, for it endows the state with a value and a purpose that are alien to it. The state as etica is totally divorced from the state as potenza, so that the former veils and mystifies the character of the latter. Such a "synthesis" leads to a notion of the ethico-political which is basically conservative and restorative, a notion which is historically and socially specific to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (that is, the concept of the ethico-political justifies the power structure that emerged in Italy after its unification).<42>

It should be noted that the thinkers who Croce believes assert the view that the "State recognizes no other law than the law of power or force" (EP, 180)<43> are precisely those who attempted to inquire into the conditions necessary for the transformation of existing reality: Machiavelli, Hegel, and Marx. On the other hand, he identifies the doctrine of the state as morality with those thinkers who emerged and worked in periods of history where restoration, preservation, and conservation had become the paramount questions of the day.<44> The Crocean relation between the political and the ethical, as well as the attempt to arrive at a synthesis, are closely related to his interpretation of the political and historical problems that confronted Italian and European history: the counter-Reformation, Italy in the age of the baroque, the failure of the 1799

Neapolitan Revolution, the history of Italy and Europe during the late and early nineteenth century, are Crocean subjects of study that emphasize the moment of restoration and preservation as opposed to the moment of innovation and transformation.<45> The age of the baroque, as well as post-1870 Europe, are seen as decisive periods where in the former Italian political science reached its "maturity," and where in the latter the formation of the Italian liberal state is viewed as a stage in the continual progress and individuation in history of liberty. The concept of history as the story of liberty<46> becomes linked to the concept of the state by means of the ethico-political: in both instances the moment of force and the moment of transformation are "transcended" into the moment of the ethical and the moment of philosophy. In practical and political terms this means that history, and the state which to Croce is the subject of this history, are denuded of their social and economic content; they are "tamed" and reduced to a history wherein struggle and conflict are absent, and to a state whose structure and role are idealized into a mere moment of thought. What Croce achieves is not a synthesis, but its opposite. He intends to relate the moment of the universal to that of the particular by means of the ethico-political viewed as the resolution of the duality of the state;(EP, 175)<47> what he in fact achieves is the construction of an ideology which justifies the particular. The particular is not transcended

into the universal; rather the universal, since it exists purely in thought and in philosophy, is particularized the instant it comes into contact with historical and political reality. Consequently, the moment of the ethical cannot transform and negate the moment of power as long as the former remains an abstract universal. The ethical does not act to transcend the moment of force, but acts as an ideological "political formula,"^{<48>} through which the force and power of the state are veiled and made acceptable to subordinate and dominated groups.

Such a state, envisioned as the "unity of political life and ethical life," and as the embodiment of an "ethical and moral consciousness" joined with an "economic and political consciousness"--where the former represents the universal, and the latter the particular, moments--is the product of a liberal and bourgeois conception of the world whose concrete and historical incarnation is the Italian state of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.^{<49>} The origins of this state may be traced to the cosmopolitan and non-national character of Italian culture and intellectuals, so that its claim to universality, and to express the "life of the nation," is an illusion that obscures and covers up the narrow and particular character of its social bases. The Crocean unity between political life and ethical life is not a unity in the Hegelian and Marxian sense of a dialectical synthesis, but is rather an artificial and mechanical juxtaposition

between the particular seen as the political moment and the universal viewed as the moral and ethical moment. The two moments are crystallized within their respective polarities and their respective values. In addition, they remain separated and unrelated to each other because the ethical is posited as a sphere superior to the political, so that the latter is reduced to an instrument and means of the former. The dyad politica/etica resolves itself into pure etica since to Croce politica acquires meaning and content through its subordination to the former category. (EP, 228-229) <50>

This notion of the ethical parallels and corresponds to the conception of philosophy and the philosopher, which to Croce embody the march of history in space and time. We should remember that philosophy represents the sole activity in history which is creative and innovating. Philosophy, culture, and ethics represent in history the universal consciousness; the political is a one-sided moment that needs to be fulfilled by the totality of the former--it is an aspect of a particular consciousness that results in what Croce calls mere "passion." (EP, 175) <51> The particular and "unilateral nature" of political action, when directed by the ethical consciousness, is transformed into the universality of the "total" state: "With this elevation of pure politics into ethics even the word 'State' acquires a new meaning: it is no longer a simple utilitarian relation, a synthesis of force and consent, and of authority and liberty, but rather it becomes the incarnation of the human

ethos and is thus the ethical State or a cultural State..."(EP, 230)<52> In effect, politics is not a self-sufficient moment of action: it is realized through ethics and culture such that it is raised to the level of philosophy and thought. But though it is so raised, the nature of politics still remains an alien form within this level, for it still retains its particular character. Thus there emerges a paradox whereby the political is autonomous, and distinct from the ethical precisely because the former's meaning and end are given by the latter. The instrumental and technical nature of politics presupposes a political knowledge whose methods and procedures are quite different and independent from those of ethics and philosophy. But since this knowledge is utilitarian, one relating to means rather than ends, it is a knowledge whose purpose and significance are determined by values located outside itself. (See MP, 93)<53>

Since the essence of the political--of pura politica--is reduced to an instrumentality and to a utility, and since, consequently, it is morally and ethically neutral, the essence of political knowledge is also reduced to a technical knowledge that describes the methods by which a ruler or a "prince" attains or maintains his power. The science of politics is the knowledge of the manipulation and deception of the "volgo"--for the attainment of ends posited by those who possess such a knowledge. The philosopher, however, (or the logos of which he is the incarnation) does

not descend immediately and directly to the world of practice and of the "volgo:" philosophy must ever remain distinct from politics. It is the political actor--"il politico" ("politician") or "l'uomo di Stato" ("statesman")--who puts into practice the political knowledge given by the notion of pure politics. The activity of political man becomes purposive and is redeemed through the activity of philosophy and culture. The politico translates the methods and rules of political knowledge into action and practice: it is he who "soils" his hands within the world of struggle and conflict.

The politico is the actor who possesses the arcana imperii--the political knowledge which describes the modes of action and the instrumenta regni proper to his sphere of activity. It is significant that the function and role of the political actor is not to svelare (uncover) the arcana imperii in order to "make political action transparent and conscious;" rather it is "to keep the arcana imperii secret and mysterious." (EP, 171-172) <54> Thus the defining characteristic of the political actor is to make certain that this political knowledge remain in the hands of "those who know" (chi sa). For it is not possible to open this knowledge--to make it transparent--to the popular masses. Such an unveiling would lead to the unraveling and to the undermining of the socio-cultural and socio-political structure of power embodied in the "State." Any attempt to reveal the arcana imperii and teach the people such

knowledge--any attempt to transform "those who do not know" (chi non sa) into "those who know"--is self-contradictory and would be rendered useless, for it would assume a level of culture and a level of intellectual-moral awareness that the "volgo" will always lack. In other words, the alta cultura which defines the life of those who possess philosophy and knowledge is to remain "superior" to the cultura popolare of the common people. The political, and the knowledge appropriate to it, are to maintain in practice this distinction between philosophy and culture, on the one hand, and politics and the "volgo" on the other.<55>

The nature of the common people is such that any revelation of political knowledge would result not only in the annihilation of the uomini di politica, but also would lead to the destruction of that socio-cultural space necessary to philosophy and to thought. The consciousness of the masses cannot attain the level necessary to understand and accept (both morally and intellectually) the stark reality of political action. The consciousness of the people is a form of error, which always exists at the level of "passion" and sentiment. And to teach political knowledge to them would be to destroy the very basis of such knowledge. Indeed, if the knowledge of the politico is to fulfill its directive and ruling function, the consciousness of the "volgo" must remain ignorant of the methods and techniques employed to shape and to manipulate it. In effect, in the same manner that politics is the subordinate

instrument of ethics and philosophy, and the politico is the instrument of the "great thinker," so too the masses are the raw material and the instrument of the political actor (a formulation which reproduces the Platonic relation between the philosopher and the people).<56> Thus political knowledge is a method by which the contradictions between the ruler and the ruled, philosophy and practice, the "word" and the action, are covered and rendered opaque.

In a review of Burnham's The Machiavellians, half a century after he first formulated his position on Machiavelli and the nature of politics, Croce registers his full agreement with Burnham's call for a "realistic political theory:" "this pure political theory, discovered once and for all by Machiavelli, is to be found repeated by many who, consciously or not, have recently followed his tradition." This tradition teaches that history and experience "prove" that democracy is impossible; and since "we have no reason to suppose that the tendencies and conditions which have prevented the realization of democracy in all periods of human history will disappear in the future, we must, as scientific thinkers, expect that future to have as little democracy as the past." (MP, 91-92) <57> The "hard doctrine" of the Machiavellian tradition has proved to be the "only scientific theory of politics; in the political world it is the truth." This truth which is taught by Machiavelli "is opposed to the masses, who can never be induced to think scientifically and critically, to see

realistically or to argue logically at the sacrifice of passion sometimes fickle and sometimes obstinate, but always violent." (MP, 93; contrast this to MS, 114-115) <58>

The popular masses represent and embody "feeling" (sentire) and passion. As in Plato, so too in Croce, the people can never "think" and deliberate, and therefore can never acquire an autonomous and self-determining will--the "volgo" in itself can never create a world which is "for itself" and which is the embodiment of its life and its values. But if this is the case, then this would imply that to the extent that the people cannot think and determine for themselves the form and shape of their social existence, then to that extent the people will never attain the realm of the ethical and the moral. The slave in Aristotle is a being whose nature lacks the faculty of reason and moral deliberation which only the master--the autonomous citizen--can provide him; the people in Croce is an entity than can acquire moral and ethical purpose only through the leadership of "those who know." <59> What this means is that within the social totality described by the ethico-political "State," the the ethical moment is realized through the intellectual and cultural activity of those who possess knowledge and who know how to rule, while the political moment (technique, force, power) delineates the realm wherein the "volgo" exists as a subordinate entity, whose life and consciousness are determined by the moral and intellectual elite. Autonomy and freedom presuppose moral

and intellectual knowledge, and since the masses can never aspire to such a cultural and ethical consciousness, they will remain immersed within the "realm of necessity," where mere nature--passion, feeling, and violence--reigns. On the other hand, "those who know," possessing a superior consciousness, are able to develop a moral and autonomous will through which is established the "realm of freedom" where nature and violence are transcended. Although Croce is fond of using the Hegelian terminology of "dialectics" and "transcendence," he most tellingly fails to understand the basic Hegelian proposition that the freedom of a given subject presupposes at the same time the freedom of the Other; whereas Croce constructs a dialectic that posits the freedom of the subject as dependent upon, and requiring, the domination of others and their subordination to necessity and to nature.<60>

The metaphysical and theoretical duality (which is quite Kantian and anti-Hegelian) between thought and action, between pensare and sentire, is socially and politically reproduced by this "pure" political doctrine that posits an essential and necessary divorce between the "scientific" and educated elite (the "aristocracy of the intellect"), and the "volgo" which "does not seek the truth" and thus cannot rule itself. (MP, 93)<61> The metaphysical polarity thinking/feeling established by philosophy parallels the cultural dyad philosopher/the "simple" (i semplici), which translates into the social antithesis intellectual/common

people, which, finally, corresponds to the political dyad ruling/being ruled. (See Mosca and Michels, modern day "pluralism")<62> These polarities must at all costs be maintained, for there cannot be "liberty without necessity." (F, 118)<63> Any attempt to over-come the antitheses would result, not in the annihilation of necessity and the universalization of liberty, but rather in the destruction of the realm of freedom and the return to nature--that is, the people as a political force signals the destruction of culture and ethical life, and the intrusion into society of nature and violence.

It is the political, the pure political theory discovered by Machiavelli, that acts as the vehicle through which these distinctions are maintained and constantly reproduced. Given the nature of the masses, which even the efforts of popular and public education to raise its level have proved futile, and which will ever remain ignorant of philosophical and political knowledge, "the only course...is to put our trust in that part of the ruling elite which is scientifically educated....We must trust the class called the 'intellectuals,' as Hegel acknowledged by calling them the 'universal class,' or the 'unclassed' [classe non classe]." (MP, 93)<64> This universal class, ever open to new members issuing and rising from below as it opens its ranks to them, will renew and rejuvenate itself constantly (this is not dissimilar to Mosca's "circulation of elites.")<65> In the Crocean vision of "democracy" (which in American

political thought translates into pluralism and the theory of groups and organizations), <66> the intellectuals, as the universal class, will establish an "aristo-democracy" that will produce the socio-cultural and the socio-political conditions necessary for further historical development. <67> Such development depends upon the continued subordination of the "volgo" to the intellectuals, and upon the continual reproduction of the moral and intellectual distance that the Crocean liberal "State" guarantees between cultura popolare and alta cultura--that is, between "feeling" and "thinking."

The masses as a socio-political force will act to undermine the intellectuals as the universal class. In the same way that philosophy, when directly linked to politics, is corrupted and transformed into ideology and error, the intellectuals will lose their autonomy as a socio-political group, and become the appendages and satellites of the particularistic interests of societal groups and classes: they will lose their universality and descend to the particularity of the class conflicts and power struggles of society. But what is an outcome to Croce, is to Marx and Gramsci the general and existing condition of philosophy and thought in a society where the contradiction between the moral-ethical freedom of the few is made possible, and grounded in, the brute necessity of the many.

To Croce the very nature of philosophers and intellectuals--the antithesis of the nature of the common people--determines their social status as the universal class. They are the social and cultural expression of thought and "truth," the subjects whose activity is to think and to deliberate, such that "il pensiero pensa." To establish a popular and mass base for philosophy and for the intellectuals, to demand that the philosopher not only go to the people, but that he issue and arise from the life of the people, would mean that "thought does not think"--it would mean the transformation of "thinking" into "feeling," and "feeling" into "thinking." (MS, 114-115) <68> The function of the political is to establish the conditions under which "thought thinks." The political is to order and manipulate the passions and emotions of the people, to dominate and to control the people; but it cannot seek to discover the conditions existing within the social reality that would transform the "volgo" into an active agent of history.

The movement from thinking to feeling, and from feeling to thinking, is a mutual and reciprocal relation that parallels the relation established between the educator and the student. It is a movement whose theoretical and critical elaboration--not to mention its social and practical realization--presupposes a concept of the political which does not limit itself to mere power and utility, but rather understands political activity as hegemonic activity, as moral and intellectual reform. The

latter does not posit a static and mechanical distinction between ethics and politics, thought and action: it understands feeling, thinking, seeing, and acting as mutually related and mutually dependent aspects of a totality which is constantly becoming. The Crocean "dialectic" as it proclaims the autonomy of "pure politics" at the same time reduces it to the status of a technical instrument dependent upon ends posited by ethics and philosophy. The political is posited and ossified into an abstract "science" that teaches a body of knowledge conceived as immutable and universal "truth"--a truth which, given its "scientific" character, is socially and ideologically neutral. In such a notion, the truth taught by Machiavelli is not dependent upon the political subject that knows it and seeks to use it: it is there ready to be used by the tyrant or the democrat, the bourgeois or the proletarian. (NM, 9-10) <69>

The "machiavellismo" as posited by Croce is criticized by Gramsci as being ahistorical and "bookish." <70> Gramsci believes that the knowledge Machiavelli intended to teach, and the political project that he intended to introduce, are intimately related, so that the "science" of politics cannot be understood unless it is inserted "within its concrete context (as well as within its logical formulation) and seen as an organism in the process of becoming." (NM, 9) <71> Gramsci translates the Crocean "pure politics," and its autonomy of political science, into what he calls an "active

politics" (politica attiva), and thus into the autonomy of political action--where action is now precisely the concretization of the reciprocal movement between pensare and sentire, philosophy and practice.(NM, 117-119)<72>

"Politics is an autonomous activity" which, though it certainly follows rational methods proper to itself, at the same time "innovates the conception of morality and religion--that is, it innovates the entire conception of the world."(NM,9)<73> To Gramsci it is the political that gives meaning and purpose to the world, and that establishes the conditions and goals through which the social and historical transformation of reality is attained. Such a conception is diametrically opposed to the Crocean "pure politics," which lacks any transformative or educative character. More importantly, the very fact that Machiavelli's politics is interpreted as "science" and as pure theory (from which have issued over the centuries long and vacuous debates regarding politics and morality, Machiavellianism and anti-Machiavellianism) is an indication that the notion of politics as a transforming and creative activity put forth by Machiavelli has not "succeeded in becoming the 'common sense' of the modern world."(NM,9)<74>

What this means is that Machiavelli's thought has been appropriated throughout the course of Italian history precisely by those elements and groups that have been the strongest and most consistent opponents of the Machiavellian political project. The Crocean school of Machiavelli

interpretation--students such as Russo and Chabod<75>--represents a political and philosophical orientation whose emergence could not have been possible without the absence in Italian politics of a popular and mass base. The fact that Machiavelli's thought has remained the possession of Croce and other "high intellectuals," that it has not penetrated to the "volgo" and become the "common sense" of the people, "means that the moral and intellectual revolution whose elements are contained in nuce in Machiavelli's thought is not yet actualized. It has not become a public and manifest form of national culture."(NM,9)<76> Thus the very existence of a traditional intellectual, who interprets Machiavelli in terms of a pure science of politics, is a reflection of the social and political contradiction within an Italian society divided between the two cultures of "those who know" and "those who do not know," and between the culture of the rulers and that of the ruled. The Crocean interpretation of Machiavelli is the political expression of the liberal and bourgeois antipathy towards the workers and peasants. But it is precisely the people, the transformation of a mass into a people, that is the central Machiavellian and Gramscian problem. Machiavelli and the enterprise he wanted to initiate encompass the revolutionary problematic that seeks the real and concrete conditions for the creation of what Gramsci calls the "national-popular collective will."(NM,8)<77>

To the question whether it is possible to "escape from this contradiction between word and action"--a question posed by de Sanctis in his analysis of the relation between Luther and Machiavelli<78>--Croce answers that the solution may only be addressed at the theoretical level, but that at the practical level there is no possible resolution or synthesis. Harmony between speech and deed would require that "political men should also philosophise, and that the popular masses no longer be the masses [far si' che gli uomini politici filosofino anche, e che il volgo cessi di esser volgo]." (EP, 171)<79> Here Croce identifies the crux of the matter. It is here too that we find the central pivot on which revolves the radical difference in the Gramscian and Crocean interpretation of Machiavelli and of his politics. This statement summarizes the Gramscian political project and its radical critique of Crocean thought, and of Italian culture and politics that such thought expresses.

To state that the political actor should philosophize is to state that politics is not simply pure power or pure utility, but is also the generation of hegemony and reform: it is to state that the political actor is a democratic philosopher (politicus + philosophus). The democratic philosopher is the politician-intellectual that addresses the Crocean requirement that political men should also know philosophy (a requirement, of course, first enunciated by Plato). But to ask that politics become philosophy is also to ask that philosophy become politics: it implies that

philosophy realizes itself in the world. And the realization of philosophy in practice, within social reality, assumes the concrete existence of a political subject that embodies such a philosophy, which by acting in the world its development and self-becoming as a subject are simultaneously the development and self-realization of philosophy.

In effect, to ask that politics become philosophy is to ask that the "volgo cessi di esser volgo"--it is to ask that the masses transform themselves into a coherent and determinate people possessed of a purpose and will. This people as a political force embodies the activity and the thought of its life, such that it is the agent and subject of history, which through its praxis determines itself and defines itself both in thought and in practice. It is, indeed, the political-educational--and thus hegemonic--relation between the democratic philosopher and the people, a relation which describes the moral and intellectual reform whose model in the Lutheran Reformation Gramsci attempts to translate into contemporary Italian culture and politics. But what to Gramsci signals the realization of philosophy and the proliferation of a new conception of the world which has become the life and custom of the age is to Croce the transmogrification of philosophy into popular prejudice and error. "Che il volgo cessi di esser volgo" is the moral and intellectual reform that the philosophy of praxis is to initiate, a political and

cultural process that will uncover existing reality in order to transform it--that is, a process that moves towards the over-coming and annihilation of the socio-practical conditions wherein the contradiction between "il detto" and "il fatto" is embedded. The Crocean conception of the political as "pure politics" is both product and presupposition of such a contradiction. In opposition to this notion Gramsci attempts to formulate a notion of the political which is both the product and the carrier of a transformative and innovating praxis. (MS, 44-45) <80> Gramsci takes Machiavellian political thought as the representative thought in Italy of such a conception of politics. Machiavellian thought is the negation of Crocean liberal thought, and Machiavelli is the anti-Croce that exposes and uncovers the anti-popular and anti-democratic roots of Italian politics, history, and culture. (NM, 118-119) <81>

But the democratic philosopher does not express a simple contradiction of the traditional and cosmopolitan intellectual: he is the over-coming and transcendence of the historical and cultural weight that the former type represents. The very generation of the democratic philosopher presupposes the political and practical over-coming of the traditional and established way of life and "common sense" through the proliferation of a new conception of the world. But this very formation of a new conception of the world is itself the product and motive force of the moral and intellectual reform which is sparked

by the democratic philosopher/popular masses dyad--an active and reciprocal relation which in its totality and in its reciprocal movement constitutes the national-popular and collective will. The organic and dynamic relation described by such a movement between the educator and the student creates the practical and social bases for that very requirement Croce believes impossible to achieve--the transformation of the "volgo" from a passive and non-conscious entity into a coherent force whose knowledge and activity within the pre-existing reality represent the concrete and practical potential for further transformative development inherent within this very reality.<82>

"Che il volgo cessi di esser volgo" is a Crocean formulation intended to show the impossibility of this transformation. Gramsci translates this formulation into the language of the philosophy of praxis and into the language of Machiavellian political theory, such that the Crocean formulation is transformed into the Gramscian and Machiavellian imperative: the formation of a political and revolutionary class in Gramsci, and the formation of "the revolutionary class of the time, the 'people' and the Italian 'nation,' the citizen democracy" in Machiavelli.(NM,10)<83> The "citizen democracy" is diametrically opposed to, and represents the over-coming of, the "volgo" in the same way that a revolutionary class constituted as a political and conscious subject is the negation and transcendence of an indeterminate class defined

as a mere economic category that unconsciously reflects the prevailing knowledge of the ruling class. The transformation of the Crocean "volgo" into the Machiavellian "democrazia cittadina" is the coming-to-be of the popular masses as a political and hegemonic force. The contrast between the two entities corresponds to the opposition between the Crocean notion of politics as pure technique and the Gramscian notion (which he attributes to Machiavelli) of the political as praxis, as conscious activity.<84> The Crocean politico is an actor whose "technical" activity presupposes the people as "volgo;" the Gramscian and Machiavellian politico embodies and concretizes a politics whose sphere of action is the transformation of the "volgo" and the coming-to-be of a people as a determinate and collective entity.

In effect, the interpretation of Machiavellian thought is central and pregnant with political and historical consequences both to Croce and to Gramsci: Machiavelli as the discoverer of "pure politics" sees Machiavelli as a scientist and thinker isolated from the masses, as one who lives and thinks within the self-enclosed circle of his thought and science; or Machiavelli the man of action, who creates an "active and operating politics" (*politica attiva e operante*), whose knowledge is the embodiment of the people--not of a people envisioned as a static and passive "volgo," but of a people that is a constantly becoming subject, a hegemonic force that initiates and carries

forward a moral and intellectual reform that lays the basis
for the "democrazia cittadina."

Notes

<1>For Machiavelli as the discoverer of an objective political science, see Benedetto Croce, Etica e politica, (Bari: Laterza, 1931), "Machiavelli e Vico. La politica e l'etica," pp. 251-255. See also Croce, "Cio' che il Machiavelli fece e cio' che lascio' fare," in Terze pagine sparse, (Bari: Laterza Editore, 1955), vol. I, pp. 217-218, as well as "Teoria politica," in Terze pagine sparse, (Bari: Laterza, 1955), vol II, pp. 129-140, and "Un giuoco che ormai dura troppo," in ibid., pp. 252-253; and Croce, "Moralita' del Machiavelli," in Nuove pagine sparse, (Napoli: Ricciardi, 1949), vol. I, pp. 238-239, and "La quistione del Machiavelli," in Indagini su Hegel e schiarimenti filosofici, (Bari: Laterza, 1952), pp. 164-176; and his Storia dell'eta' barocca in Italia, (Bari: Laterza, 1929), pp. 80, 83. And note Croce's polemic against Alderisio, in B. Croce, Conversazioni critiche, (Bari: Laterza, 1951), vol. IV, "Il Machiavelli volta al morale," pp. 14-17, where Croce attacks the moralistic and "theological" interpretation of Machiavelli advanced by F. Alderisio, Machiavelli, (Bologna: Zuffi, 1950), in which Alderisio argues that Machiavelli does not stand outside the accepted and traditional (read Christian) conceptions of politics and morality. Gramsci agrees with Croce on Alderisio, see Gramsci, Note sul Machiavelli, sulla politica, e sullo Stato moderno, (Torino: Einaudi Editore, 1966), p. 119. It is both interesting and ironic that on this point a thinker such as Leo Strauss would agree with both Croce and Gramsci, see Strauss, Thoughts on Machiavelli, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957). See, in addition, the essay by Croce "Un detto di Machiavelli," in his Conversazioni critiche, IV, pp. 17-20, where he remarks upon Machiavelli's famous statement in his letter to Vettori, "amo la patria piu' che l'animo." On Machiavelli and Croce, see Gramsci, Il materialismo storico e la filosofia di Benedetto Croce, (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), pp. 140-141. And Gennaro Sasso, Il pensiero politico di Niccolo' Machiavelli (Torino: ERI, 1964), pp. 47-61; on Croce's importance and position within the field of Machiavellian studies, see Sasso, ibid., pp. 53-56. And see Hans Baron, "Machiavelli: the Republican Citizen and the Author of The Prince," English Historical Review 76 (1961), pp. 207-253, in which Baron argues against Croce's interpretation of Machiavelli. See also F. Alderisio's "Ripresa machiavelliana. Considerazioni critiche sulle idee di A. Gramsci, di B. Croce e di L. Russo intorno a Machiavelli," Annali dell'Istituto universitario di Magistero di Salerno, I (1949-1950), pp. 231-246, in which Alderisio polemicizes against Croce's reading of Machiavelli as the theorist who presents the notion of the political as pura politica, independent of etica.

<2>Francesco de Sanctis, Storia della letteratura italiana, a cura di Benedetto Croce, (Bari: Laterza, 1965), two volumes. See also his "La letteratura italiana nel secolo XIX," in Opere, a cura di Niccolò Gallo, (Milano: Riccardo Ricciardi Editore, 1961), pp. 1115-1125. Gramsci relies heavily on de Sanctis, whose literary criticism and methods he believes are superior and more historically and politically grounded than are those of Croce. See Gramsci, Letteratura e vita nazionale, (Torino: Einaudi, 1955), henceforth cited as LVN, pp. 6-7, 89, in which Gramsci calls for a "ritorno a de Sanctis," by which he means the development of a culture, a literature, and a language--and thus a politics--centered within the life and practice of the Italian people (See his Int, pp. 28-29). Gramsci understands de Sanctis as a thinker and critic whose work could lead Italian intellectuals toward a new relation with the people, who himself worked to achieve a reform of the attitudes and the culture that established the intellectual/semplici relation into a frozen structure of domination and subordination. The "return to de Sanctis" is thus equivalent to a "lotta per una nuova cultura, cioè per un nuovo umanesimo, la critica del costume, dei sentimenti, e delle concezioni del mondo," LVN, p. 7. See Giorgio Nardone, Il pensiero di Gramsci, (Bari: De Donato, 1971), pp. 251-256, where it is stated that "Gramsci finds in de Sanctis [confirmation] of his own notion of culture....[where] culture means a 'conception of life which is at once coherent, integrated, and disseminated throughout the nation.' To him such a total and complete dissemination includes within itself the unity of theory and practice....[a philosophy is transformed into culture] when it has generated an ethic, a way of life." On the relation between culture and people, see de Sanctis, "La scuola democratica," in Opere, pp. 1115-1125. See also Giancarlo Bergami, Il giovane Gramsci e il marxismo 1911-1918 (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1977), pp. 55-56, 63-69.

<3>De Sanctis, Storia della letteratura italiana, henceforth cited as SLI, vol. II, pp. 60-68. The notion of disarmonia in de Sanctis, where it is viewed as the political and cultural condition that is equivalent to the disintegration of the old order and of the traditional conception of the world, parallels Gramsci's critique of the Crocean frattura between thought and action, culture and politics, and between language and life. In both, the antinomies are product and herald of the crisis within the established order.

<4>De Sanctis, vol. II, p. 67.

<5>Ibid., p. 63.

<6>Ibid., vol. I, p. 420. And Gramsci, Il Risorgimento, (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), henceforth cited as R, pp. 33-34.

<7>De Sanctis, SLI, vol. I, p. 421.

<8>Ibid., p. 420.

<9>Ibid. And Saveria Chemotti, Umanesimo, Rinascimento, Machiavelli nella critica gramsciana, (Roma: Bulzoni, 1975), pp. 94, 107. And note Croce's critique of Gramsci's "return" to a de Sanctian Machiavelli: "il Gramsci non ha trovato cosa alcuna nuova in questo argomento [concerning the interpretation of Machiavelli] e ha abbassato la grande idea del Machiavelli e del Vico, facendole, peggio che negare la morale, meschinamente concepirle come dipendente da una classe sociale," in "Un giuoco che ormai dura troppo," in Terze pagine sparse, (Bari: Laterza, 1955), p. 253. In addition, see Raymond Aron, "Machiavel et Marx," in Machiavelli nel V centenario della nascita, AA.VV, (Bologna: Boni Editore, 1973), pp. 11-30, and especially pp. 27-28.

<10>Gramsci, Note sul Machiavelli, p. 86.

<11>Gramsci envisions de Sanctian criticism and thought as a fertile seed that contains within itself the potential to develop into a national-popular culture and a national-popular reform. See Gramsci, LVN, pp. 6-8. And de Sanctis, "La scuola democratica," in Opere, pp. 1115-1125, as well as de Sanctis' "Machiavelli Conferenze," in Saggi critici, a cura di Luigi Russo, (Bari: Laterza, 1965), vol. II, pp. 309-338.

<12>De Sanctis, "Machiavelli Conferenze," op. cit., p. 324.

<13>Gramsci, NM, p. 15.

<14>See Eric Cochrane, "Machiavelli: 1940-1960," The Journal of Modern History, 33, (1961), pp. 113-136. Cochrane presents a discussion of the origins and the widespread acceptance of the interpretation that Machiavelli is the discoverer and elaborator of the now famous formula "the autonomy of politics." Cochrane is correct when he says that Croce is the most influential and original source of the interpretation that Machiavelli's fundamental purpose was to argue and present a political science centered around the autonomy of politics. Thus, for example, both Chabod and Russo, as well as Gramsci (not to mention Wolin) are indebted, though in different ways and for different purposes, to Croce on this point. See Federico Chabod, Machiavelli and the Renaissance, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965), as well as Chabod's Scritti su

Machiavelli (Torino: Einaudi, 1964); and Luigi Russo, Machiavelli, (Bari: Laterza, 1975), and Sheldon S. Wolin, Politics and Vision: Continuity and Change in Western Political Thought, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960). See also Sasso, op. cit.; and Felix Gilbert, "Machiavelli in modern historical scholarship," in Machiavelli nel V centenario della sua nascita, pp. 157-171. For an interpretation of politics as human activity, as action, and Machiavelli as an "impassioned" theorist of political action--"self-conscious, purposeful motion"--(a notion quite similar to Gramsci's), as well as the notion of politics as an autonomous form of human activity, see Neal Wood, "Machiavelli's Humanism of Action," The Political Calculus: Essays on Machiavelli's Philosophy, ed. Anthony Parel, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), pp. 31-57, see especially pp. 34-40, 43-58. The term "humanism of action" recalls Gramsci's "ritorno" to de Sanctis, and his notion that philosophy = history = politics, such that politica = storia in atto + filosofia in atto = riforma morale e intellettuale = egemonia. For Marxism and humanism, see R. Mondolfo, Umanesimo di Marx: studi filosofici, 1908-1966, (Torino: Einaudi, 1968), see Norberto Bobbio's introduction, p. xlv, where Bobbio writes: "Nelle varie coppie di opposti--momento economico e momento etico-politico, momento oggettivo-momento soggettivo, necessita'-liberta'--il momento primario e' sempre il secondo." And see Sir Isaiah Berlin, "The Originality of Machiavelli," in Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas, ed. and with a bibliography by Henry Hardy, introduction by Roger Hausheer (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1978). For a Bolshevik (or Stalinist) interpretation, see Kamenev's introduction to the Russian edition (Moscow, 1934) of Machiavelli's The Prince, in which he sees Machiavelli as a "publicist" who analyzes the "mechanism of the struggle for power" during the Renaissance. In Kamenev Machiavelli becomes a "sociologist" who brilliantly analyzes the "sociological" bellum omnia contra omnium before the creation of a "powerful, national, and basically bourgeois" Italian state. Machiavelli has an almost "dialectical" understanding of power structures and power relations, such that his thought is free from metaphysical and theological impedimenta. Kamenev notes that Machiavelli may be seen as a forerunner of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin. See L.B. Kamenev, "Preface to Machiavelli," New Left Review, 15 (May-June, 1962), pp. 39-42. And compare this to Gramsci, NM, pp. 10, 39-40; and to Croce, Historical Materialism and the Economics of Karl Marx, trans. C.M. Meredith, with an introduction by A.D. Lindsay, (New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1966), pp. 110, 118. Note also Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selected Correspondence, trans. I. Lasker, ed. S. Ryazanskaya, (Moscow, 1965), letter no. 37, Marx to Engels, 25 Sept. 1857, p. 98, in which Marx recognizes Machiavelli as the precursor of a modern politics and a modern view of

life, and sees his work as a secular humanism.

<15>Benedetto Croce, Etica e politica, henceforth cited as EP, p. 251, and Terze pagine sparse, vol. II, p. 253. Contrast this to de Sanctis, SLI, vol. II, p. 74. In addition, see Croce's Storia dell'eta' barocca in Italia (Bari: Laterza, 1957), where, referring to Machiavelli's status during the counter-Reformation, Croce says "ma dannati il nome di Machiavelli e quello della Ragion di Stato, restava il machiavellismo, cioe' un ordine di considerazioni e un corpo di precetti dei quali non si poteva far a meno, perche' dettati dalla necessita' delle cose e chiaramente conformi alla pratica universale," p. 80. On machiavellismo and anti-machiavellismo see Gramsci, NM, pp. 9-10, 158. See also Anthony Parel, The Political Calculus: Studies in Machiavelli's Philosophy, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), Parel's essay, "Introduction: Machiavelli's Method and His Interpreters," pp. 3-32; and Giuliano Procacci, Studi sulla fortuna del Machiavelli (Roma: Istituto storico italiano, 1965), as well as Federico Chabod, Studi su Machiavelli, pp. 108-135. The best known work on Machiavelli as the founder of Staatstrason and Realpolitik is Friedrich Meinecke, Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison d'Etat and Its Place in Modern History, trans. Douglas Scott (New York: Praeger, 1965), an interpretation which manages to be both Hegelian and Crocean, and which combines elements of German romanticism and Italian realism. See also Gennaro Sasso, Niccolo' Machiavelli: storia del suo pensiero (Napoli: Nella sede dell'Istituto, 1958), as well as Sasso's Il pensiero politico di Niccolo' Machiavelli, pp. 47-61, for a discussion of Croce and Meinecke.

<16>De Sanctis, SLI, vol. II, pp. 62, 68. In addition, see Eugenio Garin, La cultura italiana tra '800 e '900. (Bari: Laterza, 1963), pp. 175-209, for a discussion of de Sanctis and Croce in relation to Machiavelli. And see Nardone, Il pensiero di Gramsci, pp. 255-258. On de Sanctis and Machiavelli, see Giuliano Procacci, Studi sulla fortuna del Machiavelli (Roma: Istituto storico italiano, 1965), pp. 442-447.

<17>Croce, EP, p. 251.

<18>De Sanctis, SLI, p. 76.

<19>Ibid.

<20>A.R. Buzzi, La teoria politica di Gramsci, (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1973), pp. 116-120. In addition, see H. Stuart Hughes, Consciousness and Society: the Reorientation of European Social Thought 1890-1930, (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), pp. 206-229.

<21>Croce, Etica e politica, p. 253. Croce here refers to Machiavelli's The Prince, chapter XII.

<22>Croce, Etica e politica, "Politica in nuce." See Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question," in Karl Marx: Early Writings ed. T.B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), for the classic statement on the dualism of the modern state, pp. 1-40, and especially pp. 13-15, 26-31.

<23>Croce, Historical Materialism, p. 110, note 1. See also A.D. Lindsay's introduction to this edition, pp. xiv-xvi; and "Politica in nuce," in Etica e politica.

<24>Gramsci, MS, pp. 172, 174, and 226 note 1. By "Giolittian" is meant a politics whose techniques and methods (trasformismo) are directed towards the maintenance and preservation of a pre-existing order or balance of socio-political forces, within which the political performs the stabilizing and integrating functions necessary to maintain the frattura between the colti and the semplici, the intellectuals and the people.

<25>Croce, EP, pp. 215-218, 241-245. And see Guido de Ruggiero, The History of European Liberalism, trans. R.G. Collingwood, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), see especially pp. 347-369.

<26>Croce, EP, p. 182.

<27>Ibid., p. 181.

<28>Ibid. See also Croce's Historical Materialism, where he says that Marx brought him back "to the best traditions of Italian political science, thanks to the firm assertion of the principle of force, of struggle, of power, and satirical and caustic opposition to the anti-historical and democratic insipidities of natural law doctrine--to the so-called ideals of 1789." (Croce's italics). And see Hegel on Machiavelli, in Georg Lukacs, The Young Hegel: Studies in the Relations between Dialectics and Economics, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1976), where Lukacs refers to Hegel's The German Constitution, pp. 303-305, and 307-310. In addition, see G.W.F. Hegel, Philosophy of History, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press), and his Political Writings, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), "The German Constitution," pp. 217-223, and see especially, pp. 220-221. And, Giuliano Procacci, op. cit., pp. 393-394, for Hegel and Machiavelli. In addition, see Aron, "Machiavel et Marx," pp. 16-17, 19-20.

<29>Croce, Historical Materialism, p. 118, in which Croce states that "I am surprised that no one has thought of calling him [Marx] 'the most notable successor of the

Italian Niccolo' Machiavelli'; a Machiavelli of the labour movement." (Croce's italics). In addition see Croce, Filosofia e storiografia, (Bari: Laterza Editore, 1949), p. 277, in which he notes that he "Ammirai la sua [Marx's] genialita' politica di rivoluzionario e lo salutai col nome di 'Machiavelli del proletariato,' quasi parallelo di quel Machiavelli che fu consigliere ed esortatore del principato a pro' dell'unita' e dell'indipendenza italiana." This is to be found in English in Philosophy, Poetry, History: An Anthology of Essays, trans. with an introduction by Cecil Sprigge (London: Oxford University Press, 1966): "I admired his political gifts as a revolutionary and saluted him by the appellation 'Machiavelli of the proletariat,' implying a parallelism with Machiavelli the counsellor and stimulator of the princes in the cause of the unity and independence of Italy," p. 626. In addition see Croce, Filosofia, poesia, storia (Milano: Ricciardi, s.d.), p. 556. See note 28, above. On the relation between Machiavelli and Marx as posited by Croce, see Eugenio Garin, "Gramsci nella cultura italiana," in Studi gramsciani, Atti del convegno tenuto a Roma nei giorni 11-13 gennaio 1958, Istituto Gramsci, (Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1973), p. 413, note 3, and p. 414. And, see Felice Alderisio, "Ripresa Machiavelliana: considerazioni critiche sulle idee di A. Gramsci, B. Croce, e L. Russo intorno a Machiavelli," Annali dell'Istituto Universitario di Magistero di Salerno, 1949-1950, pp. 231-246; and Nicola Matteucci, Antonio Gramsci e la filosofia della prassi, p. 58; and Buzzi, op. cit., pp. 152-153.

<30>Gramsci, NM, pp. 11-12, 39, and MS, pp. 101-102.

<31>Croce, EP, pp. 250-252. and also his Conversazioni critiche (Bari: Laterza, 1951), vol IV, pp. 14-17, as well as his "Il problema della politica e il machiavellismo," in Filosofia della pratica. Economica ed etica, (Bari: Laterza, 1957). In addition, see Luigi Russo, Machiavelli, (Bari: Laterza, 1975), and Russo's notes and commentary to his edition of Machiavelli's Il principe. See also, Chabod's Machiavelli and the Renaissance, Neal Wood's introduction to Machiavelli's The Art of War (Bobbs-Merrill), de Sanctis' "Machiavelli Conferenze," op. cit., and Giuseppe Saitta, Il pensiero italiano nell'Umanesimo e nel Rinascimento, (Firenze: Sansoni, 1961), vol. III, pp. 376-378.

<32>Croce, EP, p. 254.

<33>See Saitta, pp. 375-381; de Sanctis, SLI, vol. II, pp. 58-112. And Gramsci's critique of Russo on this point, in NM, pp. 141-143. See also Buzzi, pp. 154-156.

<34>Croce, EP, p. 182.

<35>See especially "Politica in nuce," in Etica e politica, pp. 213-249, as well as "Storia economica-politica e storia etica-politica," in ibid., pp. 273-283.

<36>Croce, EP, p. 170.

<37>See Etica e politica, pp. 250-251, and especially 207-210. In addition, see Croce's "Why we cannot help calling ourselves Christian," in My Philosophy, (New York: Collier Books, 1962), pp. 38-48, and "The Identity of Philosophy and Moral Life," in ibid., pp. 240-246. For an excellent analysis of Augustinian social and political thought, see Herbert A. Deane, The Political and Social Ideas of St. Augustine, (New York: Columbia University press, 1963).

<38>Croce, Historical Materialism, pp. 110-113. For Gramsci on Kant, see NM, pp. 40-41, MS, pp. 46, 67, and Passato e presente, (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), p. 202. And, Garin, op. cit., pp. 408-409. On Kant, see Herbert Marcuse, Studies in Critical Philosophy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), pp. 79-94. In addition, see Sidney Hook, From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1968), pp. 17-76, 308-312.

<39>Gramsci, MS, pp. 187-189, 221; and Lettere dal carcere (Torino: Einaudi, 1955), p. 186. Also, Emilio Agazzi, "Filosofia della prassi e filosofia dello spirito," in La città futura: Saggi sulla figura e sul pensiero di Antonio Gramsci, a cura di Alberto Caracciolo e Gianni Scalia (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1976), pp. 110-112.

<40>Croce, EP, p. 220; Gramsci, MS, pp. 216-217, and p. 38.

<41>Gramsci, MS, p. 182.

<42>Agazzi, pp. 103-104. And see Gramsci, Passato e presente, pp. 26-28, MS, pp. 184, 193-194, 196-197, 210-211, Lettere dal carcere, p. 193, and Gli intellettuali e l'organizzazione della cultura (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), p. 5.

<43>Croce, Etica e politica, p. 180.

<44>See, for example, Croce's Storia dell'eta' barocca in Italia, (Bari: Laterza). And Gramsci, MS, pp. 184-186, 219.

<45>Gramsci, MS, pp. 184-186.

<46>Croce, History as the Story of Liberty, trans. Sylvia Sprigge (Chicago: Gateway Editions, 1970), pp. 59-62, and especially pp. 55-58. See also H. Stuart Hughes, op. cit., pp. 217-229.

<47>Croce, Etica e politica, p. 175.

<48>Ibid.

<49>See Serge Hughes, The Fall and Rise of Modern Italy (New York: Minerva Press, 1968), Part One, "Sand Castle 1890-1925," and de Ruggiero, op. cit., pp. 298-343.

<50>Croce, Etica e politica, pp. 228-229.

<51>Ibid., p. 175.

<52>Ibid., p. 230.

<53>Croce, My Philosophy, p. 93.

<54>Croce, Etica e politica, pp. 171-172.

<55>See Croce on "Religiosita'," where it becomes quite clear that the modern form of "religion"--that is the philosophy of liberty and of the ethico-political of the Spirit as propounded by Croce--is antithetical to the "volgo:" "il volgo e'...disarmonia, e altro pensa e altro brama, o altro vagheggia e altro fa" but "la religiosita'"--now transformed into the conscious, "de-mythologized" and de-mystified "religion of liberty"--"in quanto armonia, e' aristocrazia." Etica e politica, p. 208. Thus the popular masses are defined by an intrinsic disharmony between what they will and what they do, such that the frattura between thought and action is embodied in the irrationality of the mass as a purely emotional and reactive entity. On the other hand, harmony exists within the level of the colti and those who know how to rule, who together possess the cultura and the knowledge to relate vagheggiare to fare, and thus understand the relation between means and ends, thinking and doing, willing and acting. Contrast Croce's disarmonia to de Sanctis', above.

<56>See Sir Ernest Barker, The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle (New York: Dover Press), and T.A. Sinclair, A History of Greek Political Thought (Cleveland: Meridien Books, 1968).

<57>Croce, My Philosophy, pp. 91-92. And see H.S. Hughes, pp. 249-250.

<58>Croce, My Philosophy, pp. 91-92; contrast this to Gramsci, MS, pp. 114-115.

<59>See Barker, and Sinclair, op. cit., and Croce, Etica e politica, essay on "Religiosita'."

<60>On the Hegelian notion of freedom, see Herbert Marcuse, Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), pp. 184-194; and Shlomo Avineri, Hegel's Theory of the Modern State (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp. 179-184, and 221-238, and Marcuse, Studies in Critical Philosophy, pp. 95-110; and Lukacs, The Young Hegel, passim.

<61>Croce, My Philosophy, p. 93.

<62>The theorists of modern day pluralism are noteworthy in this regard.

<63>Croce, Il carattere della filosofia moderna (Bari: Laterza, 1945), pp. 117-118.

<64>Croce, My Philosophy, p. 93.

<65>See Gaetano Mosca, The Ruling Class, ed. and rev. by A. Livingston, trans. Hannah D. Kahn (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1939); and H.S. Hughes, pp. 249-277.

<66>See Robert A. Dahl and Robert Schumpeter.

<67>Croce, My Philosophy, p. 93, and Etica e politica, pp. 302-315.

<68>Gramsci, MS, pp. 114-115.

<69>Gramsci, NM, pp. 9-10.

<70>Gramsci, NM, p. 9; and MS, p. 71.

<71>Gramsci, MS, p. 71.

<72>Gramsci, NM, pp. 117-119.

<73>Ibid., p. 9.

<74>Ibid.

<75>See Russo, Machiavelli, and Chabod, Machiavelli and the Renaissance.

<76>Gramsci, NM, p. 9.

<77>Ibid., p. 8.

<78>De Sanctis, SLI, vol. I, pp. 419-420.

<79>Croce, Etica e politica, p. 171.

<80>Gramsci, MS, pp. 44-45.

<81>Gramsci, NM, pp. 118-119.

<82>Gramsci, MS, pp. 11, and 24-26.

<83>Gramsci, NM, p. 10. But see A.B. Davidson, "Gramsci and Reading Machiavelli," Science and Society, XXXVII, 1 (Spring, 1973), pp. 77, 79. Also, see F. Alderisio, "Ripresa machiavelliana. Considerazioni critiche sulle idee di A. Gramsci, di B. Croce e di L. Russo intorno a Machiavelli," Annali dell'Istituto universitario di Magistero di Salerno, I (1949-1950), pp. 218-219, 223-230.

<84>Gramsci, MS, pp. 3-4, 101.

Chapter V

The antithesis established between the Crocean Machiavelli and the Gramscian Machiavelli underlines the fundamental opposition between the liberal conception of the world which takes itself to be the "last word" and end of European thought, and a "neo-humanist"<1> conception of the world which sees itself as emerging from within the very contradictions which the former conception has posited as the immutable products of knowledge and science. The debate over the nature of Machiavelli as a theorist, and the controversy over the nature and significance of his political knowledge, are the focal points around which revolves the struggle between the two antagonistic conceptions. The political and historical ramifications are evident: the liberal Croce sees in the Italian social and political structure that emerged after the Risorgimento a firm ground for the progress of liberty; the Marxist Gramsci sees in the very same power structure the negation of liberty and the oppression of the popular masses. One sees the Italian state as already constituted and the basis for the further development of Italian society; the other sees a non-state and a non-society because the "volgo" as a people does not yet exist.

In both Croce and Gramsci these political and ideological differences are embodied in the figure of Machiavelli: what is the nature of his political knowledge,

and in what way does it differ from that of his predecessors and contemporaries? What is the nature of the Machiavellian political project, and how is this project related to the knowledge that he intends to impart? Indeed, what is Machiavelli's intention--is it to establish the rules and methods of an "objective" political science, or is it to introduce within existing reality a new political and social order? Is there a necessary relation between the new political knowledge and the new political order, or can one accept the validity of one without being logically compelled to accept that of the other--that is to say, is the new political knowledge such that its emergence and existence presuppose a new order of things, and is the latter a reality whose coming-to-be is a real potentiality whose necessity is given by this new political knowledge? Is the new knowledge independent of Machiavelli's intention?<2> Does the intention affect the status of this new knowledge? If Machiavelli's thought is an autonomous political science, does the nature of the subject who knows and acts upon this thought influence the character of the knowledge? In other words, who--or what--is the object of Machiavelli's thought? Is it the internal categories and concepts that make up this knowledge? Is he attempting to discover the rules and methods of a "pure politics," such that the object of his thought is the science of politics? Or, on the other hand, is the object of Machiavelli's "new modes and orders" a particular and concrete subject whose existence is

discovered by his political thought?

These questions assume and summarize our earlier discussion regarding the nature of politics and its relation to ethics and philosophy. The questions presuppose a knowledge of the problematic attendant upon this relation, and at the same time they concretize the problematic by inserting it within a specific and particular topos: what is it that Machiavelli knows, to whom is it addressed, and how are these two questions related to Machiavelli's theoretical and political project? But all this is simply to elaborate in extended fashion what is the central question: what is the evidence in the Machiavellian text that enables Gramsci to challenge the liberal and Crocean interpretation? Is there a textual--as well as theoretical--foundation to the interpretation that sees Machiavelli as the democratic philosopher, and that sees his thought as the knowledge that seeks to generate a national-popular collective will socially and politically constituted into the "citizen democracy?" What are the elements in the Machiavellian text that enable Gramsci to envision him as the "anti-Croce" that explodes the contradictions of contemporary liberal and bourgeois politics? What are the elements that describe the democratic philosopher and the citizen democracy in opposition to the traditional intellectual and the "aristo-democracy?" If the citizen democracy is the object of Machiavelli's project, then what are the political and

rational elements that constitute it? And, finally, if the national-popular and collective will is what describes the democratic and popular character of Machiavellian thought, then it becomes necessary to identify such a will as an entity that emerges from within the structure of the Machiavellian enterprise, and the new knowledge must be able to identify and elaborate the process by which the collective will is generated and formed.

Now it is legitimate to ask, what is "new" about this knowledge, and what sets it apart from those of the past and those of Machiavelli's contemporaries? In what sense can we say--or indeed, can Machiavelli say--that the teaching of this knowledge is different from that of medieval thought or from the thought of the Renaissance humanists? Machiavelli clearly sets out his "intention" in The Prince (XV): he wants to base his new knowledge on the "verita' effettuale della cosa" (the effective truth of things) rather than on an "imagined truth." He intends to uncover the "operative reality" in order to "see what ought to be the rules and methods for a prince." He is aware that "many have written of this," and he fears he might appear "presumptuous" since his argument will depart greatly from the opinions of others.<4> But since, in constructing and developing his argument, he intends to use neither authority nor force,<5> we know that he will not follow the traditional scholastic methods whose arguments depend upon authority and tradition. And if the argument is not based on authority and on the

methods of those who have come before him, then he must present a method which is opposed to the prevailing methods of "disputation." Those who have come before are the "many" that have "imagined republics and principalities never seen or known to exist in reality." He wants to leave the latter aside and consider the "verita' effettuale," where a distinction is immediately established between "what is done" and "what ought to be done." To leave the former for the latter is to invite ruin and destruction. For a prince to maintain himself it is necessary to discard notions of what an imaginary prince ought to do and to address oneself to the existing reality ("cose vere").

Thus we have an opposition between "what is" (essere) and "what ought to be" (dover essere): one looks towards a realistic interpretation of the world, and the other provides a moral or ethical interpretation.<6> Students of Machiavelli (such as Croce, Chabod, and Russo) have seized upon this distinction and turned it into the organizing and central theme of the Machiavellian project. Others, such as Strauss and his school--which in Italy and in Europe have gone under the name of "anti-machiavellianism" and are closely associated (in Italy, but not in France and protestant Europe) with the counter-reformation and the baroque age<7>--see the essere/dover essere dyad as the dividing line and the point of rupture between "modern" and "pre-modern" political thought (where the latter is seen, at least by the Croceans and the Straussians, to encompass both

classical and medieval thought).<8> To Strauss Machiavelli is the "teacher of evil" who represents a radical and thorough-going departure from the philosophical, moral, and political ideas of Christian theology and classical thought (an interpretation not far distant from Croce's, except that the latter attempts to maintain a "detached" and morally "neutral" stance towards the new teaching).<9>

All of these interpreters view the "imagined" ("cose imparate") and the "real" ("cose vere") as a mutually exclusive and irreconcilable antinomy, so that when Machiavelli attacks the former they understand him to criticize the thematic concern of classical thought with the "good life," on the one hand, and with the traditional concern of medieval philosophy with theology and spiritual life, on the other. In both cases Machiavelli is seen to focus his attention on "life" and "preservation." "Cose vere" and "cose imparate" respectively parallel the "what is done" and the "what ought to be done:" the second terms of the antithesis describe the traditional and established views of the "many," and the first set of terms refers to the new knowledge of Machiavelli. This knowledge does not concern itself with the moral and ethical problems of the world: it exists within boundaries defined by the "effective truth," and the world of the ethical is a world this knowledge cannot reach ("non aggiunge")<10> and does not want to understand.

Whether one hails Machiavelli as the discoverer of political science and political technique (Croce) or attacks him as the revolutionary prophet of an "evil" message (Strauss), whether one sees in him the embodiment of reason (Russo) and self-consciousness (de Sanctis) opposed to medieval mysticism and scholasticism, or whether one discerns in him a calculating and at the same time passionate spirit given to a utopianism that alternates with pessimism (Guicciardini, Chabod, Sasso), the opposition between the essere and dover essere, and between the "true nature of things" and their "imagined" nature, is understood by most students to be the major point of departure in Machiavelli.<11>

But such a way of posing the issue begs the question, and misinterprets the distinction that Machiavelli is making. The very distinction between the "is" and the "ought" presupposes the existence of a particular kind of knowledge whose methods will enable one to see and to posit the antinomy. The issue is not between a medieval form of knowledge that looks to the dover essere and a Machiavellian form that acknowledges only the essere. The question is what kind of knowledge will enable one to see a distinction between the two kinds of looking at the world. In order to posit this distinction one must have a knowledge of both the essere and the dover essere, a knowledge which is able to pose to itself not just the problem of "reality," but also the problem of the genesis and the becoming of this reality.

What, indeed, is the essere, how is it constituted, how did it originate? Is the "effective truth" an entity which exists as a brute fact, a reality which is given independently of man? Is the "true nature of things" a reality which is given by a particular form of knowledge without which it could not be recognized? If this reality is independent of man, what is the process by which he comes to know it--and if he does come to know it, what significance and effect would it have on man, since the reality exists independently of man's knowledge of it? If the new knowledge poses the problem of the essere as a problem regarding the internal dynamics of this reality, then it must also pose the problem of the do ver essere--that is, the problem of the development of a given structure of reality and its transformation into another configuration.

Gramsci, of course, refuses to take Machiavelli's new knowledge as the precursor of a "positive" science in the modern sense, a science whose methods and categories are "value-neutral" and "non-normative." Such a science tries to maintain a certain distance from its object of inquiry in order not to taint or contaminate with emotion, passion, or engagement the "objectivity" to which it aspires. De Sanctis compares Machiavelli's new political knowledge to Galileo's "new science," and says that the former originated what the latter brought to further development. To de Sanctis "prose begins with Machiavelli:" that is, the world begins to awaken and understand itself, after the long

poetic night of the feudal period.<12> Such a comparison is correct, if it is understood that the "prose" first discovered by Machiavelli in the political world, and later deepened by Galileo in the study of nature, represents a revolutionary rupture and a radical discontinuity with the medieval methods of investigating the essere. But to take this "prose" as Croce does and to transform it into an autonomous science that dispassionately seeks to understand reality is to distort the basic Hegelian sense of the de Sanctian statement. As Gramsci puts it: "Machiavelli is not a mere scientist; he is partisan, a man of powerful passions, a committed political actor engaged in the world [politico in atto], who wants to create new relations of force and thus cannot but address the question of the 'dover essere,' but certainly not one understood in any moralistic sense....Political man is a creator...but he does not create out of nothing. He acts within an effective reality [realta' effettuale], but what is this effective reality? Is it something static and immobile, or rather isn't it a relation of forces in continual movement where the balance of forces is constantly changing?...." Thus to Gramsci the dover essere is the engagement of the will within the essere in order to create a new equilibrium and a new relation of forces. It is the "concretization" of the will--what Machiavelli calls ordinata virtu'--within the existing reality in order to "dominate and over-come it." The "what ought to be," therefore, is a product of a realistic and

historical interpretation of the "what is:" it is "history in action and philosophy in action [storia in atto e filosofia in atto], and thus it is politics."(NM,39)<13>

There is no question that an inquiry into the "verita' delle cose" was an important component of Machiavelli's knowledge. The point, however, is that to discover the nature of this reality, to uncover the nature of the essere, cannot but be a revolutionary act, for such a task would require the formulation of methods that could simultaneously encompass the "is" and the "ought" within the reality that is to be uncovered. Galileo and Machiavelli represent not simply the methods and reason of a new science which proclaimed its independence from traditio and established authority. This very demand for autonomy from the prevailing philosophical and value systems of thought is in itself an affirmation of an opposing conception of the world. Science as an autonomous mode of activity presupposes a socio-cultural and political environment markedly different from the Thomistic and feudal understanding of reality and of thought. To argue, therefore, for the autonomy of science is at the same time to argue for a specific socio-cultural and socio-political conception of the world.<14> The new knowledge cannot be separated from, nor understood, apart from the new order which is to be seen as both the product and the foundation of this knowledge. Thus the new knowledge is both the creator and the creature of the new order. It is

simultaneously a means by which the new conception of the world is translated into an existing socio-political reality, and an end-product of the new world view. The intimate connection between science and world view is revealed by the fate suffered in Italy by Galileo's new science, especially when this fate is contrasted to the experience and history of the new science in those countries that underwent the kind of moral and political resurgence that Machiavelli had wanted for Italy.<15> The fate of both Galileo and Machiavelli suggests that the notion of the autonomy of science is a concept historically and socially rooted, dependent upon the character of the established world view and upon the prevailing socio-political structure.

The political knowledge that Machiavelli intends to teach is a product of both "continua lezione" (continual study, that is, theoretical activity) and "lunga pratica" (long experience or practice, that is social and political activity).(D,ded.)<16> Machiavelli's knowledge is not a passive, merely reflecting product of reality that simply registers events, nor is it an empty receptacle filled by the action upon it of an external reality. This reality and the new knowledge presuppose each other, such that one acts reciprocally on the other. The reality and the knowledge taken together constitute a relation that sees the world both as it is and as it will be--that is, both actually and potentially. Machiavelli understands experience and

"empirical reality" not as an objective "fact" that imposes itself on man and his knowledge, but rather experience is mediated by the new knowledge, such that both "lunga pratica" and "continua lezione" form the totality of the new knowledge which is able to act as a guide to action and as a spring-board from which the existing reality may be transformed. What are described by Galileo as the secondary or non-essential characteristics of reality are to Machiavelli the primary material around which reality is organized and ordered: emotion, passion, thought, beliefs, prejudices--the entire complex of socio-cultural structures without which reality cannot exist or be understood. Machiavelli attempts to construct a knowledge of reality that recognizes within this reality the potential or possibility of over-coming what is given by present and past experience. The categories of this knowledge do not simply reproduce the reality given by experience. It is informed by an active and critical orientation, and the analysis of the "verita' effettuale delle cose" looks towards those elements of the given situation that are dynamically poised to generate a new "verita'."

Thus Machiavelli's project is to change the reality, not merely to reflect it or to "study" it. His type of knowledge cannot be understood if it is separated from his "intention"--"quello che io intendero'."(D,II,In)<17> Both the purpose of the project and the knowledge contain each other. The Discourses outlines a particular interpretation

of the past and the present which is simultaneously a product of "continual study" and "long research." But it is also a product of the intention of the subject who is doing the theorizing and the acting. Knowledge of "primary objects"--reality stripped of the human factor--is not possible to Machiavelli. What this means is that the new knowledge is a product of the relation between human intention--ends, goals, values--and the "effective truth of things," such that knowledge is always a human knowledge, a product of conscious human activity.<18> Such a posture towards knowledge and reality pervades the totality of Machiavelli's writings: socio-political reality cannot be considered in the abstract, but is rather an ever-changing structure that issues from action. Action, in turn, results from the knowledge of the proper relation between what is and what ought to be. Thus the relation between the essere and the dover essere is described by Machiavelli's intention. The essere is given by the analysis of the past and the present, and the dover essere is given by the intention of Machiavelli, which looks towards a future that he believes is present within the essere. Such an intention is itself an aspect of the analysis. In the same way, the analysis develops as it does, and perceives the reality as it does, because it is an aspect of the intention.

As Machiavelli states: "I shall boldly and openly say [saro' animoso in dire manifestamente] what I think of the former times and of the present, so as to excite in the minds of the young men who may read my writings the the desire to avoid the evils of the latter, and to prepare themselves to imitate the virtues of the former, whenever fortune presents them the occasion."(D,II,In)<19> What Machiavelli intends is to establish a form of knowledge that contains within itself the conditions for action, conditions whose unfolding depends not simply on "occasion" but also on the proliferation of such knowledge within the life and "spirit" of the young. Machiavelli's writings are therefore not a simple "scientific" and "analytical" treatise on the rules and laws of political activity: they are such, and more--they are a social and political teaching that intends to inform its readers of the possibility--and the necessity--for a radical and new stance towards the "effective truth." The analysis is a necessary preamble to the "preparation" and the "imitation."

"To read my writings" and "to prepare and to imitate" the virtu' of the ancient Romans are two moments that together constitute the knowledge that Machiavelli desires to introduce. The teaching of this knowledge is itself a moment in the movement toward the introduction of "new orders and systems."<20> The preparation and imitation are closely linked to "the desire to avoid the evils of the present"--that is, the possibility of changing the present

emerges from the knowledge and understanding of the past. Machiavelli is offering a reading--or rather, a re-reading--of the past (classical times) as a means of presenting and developing his new knowledge. And a reading of this knowledge, which he makes clear is a synthesis of the present and the past, is intended as an education, and a moral and intellectual "discipline," that will change the nature and character of those who submit to it. But to submit to it is to accept the intellectual argument and to subscribe to the value judgement of Machiavelli's intention--the present is decadent and corrupt and must therefore be transformed.

What Machiavelli intends to say, and what he wants to be read, are not a scholarly disquisition delivered sine irae et studio, a calm and dispassionate presentation of an abstract argument. He is "animoso in dire" what he intends to argue and analyze; and his presentation must be animated and "spirited" because his teaching is not simply a "pure science" as Croce would have it, but it is also passion and will, a dynamic knowledge that produces engagement and commitment--what he calls "azione feroce e gagliarda" (fierce and vigorous action). (D,II,2; see NM,13-14)<21> It is significant that in the introduction to Book II of The Discourses Machiavelli brings up the possibility of error in the formulation of his teaching: the possibility exists, but he dismisses it because "the thing" is "so evident" (così manifesta): "the virtu' of ancient times, and the

vice of the present age" are "clearer" to him "than the sun."<22> This clarity is not a simple product that issues from an analytical inquiry; it is an aspect of Machiavelli's intention to prepare those who will follow in his footsteps. The intention and the reasoned argument are simultaneous moments of Machiavellian knowledge. Machiavelli is addressing those who--like the young--are willing to envision a different and radical conception of what constitutes value and virtu': it is the difference in conception that enables Machiavelli to contrast the vice and degradation of the present with the virtue and greatness of the past.

Yet what is clear to Machiavelli is not so clear to contemporaries such as Guicciardini. And if the latter is taken as the representative of the younger generation, then Machiavelli's intention to transform the present is unique and anomalous for his times. As both Gramsci and Croce recognize,<23> Guicciardini and Machiavelli are thinkers who express differing and opposing conceptions of the world. The virtu' animosa of Machiavelli provides a sharp contrast to the "pessimism" and "skepticism" of Guicciardini.<24> The fact that events proved Machiavelli wrong, and that the future development of Renaissance Italy "empirically" justified the Guicciardinian orientation towards resignation and into a way of life absorbed with the "virtues" of il particolare (private life), does not negate the Machiavellian project to over-come the values and thought of

the present--indeed, it re-inforces the Gramscian argument that Machiavelli is the thinker of events that occurred and were to occur outside Italy.<25> On the other hand, the conception of the world epitomized by Guicciardini--a retreat into the private sphere of self-interest, and a way of life devoted to the abstract analysis and contemplation of external events--is precisely that orientation whose prevalence throughout Renaissance Italy contributed to the fall of the Italian city-states and to the victory of the counter-Reformation.

What is clear to Machiavelli is the opposite of what is clear to Guicciardini: both orientations are rooted within the very same reality. Machiavelli interprets Roman history and politics in order to discover within the present "relations of force" the seeds for the transformation of reality. His interpretation of the past is an aspect of his intention to transform the present, an intention which is, in turn, intimately related to a conception of virtu' and action opposed to the Christian and medieval notions of virtue and conduct.<26> The aristocratic skepticism of Guicciardini describes a conception of the world, and an orientation towards the established socio-political structure, that posit the "effective reality" and the "effective truth" as a given that cannot be transcended through man's action and virtu'. To Guicciardini reality and history are not a product of man's action--rather it is man who is the creature and "play-thing" of this reality

such that man's activity and man's knowledge become a reflection and mirror of a reality fundamentally external and always opposed to humanity. Thus any attempt to transform this reality is not simply utopian, but will merely lead to a reproduction of the pre-existing form of reality. Such an orientation is what enabled Guicciardini to produce works on history and politics that historiographically and "scientifically" are more reliable and more "faithful" to the historical events than those of Machiavelli.<27> Guicciardini observes human activity dispassionately and analytically because his knowledge always remains within the value-structure and the thought-structure given by the existing reality. This objective detachment, however, leads to an acceptance of reality which is as "partisan" as the Machiavellian engagement to negate and over-come it. If a true science of politics was indeed discovered by Italians as Croce claims, it is Guicciardini, and not Machiavelli, who should be hailed as its founder and expert practitioner. Guicciardini's political knowledge is of a type that seeks to discover the rules and methods necessary to a political activity that accepts the socio-political structure as immutable. It describes a political technique whereby the actor will be able to maneuver and pursue his interests within the accepted reality. Guicciardinian political knowledge is a product of the socio-political and moral exhaustion of Renaissance civilization in Italy, an

exhaustion that led to the decline of the Italian "international" state system whose final and irrevocable disintegration was heralded by the sack of Rome in 1527 (the year of Machiavelli's death).<28>

But to over-come the established system is to over-come the accumulated weight of the past,(MS,222)<29> and it is a project that requires a total immersion within the very consciousness that reflects this reality. In order to over-come it one must subordinate it and re-define it--that is, assimilate it and make it one's own. Now both Machiavelli and Guicciardini initiate an historical inquiry of the past and a political analysis of the "relations of force" that obtain in the present. The "facts" and the "events" in themselves are not in question: yet what is as clear as the sun to Machiavelli is pure illusion to Guicciardini. When the latter, in his critique of Machiavelli's Discourses,<30> asserts that Machiavelli is too enamored of the Romans, he does not dispute the greatness of Rome and the virtus by means of which the Romans established a "durable" socio-political order. Both Machiavelli and Guicciardini reflected the long humanist tradition that looked to the classical age for the "renovation" and rebirth of culture and literature.<31> To Guicciardini the Machiavellian attempt to recover the Roman values of republican virtu', and to introduce political and military institutions based on Roman models, are an impossibility. The fascination with Rome has led

Machiavelli to misinterpret the past, and to mistake the contemporary political reality for an idealized and imaginary reconstruction of it. To attempt to introduce the ancient "orders" within contemporary history results in bad history and in an incorrect analysis of the present world.

Such a criticism, whatever may be its empirical and "objective" grounds for its validity,<32> fundamentally misunderstands the nature and intent of the Machiavellian project. Machiavelli's passionate interest in the moral, cultural, and political institutions of the Romans was inspired by neither scholastic nor literary concerns comparable to those of the Renaissance humanists. Nor, for that matter, was such an interest founded upon a simple belief in the reproduction within contemporary Italy of Roman values and practices. What Machiavelli attempts is to re-capture the past, not to reproduce it. To recapture the past, in Gramsci's words, is to "operate in the present" in order to transform the present.<33> Such an attempt is a process that involves the selection and filtering of "objective" facts and events: the past becomes for Machiavelli an aspect of the present. But the present is a reality that is in constant movement, a product of social and political struggles for power, in the same way that the Roman "effective reality" or "truth" was constituted by power and political struggles. Thus to recapture the past is to assimilate it, to transform it in terms of the social and political imperatives of the contemporary struggles

within the existing society. The question therefore becomes: for whom, for what actor or group existing within the "present reality" is Machiavelli attempting to recapture the past in order to transform the present?<34>

It is at this point that Machiavelli's attempt to re-interpret Livy and Roman history acquires political and theoretical significance. The question that Machiavelli addresses--whether the greatness of the Romans was a product of fortuna or of Roman virtus--is central to his over-all project, for on its answer depended the kind of present and future Italy would have. If glory and greatness in the past were attained by means of one's own activity, then such a condition may be recaptured--certainly not reproduced--by an inquiry into the factors that had made it originally possible. On the other hand, if fortuna is the mistress of human events, if the glory of the Romans was the product of the favors of fortuna, then the intention and the need to transform the present is a futile self-deception (which is precisely the accusation Guicciardini leveled against Machiavelli).

The discussion of fortuna in The Prince is related to the discussion of Roman virtu' in The Discourses. Machiavelli criticizes in the former work the "many" who "have been and are of the opinion that worldly events are so governed by fortune and by God, that men cannot by their prudence change them, and that on the contrary there is no

remedy whatever, and for this they may judge it to be useless to toil much about them, but let things be ruled by chance. This opinion has been held more in our day..."(P, XXV)<35> The critique is echoed in The Discourses, where Machiavelli argues against the very same "many" (both modern and ancient) who "have held the opinion that the people of Rome were more indebted in the acquisition of their empire to the favors of Fortune than to their own merits [virtu']....It was the valor of her armies that achieved those conquests, but it was the wisdom of her conduct and the nature of her institutions, as established by her first legislator, that enabled her to preserve these acquisitions....And those people who will observe the same mode of proceeding will find that they have less need of fortune than those who do not."(D,II,1)<36> With these two quotes we can see that the "mode of proceeding" of the Romans--their virtu'--is a means by which Machiavelli criticizes and refutes the established opinion of his times. The tribulations and degradation that Italy is undergoing are not due to the inscrutable will of God or to the caprices of fortuna, but are rather the outcome of a reality created by the actions of men who do not possess virtu' and who lack the knowledge of the "mode of proceeding." To establish virtu' as the important factor for the greatness of Rome is to establish both the cause and the remedy for the ravaged state of contemporary Italy, and, at the same time, it is to deny to the "many" the intellectual and moral

grounds for a theory that justifies passivity and inaction. In these two passages is revealed the dual nature of the Machiavellian enterprise: to re-capture the past in order to re-make the present, and to engage the accepted opinion and established conception of the world in order to capture the past and seize it as one's own.

Machiavelli's belief that men's "freedom [is] not entirely extinguished" is opposed to the accepted opinion that men in this world "have no remedy whatever." But the contrast between the two underlines Machiavelli's point that action seems futile precisely because "men...let things be ruled by chance." That this opinion is the prevailing conception of the times is both cause and effect of the social and political troubles that afflict Italy. It is the cause because it has rendered Italy a prey to forces--both internal and external--that could have been resisted had it not been for the "vices" and "indolence" that such an attitude fostered; and it is an effect because the belief faithfully reflects the actual and real state of corruption and disunity expressed by the moral, political, and cultural life of the Italian states.

In The Prince Machiavelli compares fortuna to a raging river over-flowing its banks, and virtu' to the planning and building of dykes and dams that will channel the flood and render it both harmless and useful. Machiavelli says that fortuna shows her power where no measures have been taken

[non e' ordinata virtu'] to resist her;" and immediately in the next sentence he connects this to contemporary Italian events: "And if you regard Italy, which has been the seat of these changes, and who has given the impulse to them, you will see her to be a country without dykes or banks of any kind. If she had been protected by proper measures, like Germany, Spain, and France, this inundation would not have caused the great changes that it has, or would not have happened at all."(P,XXV)<37> The remedy--dykes and banks--presupposes an "ordinata virtu'"--but this in turn presupposes a form of activity which is structured and directed towards an end which is posited by man. "Ordinata virtu'" is structured action, it is social action directed by a purposive and conscious will. The construction of banks and dykes requires a knowledge that will enable one to anticipate the future flooding of the river--which assumes a knowledge of the past and present course of the river. But more importantly, the intention and the project to erect these dykes demand not simply the technical and scientific knowledge necessary to the project, but also the moral and political knowledge that will create the necessary will and the necessary purpose that will enable one to "ordinare" and to organize an activity which is inherently social and political.

It is "ordinata virtu'"--the defining and essential characteristic of political and social action--that will redeem "questa provincia" (Italy) from the external and alien forces of fortuna. But such an orientation towards action--a consciousness of one's relation towards the objectivity of the world, and a purposive will that "subjectifies" this objectivity and transforms it into a humanized and social reality--assumes the introduction and proliferation of a particular form of knowledge that understands the necessary relation between virtu' and fortuna. It is this relation that describes one of the most recurring terms within the writings of Machiavelli--necessita'--a term that adumbrates the relation between the consciousness of the objectivity of the world, and the virtu' or purposive will that humanizes it.<38> To humanize the alien and objective forces of fortuna is precisely to intervene actively and dynamically within the essere. It is, in Gramsci's terms, to "operate within the present" in order to re-order it and re-create it.<39>

The problem with the Guicciardinian conception of the relation between virtu' and fortuna is that the opposition between the two is posited as an absolute antithesis, such that the two poles of the dyad, frozen into an unchanging and eternal antinomy, lose the tension necessary for the transformation of the relation. As a consequence, Guicciardini's concept of virtu' envisions it as a reactive and merely prudential quality. Since historical and

political events assume an objectivity and a force external to man, since these forces are not a product of man's virtu', then the latter can only function within the limits and structure imposed by fortuna. Virtu' will never over-come the existing reality. It can only seek to adapt itself and to accommodate itself within a reality which is not, and can never be, the conscious product of man's action. Therefore such a reality will always remain alien to man; it can never be a human reality. Such a conception of fortuna--as a power alien and external to man--bears a close resemblance to the medieval and Christian view where it becomes either a power subordinated to providence or to God, or it is simply translated into the will of God.<40>

On the other hand, the Machiavellian relation between virtu' and fortuna establishes a reciprocal and dynamic interaction where fortuna no longer appears as a power external to man, but is seen, rather, as an aspect of virtu'. Fortuna appears as the existing objectivity of the essere, an objectivity that results from the action of man in the world. Virtu' is the conscious and purposive will that recognizes itself in this objectivity because the latter is the product of this will. Fortuna appears as an alien force only when, and because, the virtu' of man has disintegrated and degenerated. But it is to be noted that even with this disintegration fortuna, while acquiring a power over man's activity, nevertheless still remains an aspect of virtu': in this case the former now appears as

the objective force of events over which man believes he has no control. Thus the subordination of man to fortuna is a function of virtu' itself: to the extent that virtu' is active and operative, to the extent that it is embodied in the concrete activity of man in the world, then to that extent the objective forces of fortuna are overcome and directed towards human ends and human purposes. As Gramsci puts it, "According to Russo, [<41>] for Machiavelli fortuna possesses a double meaning, both objective and subjective. Fortuna is the natural force of reality [delle cose] (that is, the causal relation), the propitious concurrence of events, what to Vico will become Providence, or that transcendent power mythologized by the old medieval doctrine of God. [But] for Machiavelli this is simply the very same virtu' of the individual, and its power springs from the very same will of man." (MS, 101) <42>

These differing conceptions of the relation between virtu' and fortuna establish, in Gramsci's view, the basic opposition between Machiavelli and Guicciardini. The former is a politico who acts upon the existing reality in order to transcend it and establish a new structure; the latter is a diplomatico, who "can only move within [the existing structure] of effective reality, because his specific activity is not directed towards the creation of new structures [equilibri], but rather towards the preservation within certain juridical boundaries of the existing structure of power." (NM, 39) <43> Guicciardini's attitude

towards Machiavelli anticipates Croce's attitude towards the philosophy of praxis, in the same way that Croce's interpretation of the relation between political action and thought is a modern version of Guicciardini's: both Croce and Guicciardini look at politics as a technique useful to maneuver within the given reality, but one which is always subject to the laws that govern this reality (Croce), or to the external power of fortuna (Guicciardini). Both regard any attempt to transform this reality not only impossible, but also dangerous, for any such action will de-stabilize the existing structure and unleash the unpredictable and violent forces of fortuna.

It is not an accident that to both Guicciardini and Croce such violence and unpredictability are products of the active intervention of the people into the socio-political reality.<44> Since the nature of the existing reality is immutable, and since the nature of the "volgo" is always opposed to thought (Croce) and to "wisdom" (Guicciardini), the emergence of the masses will disintegrate the existing structure of power, which to them depends for its stability and durability on the permanent divorce of the "wise" rulers from the ignorant people. From this perspective the Guicciardinian and Crocean critique, issuing from a basically conservative and "restorative" interpretation of history and politics, represents an element of the contemporary reality against which Machiavelli and Gramsci are struggling. The latter's attempt to recapture the past

in order to change the present is at the same time an attempt to deny the very same past to those who, like Guicciardini and Croce, would employ it to justify the prevailing conception of the world and to maintain the established system or "equilibrium" of forces. A Guicciardini who supports the rule of the ottimati and argues for the establishment in Florence of a governo stretto envisions a Roman past and its relation to the Italian present quite differently from a Machiavelli who supports the popolo minuto and argues for the formation of a governo largo.^{<45>} The former understands historical and political change as the result of the uncontrollable forces unleashed by fortuna, while the latter sees such change as the product of an interaction between virtu and fortuna, such that socio-political reality is open to the transformative efforts of political action. The ottimati, being more cultured and possessed of more virtu' (that is, more disciplined and "prudent") than the common people, will be able to create a stable and more durable state that will be able to lessen the deleterious effects of fortuna. To expand the base of the governo, to subject the state to the popular participation of the people, would be to de-stabilize the foundations of the state (which can only rest on the "wisdom" and prudential knowledge of the ottimati), and thus would be to destroy the narrow space necessary for the aristocracy to pursue its cultural and social endeavors.^{<46>} If men are subject to the action of

fortuna, then the expansion of political participation through the introduction of the popolo minuto into the government will mean the expansion and the intensification of the forces of fortuna. The governo stretto of Guicciardini translates into the "aristo-democracy" of Croce: both are seen as necessary to the establishment and preservation of a realm of culture and thought.

In both cases the nature of the people is as unchangeable as the nature of the "aristocracy of the intellect." The underlying assumption that supports both perspectives is a belief that posits a profound gulf between knowledge and action, a position which posits a superior value to thought and contemplation precisely because thought is seen as an activity isolated from socio-political action. To both Croce and Guicciardini not only is the "word" always antithetical to the deed, but the deed itself can never redeem the brute necessity of worldly events, so that salvation is possible only through the word, and by retreating into the particular and private world. Thus Gramsci asserts that there is in Croce "the will not 'to commit oneself' at all, which is the mode of looking to one's own "particolare," a modern Guicciardinism peculiar to many intellectuals for whom the 'word' is quite sufficient: 'Dixi, et salvavi animam meam.' But the soul will not be saved merely through the word. Works are needed...." (MS, 253) <47>

The parallel between the Machiavellian attack on the "many" who believe men's actions cannot remedy the nature of things, and the Gramscian critique of Croce is noteworthy. The former assert that "there is no remedy whatever, and for this they may judge it useless to toil much about them," (P, XXV) <48> and Croce's separation of philosophy from practice reduces itself to the will not to engage the world. The will not to commit oneself in Croce's case, and the will to retreat into the private realm of the particolare in Guicciardini, are translated, within the political and social context of struggle and competition, into the will to support a concrete social group and a concrete structure of power. In the first the liberal philosophy that posits the political as technique and as "pure" science envisions a divorce between the rulers and the ruled, the intellectuals and the "volgo"--a divorce necessary to attain and maintain a "liberty" founded on the "aristo-democracy." In the second case Guicciardini's historical and political thought similarly posits a distinction between "those who know" (the oligarchic families of Florence) and "those who do not know" (the populo minuto), which must be preserved if stability and liberty are to be achieved. Crocean thought posits the existing Italian state and the existing social relations of power as the culmination of the nineteenth century liberal movement; Guicciardini posits the governo stretto of the great Florentine houses as the only possible means of avoiding the violence of the people and the tyranny of the

despot. It is significant that both Croce and Guicciardini, within their respective time periods, felt it necessary to support, or at least to acquiesce to, the despotism of the Medici (restored to power by papal and foreign armies) and the reaction of the fascists.<49>

The Machiavellian conception of the virtu'/fortuna dyad presupposes an active will engaged in the world, a will that sees the world as its own creation. Consequently, the relation between the essere and the dover essere establishes a conception of politics where the latter is seen as emerging from the former, where the realization of the latter necessitates socio-political engagement within the former. In Machiavelli the dover essere is not a realm whose meaning and purpose are actualized within the private realm, and the essere is a world where the iron laws of events are impermeable and intractable to the value-creating activity of man's virtu. In Machiavelli there can be no retreat to the realm of the private: all value and all creative activity emerge from within the realm of the public, that is, the political is the activity by which the dover essere which is latent within the essere is transformed into a new "verita' delle cose." The Machiavellian political knowledge, therefore, must of necessity be a "public" knowledge which both teaches the "new principles and orders" and which attempts to "animate" by means of this teaching the will and virtu' of men.

Thus Machiavelli asserts in The Discourses that "saro' animoso in dire manifestamente"--he will speak out openly and passionately and reveal the fruits of "lunga pratica" and "continua lezione," that is, the new political knowledge which encompasses both history and politics.<50> And in The Prince he also makes it clear that the "modes and orders" that previously were covertly taught by the Centaur he now intends to teach openly. (P, 18; see also Strauss)<51> The political as technique is not what is new to Machiavelli's knowledge; what is new is that now he is openly teaching it. But this "manifestamente" is crucial to the entire body of Machiavelli's project: the new knowledge must be an open and public knowledge because it teaches a dynamic and active virtu' inserted within the very structure of social reality, a virtu' which transforms the essere into the dover essere. It must be open and public because such knowledge cannot be developed within the Guicciardinian particolare, but rather must be addressed to an audience which the new knowledge recognizes has the potential to realize itself within the essere and within the "effective reality." The "manifestamente" of Machiavelli's knowledge is a necessary moment of the movement from the Guicciardinian particolare to the political world conceived as activity that creates new values. Similarly, the "animoso" is a necessary posture for the creation of a virtu' directed towards the transformation of the established system.

The opposition between the retreat into the sphere of the private and the active intervention into the "effective reality," the antithesis between the Machiavellian virtu'/fortuna dyad and the Guicciardinian one, are no more sharply contrasted than in those sections of his works where Machiavelli discusses the various types of religion and their relation to action and to politics. In The Discourses, where he analyzes the role of liberty in making the Roman people great, Machiavelli says that "in ancient times the people were more devoted to liberty than in the present...[because] men were stronger in those days, which is attributable to the difference of education, founded upon the difference of their religion and ours. For, as our religion teaches us the truth and the true way of life, it causes us to attach less value to the honors and possessions of this world; whilst the Pagans, esteeming those things as the highest good, were more energetic and ferocious in their actions...our religion glorifies more the humble and the contemplative men than the men of action [who are more valued by the Romans]. Our religion...places the supreme happiness in humility, lowliness, and a contempt for worldly objects, whilst the...[Roman] places the supreme good in grandeur of soul, strength of body...and if our religion claims of us fortitude of soul, it is more to enable us to suffer than to achieve great deeds. Such a way of life has made men feeble, and made them an easy prey to evil-minded men, who can control them more securely, seeing that the

great body of men, for the sake of gaining Paradise, are more disposed to endure injuries than to avenge them." (D, II, 2) <52>

We have quoted Machiavelli in extenso because there emerges within this chapter of The Discourses the fundamental conception of the world that Machiavelli's knowledge teaches and intends to introduce. In addition, the chapter also posits an antinomy between the conception of the world entertained by the the pagans--the religion of the Romans--and the conception of the world advanced by the Christian religion. It is noteworthy that in this discussion of religion Machiavelli relates a belief system and a "way of life" to what he calls education. It is through education that the way of life and the conception of the world are concretized and reproduced within society. Education implies a knowledge which is to be taught, and a practice which expresses and animates the new knowledge--a totality which presupposes an "end" and a "good" which are generated by the new moral and intellectual system. What Machiavelli finds totally unacceptable in Christian thought and practice is the negation of the world and the negation of action in the world. "Il sommo bene" (the supreme good) is located outside the world of human events. The Christian good is the standard by which the world and political action are interpreted, such that the "world has been weakened and made effeminate, and Heaven is disarmed." (Ibid) <53> The condition of the world "nel temporale," and the particular

type of moral and intellectual education, are closely connected. "La religione nostra" (Christianity) does not simply posit an irreconcilable duality between the world of thought and the world of experience, but the thought itself requires for its continued existence a form of education that maintains the duality while at same time negating the Christian good in the world of experience and political action. The continued existence of the Cristian way of life, therefore, is based on the "disharmony" between the word and the deed (to use de Sanctis' term).<54>

The cutting edge of the critique is the opposition between active and passive, pride and humility, action and contemplation, virtu' and ozio, the world "nel temporale" and a reality given by "the truth and the true way." The attack is all-encompassing, since the critique of "our religion" is basically a critique of a conception of the world that posits the "disharmony" between thought and action, and which elevates the former to a moral and ethical realm superior to that of the latter. This is evident where Machiavelli attacks those men "who have interpreted our religion according to the promptings of indolence rather those of virtu'". For if we were to reflect that our religion permits us to exalt and defend our country, we should see that according to it we ought also to love and honor our country, and prepare ourselves so as to be capable of defending it."<55> There are traces in this passage that anticipate the national, anti-papal, and anti-Empire

elements that were later harnessed by the Lutheran Reformation. It recognizes the possibility that the Christian religion may be re-interpreted away from, and against, the feudal and medieval conception of the world so that it may be wedded to the interests and needs of the emerging rulers of the various territorial states, and opposed to the interests of the supra-national Church and Empire (De Sanctis, Gramsci).<56> Whereas in the past the Christian fathers and doctors re-interpreted the classical notions of virtus and arete and transformed them into Christian concepts of value, Machiavelli intends to reverse the process: he re-interprets the Christian religion in order to assimilate it into his concept of virtu' and his notion of politics.<57> In any case, the point is unambiguous: a particular interpretation of Christianity, according to which heaven is "disarmed" (that is, the end or good is located outside the realm of historical and political action) has rendered the present world weak and subject to the forces of fortuna. Thus, a different interpretation of Christianity, based on a new conception of virtu', will re-arm heaven, locate the supreme good within the essere, and consequently re-make the world through the actualization of the dover essere ("il sommo bene").

It should be noted that the Christian good--the salvation of the soul-- is a religious and theological version of the particulare towards which action is directed by the Guicciardinian concept of virtu'. Guicciardini, of

course, entertains a secular and humanist notion of virtu'. But since this virtu' is a reactive capacity subject to the over-whelming forces of fortuna, its pessimistic and skeptical attitude towards action resembles the Christian and Augustinian belief that willing and acting cannot change the nature and structure of worldly events. Thus in one we have the retreat into the religious particulare of faith and the salvation of the individual soul, and in the other we have the retreat into the secular particulare of individual and economic self-interest: in both the "bene" is individual, particular, and narrow--a consequence of the basic futility of human action to re-dress the disharmony between word and deed (a futility based in the first on the consequences of the Fall, and in the second on the primacy of fortuna over virtu' which makes it impossible to relate in any meaningful way "pratica" to "lezione"). Thus the Machiavellian critique encompasses the past and the present: it attacks the caritas of a St. Francis of Assisi as well as the secular humanism of the Renaissance papal and princely courts; the vita contemplativa of classical and medieval philosophy as well as the literary erudition of the Renaissance humanists; the retreat into Christian self-interest (the salvation of the soul) as well as the retreat into the Guicciardinian particulare.<58>

But the critique of the Christian conception of the world, and the critique of the humanist concern with the narrow and particular interests, are at the same time accompanied by the formulation of a new conception of the world that contains within it an opposing vision of the good. It is the "common good rather than the particular good that makes cities great. And certainly the common good is recognized nowhere but in republics."(D,II,2)<59> The common good--the underlying problematic which is addressed by The Discourses--is presented as the antithesis of the particular good. The former makes a vivere civile and a vivere politico ("civil and political life") possible while the latter is a good that belongs within the realm of the private. Thus the education and the inculcation of a given conception of virtu' is a necessary condition for what Machiavelli calls the vivere libero and the vivere commune--a life based on liberty and on common action. A "way of life"--"modo del vivere"--cannot be separated from the social and political education which presupposes it. In Machiavelli such an education refers to the moral, intellectual, and cultural structure which is actively and experientially embedded within a specific way of life. The emphasis on this type of education is found throughout Machiavelli's works,<60> where there may be found numerous references to "religion," "good education," and to "good laws," which make for "good arms," which in turn lead to "good laws" and "good education."

The prevailing conception of the world, whether expressed by the feudal interpretation of Christianity or by the Renaissance humanist preoccupation with the particulare, posits a way of life antithetical to the general and common good necessary for a vivere politico. Thus Machiavelli: "It is this education, then, and this false interpretation of our religion, that is the cause of there not being so many republics nowadays as there were anciently; and that there is no longer the same love of liberty amongst the people now as there was then." (D<II,2><61> An education and a religion that teach and prescribe a "sommo bene" within the world, that celebrate and inculcate human action and practice, and that place a moral and political value on the "civil" and "political" way of life, assume a moral and intellectual perspective whose necessity is given by the new political knowledge that Machiavelli intends to introduce. On the other hand, the existing state of affairs presupposes a socio-political and socio-cultural conception of the world which is antithetical to the Machiavellian form of knowledge, a perspective whose frame of reference and terms of discourse describe and "fix" a field of vision wherein the very notions vivere politico and vivere civile lose their meaning and intelligibility.

What this means is that to pose the question of the bene commune as a way of life that embodies the vivere politico is to negate the prevailing conception of the world. The introduction of "new modes and orders"

presupposes a conception whose terms of discourse are radically different from those of the existing reality, a mode of discourse that establishes a new way of seeing the world and a new way of acting in the world. Machiavelli's new perspective is given by the end, and this end is at the same time the object in sight, because it is fixed by the new conception. A vivere politico is not conceivable without a new and different way of seeing and acting; and this new way of interpreting the world cannot become a way of life without the introduction of the new political order. Machiavelli presents two kinds of "sommo bene," antagonistic and mutually exclusive, each a product and an expression of a specific conception of the world--one embodying the prevailing structure of reality (the essere) supported by the weight and authority of the past in all its social, moral, educational, and cultural encrustations, the other embodying an embryonic seed and an end (the dover essere), which are both potentiality and necessity, embedded within the reality and yet in their unfolding constitute the negation of this reality.

The common strand that links these terms together is the notion of education as a moral and intellectual discipline without which socio-cultural and socio-political life is impossible. The point is what type of education will embody in practice a conception of the world that looks to a way of life based on the vivere civile and the vivere politico. Since such a conception of the world envisions a

notion of virtu' opposed to the established notion, the problem The Discourses poses is the organization of virtu' within a people, which is an aspect of the organization of education. But this is another way of asking who is to be the subject of this education, what entity possesses the necessary capacity to become "virtuoso?" Is there an entity within the essere which, by means of this education and this virtu', will create a civil and political life that is based on the common rather than the particular good? Or, to put it another way, what is the process by which one is able to move from the particular good located within the Guicciardinian (humanist) and Christian (feudal) realms of the private, to the common and universal good located within the public and open realm of the political?

The critique of the established conception of the world, the attack on what is assumed as a given--whether it is the skepticism of Guicciardinian political knowledge, or the feudal and scholastic type of Christianity--are translated by Machiavelli into a political and military critique of the Renaissance ruling class, which Machiavelli holds responsible for the weakened and enslaved condition of Italy. Machiavelli, in comparing the ancient "orders" to those of the present, is calling for the formation of a new type of political actor which will embody the new political knowledge put forth in The Discourses. Italy is a "provincia" "without a head, without order, beaten, despoiled, lacerated, and overrun," yet Machiavelli believes

that "there is not lacking scope [materia] in Italy for the introduction of every kind of new organisation [ogni formi]. Here there is great virtue in the members, if it were not wanting in the heads." (P, XXVI) <62> It should be noted that virtu' is not lacking in Italy when directed to particular and individualistic ends. The problem is to translate this form of virtu' which exists within the particular and private sphere into a political and public virtu', into an "ordered virtu'" consciously directed towards the common good. But "no one has arisen who knew how to discover new [orders (ordini)]." <63> Machiavelli intends to discover a subject or entity which is able to introduce the new orders given by his new knowledge.

The Machiavellian project to create a new political and historical subject emerges when we juxtapose the statement in The Prince just quoted above to the intention stated in the dedication to The Discourses: "I...do not address myself to such as are princes, but to those who by their infinite good qualities are worthy to be such...[and] to those who would know how to govern states, rather than those who have the right to govern, but lack the knowledge." <64> The new ruler addressed by Machiavelli's knowledge will not be bound by the practice and "opinion" of the present, nor will he be tied to the pre-existing system of power. Machiavelli locates the new political actor outside the established and customarily recognized centers of power. Machiavelli addresses himself to those who, though not

princes by the standards and practices of the age, yet have the potential to be such. The established princes do not deserve to rule because they are rooted within the moral, intellectual, and cultural totality corrupted by vice, "proud indolence," and idleness.<65> The servile condition of Italy reflects the true character of its ruling groups, who would rather study and practice the courtly arts and manners, rather than the arts of war and of ruling.<66>

The distinction between those "who are princes," and those who "are worthy of being such," presupposes a political knowledge which is simultaneously a critique of the present and a prefiguration or anticipation<67> of the future. The former are located within an existing reality (the essere) which is defined by a past and present whose values, ideas, beliefs, and practices together constitute the totality against which Machiavelli is reacting; and the latter, as they emerge from within this totality, represent the do ver essere which is the result and the negation of the established structure. The critique, while it originates within the intellectual, social, and cultural complex of the established totality, transcends this totality, and attempts to formulate novel moral and intellectual criteria that define the nature of ruling and the nature of the subject that rules. In effect, the new knowledge re-formulates and re-defines the concept of ruling and the nature of power. The established princes are not worthy of rule, not because they lack the knowledge of political technique--the arcana

imperii--but because they lack Machiavelli's new knowledge. The latter attempts to over-come the traditional and customary terms of discourse within which political technique is inserted. Thus Machiavelli asserts that he has "departed from the ordinary usage [uscito fuori dell'uso comune] of writers." (D,ded)<68> This departure signals the independence of the Machiavellian project from the established reality: rooted within the historical present, it looks to undermine and destroy it by locating within it a new subject able to carry forward the introduction of the new modes and orders. In Gramsci's words, Machiavelli recognizes the necessity "to break the unity [of the existing reality] created by the traditional ideology, [for] without such a rupture the new force will not be able to achieve the consciousness of itself as an independent subject [personalita']". (NM,10)<69>

The burden of the argument presented in the dedication and in the introductions of The Discourses is the opposition between those who ought to rule as a consequence of moral and intellectual force (virtu'), and those who do in fact rule simply because they possess the power and resources of the established system ("avere il regno"). The dominant groups in Italy do not possess moral and intellectual authority, for they understand the nature of rule--and of the political--only in terms of the immediate and particular good. Their rule is a consequence of the conception of the world that Machiavelli identifies with "our religion" and

with the "opinion of the many." Therefore, the established rulers "do not know" because their values and activity are determined by a world view which "esteems the private"<70> more than the public, and which therefore employs the arcana imperii for private ends rather than for public and common ends.

"To go outside common usage" represents a double departure: on the one hand, in opposition to his predecessors and contemporaries,<71> Machiavelli intends to introduce a knowledge which represents the negation of the established forms of thought and practice; and, on the other, this knowledge will address itself, not to established rulers and princes, but rather to those that are identified by this very knowledge as "worthy to be rulers." Those who are outside the established practices and beliefs are the "real" rulers and princes, while those who are within are merely the "apparent" rulers: that the former ought to rule is given by the new knowledge, and that the latter rule yet do not know how to rule is also given by this knowledge. Machiavelli thus establishes a radical opposition between two kinds of knowledge and two kinds of subject. The Machiavellian project demands a new subject--a "new prince"(P,IX)<72>--which expresses in action and in practice the new political knowledge. Since this knowledge opposes and confronts the established and dominant conception of the world, it requires a new subject which will oppose and confront the traditional and established

rulers. It is the subject to which the new knowledge is addressed that will carry forward the transformative and innovating project. The knowledge, and the subject it addresses, together constitute the over-coming of the established system and the movement towards the creation of a new reality.

Notes

<1>Antonio Gramsci, Note sul Machiavelli, sulla politica, e sullo Stato moderno (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), p. 90, henceforth cited as NM; and Selections from the Prison Notebooks, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1973), p. 248; and Il materialismo storico e la filosofia di Benedetto Croce (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), pp. 21-23, 28, henceforth cited as MS. See also A.R. Buzzi, La teoria politica di Gramsci (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1973), pp. 167-169.

<2>On Machiavelli's "intention," see Gramsci, NM, pp. 9-10, 14, 115-123, 141-142, 160. For a traditionalist--that is, moral law and "medieval"--attempt to arrive at Machiavelli's intention, see Leo Strauss, Thoughts on Machiavelli (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978). It is interesting to note that Strauss' anti-modernist--that is, pre-Machiavellian--interpretation of Machiavelli, which is seen through a philosophical prism clearly fashioned on the basis of the Judeo-Christian conception of the world, arrives at a conclusion not dissimilar to that of de Sanctis and Gramsci--namely, that Machiavelli presents a politics whose aim is to transform the moral, intellectual, and cultural system of the established order. The significant difference, of course, is that Strauss on the one hand, and Gramsci and de Sanctis on the other, assign opposite values to Machiavelli's enterprise, such that the "morality" or "immorality" of Machiavelli depends upon the interpreter's attitude toward the popular masses. For an excellent discussion of this and other interpretations of Machiavelli, see Sir Isaiah Berlin, "The Originality of Machiavelli," in Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas, ed. and with a bibliography by Henry Hardy, introduction by Roger Hausheer (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1982), pp. 25-79.

<3>See above, chapter IV.

<4>Machiavelli, The Prince, chapter XV. For a discussion of Machiavelli's "predecessors," see Allan H. Gilbert, Machiavelli's Prince and Its Forerunners: 'The Prince' as a Typical Book de regimine principum (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1938), where he discusses the relation of The Prince to other works whose subject is princely rule, most especially the literature of the speculum principii type. Gilbert says that Machiavelli follows the tradition of previous authors who had written on princship, and that these earlier works serve as a pattern or model for Machiavelli. See also Felix Gilbert, "The Humanist Concept of the Prince and the 'Prince' of Machiavelli," Journal of Modern History, vol. XI (1939), pp. 449-483, in which he analyzes the relation of The Prince to its predecessors and to the speculum tradition,

but argues that while this literature may indeed have served as a pattern or guide, Machiavelli's real purpose is to satirize and to attack a literature which idealizes and moralizes rulers and princes. Quentin Skinner's contribution is also important, see his The Foundations of Modern Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), vol. I, pp. 118-128, and his Machiavelli (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), pp. 25-47.

<5>Machiavelli, The Discourses, Book I, chapter 58.

<6>Benedetto Croce, "La questione del Machiavelli," in Indagini su Hegel e schiarimenti filosofici (Bari: Laterza, 1952), pp. 164-176; and "Moralita' del Machiavelli," in Nuove pagine sparse (Napoli: Ricciardi, 1949), vol. I. And see Francesco Ercole, La politica di Machiavelli, (Roma: A.R.E., 1926), in which the distinction between ethics and politics is denied, and in which an interpretation of Machiavelli as a theorist of the "ethical state" is put forward. On this question, both Federico Chabod, Machiavelli and the Renaissance (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965.), and Luigi Russo, Machiavelli (Bari: Laterza, 1975), follow Croce.

<7>Gramsci, NM, pp. 15-16, 115-118, 123-125, 158; and Il Risorgimento (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), pp. 32-36, henceforth cited as R; and MS, p. 223. . Also, Skinner, Foundations, vol. I, pp. 248-254.

<8>See Strauss, op. cit., and Harry C. Mansfield, Jr. "Introduction," to his translation of Machiavelli's The Prince (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), pp. vii-xxiv. And Croce, "Machiavelli e Vico," in Etica e politica (Bari: Laterza, 1931). Croce emphasizes and dwells upon the amorality of Machiavelli, and sees his special contribution to thought to be the formulation of a truly scientific knowledge of politics. On the other hand Strauss and his school stress the immorality of Machiavelli, and they understand Machiavelli as one who intends to over-throw the traditional moral law that forms the basis (according to Strauss) of the classical and medieval conceptions of the world. In the first case, Machiavelli is a thinker of the Crocean type, aloof and "Olympian" in his orientation towards le cose del mondo; in the second case, he is a thinker who presents a teaching that negates the established order of the moral universe (the "teacher of evil"). What is scientific neutrality and amorality to Croce is passionate and committed immorality to Strauss, an opposition which is translated in Gramsci into a reading of Machiavelli as the thinker who dissolves traditional categories of morality and immorality (and thus of amorality also), and who attempts to develop new criteria for a new moral interpretation of the world, that is, for a re-definition of moral and intellectual categories.

<9>For a discussion of the moral question in Machiavelli, see Gennaro Sasso, Niccolo' Machiavelli: storia del suo pensiero (Napoli: Nella sede dell'Istituto, 1958), pp. 290-303, and Luigi Russo, Machiavelli, "Prolegomena sul Machiavelli." See also J.H. Whitfield, Machiavelli (New York: Russell and Russell, 1965), pp. 114-117.

<10>The Prince, ch. XI.

<11>Croce, Etica e politica, Strauss, op. cit., and de Sanctis, "Machiavelli Conferenze," Saggi critici, Russo, op. cit., pp. 38-46. See also, Federico Chabod, "The Prince: Myth and Reality," in Machiavelli and the Renaissance, pp. 95-96, especially 98-99, and note 2 on p. 99, and pp. 104-109. In addition, see Felix Gilbert, Machiavelli and Guicciardini (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp. 239-240, 278-280; and Sasso, op. cit. See also, Luigi Firpo, "Machiavelli politico," in Machiavelli nel V centenario della sua nascita, AA.VV. (Bologna: Boni, 1973), pp. 113-136, especially see pp. 114-119, and Raymond Aron, "Machiavel et Marx," in Ibid., pp. 11-30, and especially pp. 16-20.

<12>See de Sanctis, Storia della letteratura italiana, a cura di Benedetto Croce, (Bari: Laterza, 1965), vol. II, essay on Machiavelli. See Georg Lukacs, The Young Hegel: Studies in the Relations between Dialectics and Economics, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1976), for Hegel's use of the term "prose." Note, in addition, Labriola's use of "prose" in connection with the rise of communism. "Il segreto della storia si e' semplificato. Siamo alla prosa...Ed anche il comunismo diventa prosa: ossia e' scienza." Antonio Labriola, In memoria del Manifesto dei comunisti, (Roma, 1895), p. 71. And see Gramsci, MS, p. 179 for the phrase "prosa scientifica italiana."

<13>Gramsci, NM, p. 39.

<14>De Sanctis, SLI, vol. II; Chabod, "The Prince: Myth and Reality," in Machiavelli and Guicciardini, and Felix Gilbert, Machiavelli and Guicciardini, pp. 195-200. Also, Saitta, Il pensiero politico italiano, vol. III, pp. 411-413. See Gramsci, MS, p. 37.

<15>Gramsci, R, p. 36; NM, p. 281, note; and Gli intellettuali e l'organizzazione della cultura (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), p. 38, henceforth cited as Int. Also, Saitta, vol. III, pp. 312-318. Galileo's attempt to re-translate the scriptural texts by establishing two distinct, but equal, levels of discourse was doomed to failure because, as Saitta points out, the separation of Scrittura from Scienza was equivalent to the subordination

of the former to the latter: the authority of the scriptural texts was questioned, for now these texts would be perceived as human texts, as the products of a human intelligence and a human purpose, and, as such, necessarily and inherently subject to the critical scrutiny of man's reason. See Machiavelli's apparent separation of sacred history from secular history (and thus sacred text from secular text), in The Prince, chs. VI and XI--an opposition which is eventually exploded and resolved into the supremacy and primacy of secular action, of profane history over sacred history, and profane texts over sacred texts: as Machiavelli points out, the deeds of Romulus, Cyrus, and Theseus, in the founding of their respective states, are no different in kind and in method than the deeds of Moses in founding the Hebrew people--that is, Machiavelli's new knowledge destroys the integrity of the distinction between sacred and secular, and recognizes all human activity and human thought as products of men engaged within the verita' effettuale. On Galileo, see Eugenio Garin, Science and Civic Life in the Italian Renaissance, trans. Peter Munz (New York: Anchor Books, 1969), pp. 113-116. In addition, see Leonardo Olschki, Machiavelli the Scientist (Berkeley: The Gillick Press, 1945), pp. 22-33, in which Olschki compares Machiavelli's new knowledge to Galileo's new science.

<16>Machiavelli, The Discourses, Dedication, and The Prince, Dedication.

<17>The Discourses, Book II, Introduction.

<18>Gramsci, MS, pp. 54-55, 226-227. On Galileo's "primary objects" see A.R. Hall, The Scientific Revolution 1500-1800: the Formation of the Modern Scientific Attitude (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), pp. 168-185. In addition see Garin, Science and Civic Life in the Italian Renaissance, pp. 117-144. It seems that there is a long tradition in the attempt to establish a parallel between the natural science of Galileo and the political science of Machiavelli, one which extends from Cassirer as far back to Gioberti in the early nineteenth century. See Luigi Firpo, "Machiavelli politico," pp. 118-119.

<19>The Discourses, II, Introduction.

<20>The Prince, ch. XV; The Discourses, II, Introduction.

<21>The Discourses, II, 2. See Gramsci, NM, pp. 13-14.

<22>The Discourses, II, Introduction.

<23>Croce, "Machiavelli e Vico," in Etica e politica; de Sanctis, SLI, pp. 105-109; Chabod, Machiavelli and the Renaissance, pp. 109-115; and Gramsci, NM, pp. 85-87.

<24>Gramsci, NM, pp. 85-86.

<25>Gramsci, R, p. 13.

<26>On virtu' see John Plamenatz, "In search of Machiavellian Virtu'," in The Political Calculus: Essays in Machiavelli's Philosophy e. Anthony Parel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), pp. 157-178; Skinner, Foundations, pp. 129, 138, and Machiavelli, pp. 34-38; de Sanctis, "L'uomo del Guicciardini," Saggi critici, a cura di Luigi Russo (Bari: Laterza, 1965), vol. III, pp. 1-23; J.G.A. Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), Part I; and Felix Gilbert, Machiavelli and Guicciardini, pp. 178-176. Friedrich Meinecke, Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison d'Etat and Its Place in Modern History, trans. Douglas Scott (New York: Praeger, 1965), pp. 25-41 sees virtu' as the key to the understanding of Machiavelli; and J. H. Whitfield, Machiavelli, see especially the chapter "The Anatomy of Virtu'," pp. 93-98; and also Pasquale Villari famous biography of Machiavelli, Niccolo' Machiavelli e i suoi tempi, translated into English as the Life and Times of Niccolo' Machiavelli, trans. Linda Villari (London: T.F. Unwin, 1892), in which he contrasts pagan virtu' against Christian bonta'; and see Luigi Russo, "Prolegomeni a Machiavelli," in Machiavelli (Bari, Laterza, 1975), pp. 11-87, and "Postille a Machiavelli," in ibid., pp. 167-175.

<27>See Felix Gilbert's analysis of the relative merits of Machiavelli's and Guicciardini's historiographical methods, in op. cit., pp. 236-240, and 296-301. Guicciardini's historiography "approached the modern," that is, his method is more "scientific," "objective," and empirical (more respectful of the "facts" and "events" of history) than Machiavelli's. Gilbert makes the important point--one noted by Gramsci--that Machiavelli's project and intention led him to subordinate history to politics, whereas, on the other hand, Guicciardini's political position (both theoretical and practical), and his belief that virtu' was powerless against fortuna, resulted in a body of work that subordinated politics to history, and which led Guicciardini and his historical method to the passive study and contemplation of events. See also pp. 243-244, and 245-246. See also Franco Gaeta, "Machiavelli storico," in Machiavelli nel V centenario della sua nascita, pp. 141-142.

<28>Felix Gilbert, Machiavelli and Guicciardini, pp. 241-242; and Skinner, Foundations, vol. I, pp. 186-187.

<29>Gramsci, MS, p. 222.

<30>Guicciardini, "Considerazioni ai Discorsi del Machiavelli," in Scritti politici e Ricordi, ed. R. Palmarocchi (Bari: Laterza, 1932). Machiavelli, writes Guicciardini, is too "absolute" in his statements, and analyzes "troppo assolutamente..." (p. 8). And, "Quanto si ingannano coloro che ogni parola alzano e Romani! Bisognerebbe avere una citta' condizionata come era loro, e poi governarsi secondo quello esempio: el quale a chi a le qualita' disproporzionate e' tanto disproporzionato, quanto sarebbe volere che uno asino facessi il corso di un cavallo." Ricordo 110, in Guicciardini, Ricordi, edizione critica, a cura di Raffaele Spongano (Firenze: Sansoni, 1951), p. 121.

<31>Gramsci, Il Risorgimento, pp. 9-10, 11-15, 26-27; and Int, pp. 36-38. And see Chabod, Machiavelli and the Renaissance, the chapter "The Concept of the Renaissance;" and Eugenio Garin, Italian Humanism: Philosophy and Civic Life in the Renaissance, trans. Peter Munz (New York: Harper and Row, 1965); and Hans Baron, From Petrarch to Leonardo Bruni: Studies in Humanistic and Political Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961).

<32>Guicciardini, "Considerazioni ai Discorsi," pp. 11-12. And, "E' grande errore parlare delle cose del mondo indistintamente e assolutamente e, per dire cosi', per regola; perche' quasi tutti hanno distinzione e eccezione per la varietà delle circostanze, le quali non si possono fermare con una medesima misura: e queste distinzione e eccezione non si truovano scritte in su' libri, ma bisogna le insegni la discrezione." Ricordo 6, in Ricordi, p. 11. Thus Guicciardini posits a fundamental distinction between theoretical discourse and practical action, between a theoretical construction of worldly events that artificially inserts them within a rational and coherent pattern, and the events themselves, which are resistant to the coherence and ordered discipline imposed upon them by regola. As Guicciardini writes, "Quanto e' diversa la pratica dalla teorica!..." Ricordo 35, op. cit., p. 42, an antinomy--a disarmonia in de Sanctis' words--which cannot be overcome, and which must therefore be accepted in order to devise methods by which one will be able, by the use of prudence and discrezione, to employ it towards the advantage of one's particolare. See de Sanctis, "L'uomo del Guicciardini," in Saggi critici, vol. III, pp. 1-23; and Felix Gilbert, op. cit., pp. 272-282; Chabod, "The Concept of the Renaissance," op. cit., pp. 195-197; and Saitta's chapter on Guicciardini in Il pensiero italiano, vol. III, pp. 415-449. In addition, see Gramsci, NM, pp. 122-123, where

he notes Bandello's criticism of Machiavelli's fascination with Roman military organization and tactics. Note also Martin Fleisher's discussion and comments on Machiavelli and Guicciardini, in his "A Passion for Politics: The Vital Core of the World of Machiavelli," in Machiavelli and the Nature of Political Thought, ed. Martin Fleisher (New York: Atheneum, 1972), p. 144: "To accept Guicciardini's position is to deny the possibility of an art of politics since there are no general rules that may be taught....Guicciardini's radical skepticism undermines the possibility of learning from the past--not, of course, in every area, but certainly in politics." And if this is correct, as I believe it is, then such a skepticism would also deny the possibility of any form of political action directed towards the transformation of the present; for, if we relate Fleisher's observation to Gramsci's statement that "to interpret the past" is "to act in the present," then "interpreting the past" for Guicciardini is merely a form of historiographical activity--a kind of contemplation pursued through the prism of "detached" observation--that regards events from the isolated position of the discrezione of the observer's particolare. Such an orientation is quite different from that of Machiavelli, who, basing himself on continua lezione and lunga pratica, attempts to impose regola on le cose del mondo in order to transform them. See Gramsci, NM, pp. 39, 85-86, 122; and Gaeta, pp. 140-143.

<33>Gramsci, MS, p. 27. The "crisis" of the Italian Renaissance, as Machiavelli saw it, was in part due to the distacco and the frattura between thought and action, culture and politics, that occurred in the later history of Florence. The political and the cultural had been united in the figures of the great Italian humanists such as Leonardo Bruni, Salviati, Pomponazzi, and Coluccio Salutati--figures who excelled both in letters and in political activity. Bruni and Salutati, leaders of the Florentine republic, may be seen as typical examples of the ideal politicus that united within himself philosophy and politics, and who concerned themselves equally with culture and letters as well as with political freedom, civic obligation, and the affairs of their patria. These stand in marked opposition to figures such as Bracciolini and Scala, in whom the divorce between cultural activity and political activity becomes evident. As Garin points out, the break--the frattura--becomes total and complete with the rise of the Medici: Ficino and Poliziano are types directly opposed to those of Salutati and Bruni, where the former are writers and thinkers who have retreated from politics, and who no longer see purpose and meaning through participation in public and political life. Indeed, it may be said that to Machiavelli this very distacco expressed and summarized the political degeneration and the civil corruption against which he polemicized. The absence of a vivere politico, the disintegration of the vivere pubblico, are together related

by Machiavelli to the rise of a type of letters and culture that Machiavelli believed contributed to the ozio and the corruttela of the times. See The Art of War, Book I, and Book VII. See Eugenio Garin, Science and Civil Life in the Italian Renaissance, trans. Peter Munz (New York: Anchor Books, 1969), pp. 20-22, as well as his Italian Humanism: Philosophy and Civic Life in the Renaissance, pp. 27-29, 38-46. See also Nicolai Rubinstein, "Machiavelli and the World of Florentine Politics," in Studies on Machiavelli, ed. Myron P. Gilmore (Firenze: Sansoni, 1972), pp. 3-28; and Hans Baron, The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 104-120, 121-129, 315-331. In addition see, Jerrald Seigel, Rhetoric and Philosophy in Renaissance Humanism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp. 63-98, 99-136, and pp. 249-254.

<34>See below, chapters VI and VII.

<35>The Prince, ch. XXV. On Machiavelli's virtu', see Whitfield, Machiavelli, pp. 93-98; Plamenatz, "In Search of Machiavellian Virtu'," in Parel, op. cit., pp. 157-177; Thomas Flanagan. "The Concept of Fortuna in Machiavelli," in Parel, pp. 127-156; Pocock, op. cit., pp. 161-282; see also, Fleisher, "A Passion for Politics," op. cit., for a discussion of Machiavelli's language. In addition, see Meinecke, op. cit.; and Skinner, Foundations, vol. I, pp. 33-34, 184-189; as well as Leonardo Olschki, Machiavelli the Scientist (Berkeley: The Gillick Press, 1945). See also, note 26, above.

<36>The Discourses, II, 1.

<37>The Prince, XXV.

<38>See Skinner, Machiavelli, pp. 33-34; Fleisher, op. cit., pp. 118-124; Neal Wood, "Machiavelli's Humanism of Action," in Parel, op. cit., pp. 33-57. In addition, see Emile Namer, "Machiavel et l'humanisme politique," in Machiavelli nel V centenario della sua nascita, pp. 175-189.

<39>Gramsci, MS, pp. 216-218.

<40>Skinner, Machiavelli, pp. 35-39; Flanagan, "The Concept of Fortuna in Machiavelli," in Parel, op. cit., pp. 127-135; Chabod, p. 189; Olschki, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

<41>See Luigi Russo's commentary on chapter XXV of The Prince, in Il Principe e pagine dei Discorsi e delle Istorie, a cura di Luigi Russo (Firenze: Sansoni), pp. 197-189, as well as Russo's introduction.

<42>Gramsci, MS, p. 101.

<43>Gramsci, NM, p. 39, and pp. 85, 122, for Gramsci's use of diplomazia. The dichotomy politica/diplomazia, where the first term refers to transformative action, and the second to restorative and preservative activity, parallels the distinction grande politica/piccola politica. See MS, pp. 141-142.

<44>See Guicciardini, Ricordi: "Chi disse uno popolo disse veramente uno animale pazzo, pieno di mille errori, di mille confusione, senza gusto, senza diletto, senza stabilita'." A 101, p. 152. See Maxims and Reflections, trans. Mario Domandi, introduction Nicolai Rubinstein (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), pp. 76, 134, 140, 156. Ricordi, edizione critica, a cura di Raffaele Spongano (Firenze: Sansoni, 1951). "Si vede per esperienza, e lo mostra anche la ragione, che la moltitudine non si regge mai per se' medesima, ma sempre si va apiccando e dependendo, che procede da debolezza...." in "Dal modo di ordinare il governo popolare," p. 227. To Guicciardini the "moltitudine" is ignorant, and, therefore, does not possess the means necessary to recognize and to establish liberta'. Thus the few who possess reason--i savi, i boni, i nobili--possess the knowledge and the will to establish a government--un governo stretto--based on liberta' and on ragione. Ibid., p. 227. As Guicciardini says, "in ogni repubblica bene ordinata ed in ogni tempo si e' sempre veduto che la virtu' di pochi cittadini e' quello che ha retto e regge le repubbliche, e le opere gloriose ed ed effetti grandi sono sempre nati da pochi e per mano di pochi, perche' a volere guidare cose grande ed essere capi del governo in una citta' libera, bisogna moltissime parte e virtu' che in pochissimi si congiungono." Ibid., p. 222. See also his Dialogo del reggimento di Firenze, II, p. 93, and I, pp. 44-61. The popolo is ignorant and irrational, and ignorance "cieca, confusa, e senza termine e regola." (I, p. 46) The people "va alla grossa, non discerne ne' pesa sottilmente le cose...." (I, p. 44). And finally, "Questo e' proprio di uno governo dove la autorita' e' in uno solo o in pochi, perche' hanno el tempo, hanno la diligenza, hanno la mente volta tutta a questi pensieri, e quando conoscono el bisogno, hanno faculta' di provvedere secondo la natura delle cose; che tutto e' alieno da uno governo di moltitudine, perche' e' molti non conoscono..." and "e' piu'...non sono capaci della ragione." (I, p. 61). Compare this to Croce, in My Philosophy, and in Etica e politica. In addition, see Machiavelli, The Prince, IX, and The Discourses, II, 55, 58. See also, Fredi Chiappelli, "Machiavelli segretario," in Machiavelli nel V centenario della sua nascita, pp. 45-60, see especially pp. 52-54.

<45>Felix Gilbert, op. cit., pp. 19-28, 48-57, 60-70, 73-76, 78-104.

<46>See Guicciardini, Maxims and Reflections; Felix Gilbert, pp. 271-301; and Saitta, III, pp. 440-447.

<47>Gramsci, MS, p. 253; and NM, pp. 85-87. On the particolare of Guicciardini, see Saitta, III, pp. 426-434; Felix Gilbert, chapter on Guicciardini; de Sanctis, "L'uomo del Guicciardini," in Saggi critici, and his SLI, vol. II, pp. 102-110; Pocock, pp. 219-271; and Skinner, Foundations, I, pp. 187-188.

<48>The Prince, XXV.

<49>See Guicciardini on the restoration of the Medici, Felix Gilbert, pp. 280-282. On Croce and his relation to fascism, see Serge Hughes, The Rise and Fall of Modern Italy, (New York: Minerva Press), Part One.

<50>The Discourses, Dedication, and II, Introduction.

<51>The Prince, XVIII.

<52>The Discourses, II, 2.

<53>Ibid.

<54>De Sanctis, SLI, II, pp. 60-68.

<55>The Discourses, II, 2.

<56>De Sanctis, II, pp. 67-74. "E in fondo l'idea di una Chiesa nazionale, dipendente dello Stato e accomodata a' fini agl'interessi della nazione." See Gramsci, Int, pp. 35-39, 40-41; R, pp. 126-127; and Passato e presente, pp. 166-167.

<57>Such a re-interpretation is directly related to Gramsci's notion of interpretando il passato in order to operare nel presente (MS, p. 216). See de Sanctis, "Machiavelli Conferenze," in Saggi critici, vol. II, pp. 309-338.

<58>On vita activa and vita contemplativa (negotium and otium) see de Sanctis, SLI, I; Skinner, Foundations, pp. 108-109, 115-117, 217-219, and Pocock, op. cit., as well as Seigel, op. cit. See also Hans Baron, The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 104-120, 121-129, as well as Baron's "Cicero and the Roman Civic Spirit in the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, 22 (1938), 1-28, especially pp. 16-17. On

the futility of human action, and on the need for an external power to transform and direct the vita terrena--that is, on the necessity for gratia to transform human action and to overcome the corruption and resistance of the cose del mondo--see St. Augustine, The Political Writings of St. Augustine, ed. Henry Paolucci, (Chicago: Gateway Edition, 1970), and see Herbert Deane, The Political and Social Ideas of St. Augustine (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963).

<59>The Discourses, II, 2.

<60>The Prince, XII. And The Discourses, I, 1, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 55, 58, and II, Introduction, 2, 5, 26, 27, and III, 1, 36, 46, as well as the minor political writings, such as the "Danaio," and the "Discorso," in Opere. In addition, note The Art of War (Wood edition), Proemio, pp. 3-5, Book I, pp. 17-19, 24-26, 61, 64, 151, 159, 202, 209-211.

<61>The Discourses, II, 2.

<62>The Prince, XXVI.

<63>Ibid., and The Discourses, II, Introduction.

<64>The Discourses, Dedication. See The Prince, XV.

<65>The Discourses, Dedication. And The Prince, XII, XIII.

<66>See Machiavelli's Florentine Histories.

<67>Giorgio Nardone, Il pensiero di Gramsci (Bari: De Donato, 1971).

<68>The Discourses, Dedication.

<69>Gramsci, NM, p. 10.

<70>The Discourses, Dedication, and I, Introduction. And see The Art of War, I, p. 11.

<71>The Discourses, Dedication.

<72>The Prince, IX. Also, see Nardone, pp. 20-24. And Gramsci, NM, pp. 3, 6, 10-11, 85-86. And, Garin, "Gramsci nella cultura italiana," in Studi gramsciani, pp. 415-416, and Sasso, op. cit., p. 229.

Chapter VI

The relation between Machiavelli's thought and the subject to whom it is addressed is fundamental to the understanding of the Machiavellian enterprise. The new knowledge is not a disembodied thought that exists eternally and universally. It represents a form of consciousness, and a conception of the world, whose meaning and purpose are given by the subject to whom it is addressed, and within whom this knowledge is concretized and rendered into practice. The knowledge is the consciousness that defines, in Gramsci's words, the "personalita'"^{<1>} of the subject, and the subject is the embodiment of this knowledge in the world and in struggle. Thus the problem of address is crucial: it presupposes a mutual dialogue and a conversation between Machiavelli and the subject he is addressing. Such a dialogue, in turn, presupposes an interaction which is necessarily based upon mutual recognition and mutual speech. In effect, to ask the question: who or what is Machiavelli's knowledge addressing, is to ask, what is the nature and role of this knowledge, and how is it related to practice and to action?

We have already mentioned that Machiavelli goes outside the accepted custom of his predecessors and contemporaries. He does not address himself to the existing rulers; rather, he specifically dedicates his writings to those who are "nel privato," and, though not rulers, "are worthy to be

such."<2> Those who deserve to rule are represented in The Discourses by Zanobi Buondelmonte and Cosimo Rucellai, to whom Machiavelli formally dedicates the work. Machiavelli says that although it is customary to dedicate works of this kind to a prince or ruler he will depart from the "uso comune" and address his work to those who do not have power and who live in the private sphere. Buondelmonti and Rucellai are friends of Machiavelli who had urged him to write The Discourses. Machiavelli often frequented the Orti Oricellari where he engaged in conversation and discussion concerning political, historical, and literary subjects; he may have read portions of The Discourses to the group assembled in the Gardens.<3>

In the dedication it is made clear that the "gift" Machiavelli offers to his friends is one that springs from "obligations" the writer owes to the reader-friends. Machiavelli establishes at the very beginning a relation between himself and those he addresses which is based on the mutual obligations that friends owe to each other: "take it, then, as one accepts whatever comes from friends."(D,ded)<4> The relation between Machiavelli the teacher, and the subject, is thus one of equality and reciprocity. Machiavelli signals that he intends to be a teacher of political knowledge utterly different from his predecessors. If we accept Strauss' interpretation, that Machiavelli writes The Discourses in order to transform and re-translate Livy's works to use them in the same way that

Christianity re-translated the Hebrew scriptures and the works of the classical world for its own ends,<5> then it must also be added that Machiavelli does not assert a nature radically superior to that of his readers. Machiavelli teaches in the name of no divine or earthly authority; nor does he assert divine election or any special faculty or quality not possessed by others. In contrast to the teaching of Christianity, Machiavelli's teaching is not a "free" gift bestowed on the subject by an act of grace. It is a gift, but one which is "owed" by him to his friends. Indeed, Machiavelli is "forced" to write by the very friends he is addressing: "you have forced me to write what I should never have attempted on my own accord."<6>

In Machiavelli the subject is not the product of an external "revelation:" on the contrary, the new knowledge is seen by Machiavelli to be closely related to the subject it addresses. And Machiavelli the teacher issues from the very same subject that he intends to teach. This becomes clear when we realize that Machiavelli is forced to write that which is desired by the very same subject he has "chosen" to address. Thus the knowledge that Machiavelli is attempting to formulate openly and boldly is in part a consequence of the subject, in the same way that the subject emerges as a consequence of the knowledge. The "having chosen you" is equivalent to the "you have forced me to write" and to the "you yourselves have desired it." What is desired is what Machiavelli is forced to write, which, once written,

identifies as the carrier of the knowledge the very subject that had originally sparked the enterprise. Both recognize each other as necessary aspects of the new knowledge. Thus Machiavelli's choice is a necessary choice, where this necessity is a reciprocal necessity: it issues from the identification of the subject by the new knowledge, and simultaneously from the subject as the agent that forces the formulation of this knowledge and that recognizes it as a knowledge which is specific to itself.

It is significant that Machiavelli asserts the primacy of reason over authority, tradition, or God in the chapter of The Discourses where he discusses the nature of the people ("The people are wiser and more constant than princes"). (D,I,58)<7> In this Chapter Machiavelli defends the people against those writers (both classical and contemporary) who see them as the "vulgus" whose nature leads to the violent destruction of stable rule.<8> Such a defense, he knows, is contrary to the thought of "all writers;" yet he will maintain that reason shows "the governments of the people are better than those of princes." Machiavelli "thinks, and ever shall think, that it cannot be wrong to defend one's opinion with arguments founded upon reason, without employing force or authority." "To go outside the 'uso comune'" is to "reason without employing force or authority." It is precisely such a kind of reason that enables him to see the superiority of a popular government. It is a reason that establishes a knowledge not

given by any traditional source, such as revelation, authority (secular or religious), or the absolute Reason posited by platonism and stoicism.<9> Machiavelli's knowledge is given by "long experience and continual study:" an experience that reflects the practice of contemporary Florentine and Italian socio-political struggles, and a study which is the product of a "conversation" between Machiavelli and the ancient writers such as Livy, Tacitus, and Sallust (a conversation, in other words, between past and present, which is one element that constitutes Machiavelli's knowledge).(Letters)<10> The terms of the relation--of the conversation--between Machiavelli and his readers imply each other and are essentially interchangeable. Rucellai, Buondelmonte, and Machiavelli together express a common nature and a common purpose.

It is because of this relation that Machiavelli can write: "in this I have the sole satisfaction, that, even if I have often erred in the course of this work, I have assuredly made no mistake [in questa sola so] in having chosen you above all others to whom to dedicate [indirizzi] these discourses."<11> Machiavelli admits of error in the formulation of his analyses, but there is no error in the choice of subject. A knowledge which wants to argue with reason recognizes the possibility of error, and can make no absolute statements regarding the nature of truth and error. But this knowledge recognizes itself and unfolds within a subject which is the carrier of this knowledge. It is the

relationship between Machiavelli and the subject--a relationship of friendship and mutual interests--that provides the certainty in the choice of subject. Machiavelli is free from error, not because he possesses a knowledge which has discovered "scientifically" the objective and eternal laws of reality, but because this knowledge is a product of the relation between himself and those to whom he is sending it. Machiavelli is certain because the knowledge he is formulating and the choice of whom to impart it are inherent within each other. The certainty arises from the nature of the subject, which is not an alien entity external to and outside the experience and practice of Machiavelli's knowledge. The educator and the educated are mutually products of each other. Machiavelli recognizes himself in the subject, and the subject, as a friend and reader, recognizes itself in Machiavelli. The subject is to take the knowledge in the same way that "friends give gifts to each other, where the intention of him who offers is more important than the quality of the thing which is offered." The intention would be incomprehensible without the mutual recognition and mutual interests that describe the relation.

When Machiavelli writes "in questa sola so," this "I know" is a moral and intellectual knowledge which springs from a relation of friendship and equality. What this means is that "I know" becomes possible because it is based upon, and is the product of, "we know." The certainty regarding

the subject is necessary because it is this very subject that makes the knowing possible. Thus Machiavelli's knowledge is the product of a moral-intellectual interaction, which is in turn based on a social and political relation. In this sense, Machiavelli's knowledge is fundamentally rooted within the practice and the activity of the subject to which it is addressed.

The mutual recognition and mutual interaction are seen in the construction Machiavelli employs to describe the relation between himself and his readers. After referring to his "poor arguments" and "errors," Machiavelli writes: "This being so, I know not which of us has the greater right to complain--I, that you should have forced me to write what I should never have attempted of my own accord, or you, that I should have written without giving you cause to be satisfied." ("Io a voi, che mi avete forzato a scrivere...voi a me, quando, scrivendo...."). The "io a voi" ("I to you") and the "voi a me" ("you to me") establishes a dynamic interaction between the writer Machiavelli and the reader-subject. It is precisely such a formulation that posits a relation between the knowledge Machiavelli teaches and those who are to be taught that translates the "I know" into the "we know."

Such a relation finds its parallel in The Art of War, where the interaction between the new knowledge and the new subject is symbolized in the literary and stylistic form of

a dialogue. This dialogue is a conversation between Fabrizio (an admired soldier-statesman) and a group of "young men" assembled together in the Orti Oricellari.<12> The participants in the dialogue include the same Buondelmonte and Rucellai to whom the The Discourses are dedicated. The occasion for the dialogue is Rucellai's invitation of Fabrizio to his Gardens, which provide its setting--a setting which is secluded and thus stands as a symbol for the private life and private interests against which Fabrizio will argue. Thus in both The Discourses and in The Art of War the conversation and dialogue are initiated by a subject to which, though yet existing "nel privato" (the private sphere), the knowledge is directed. The theme of the dialogue, of course, is similar to that provided by Machiavelli's "conversation" with the ancient thinkers: "to imitate the ancients in bearing hardships and inconveniences, instead of giving [oneself] up to ease and indolence, in performing such exploits as were done in the sunshine and not in the shade." Such an intention pervades all of Machiavelli's works: knowledge of ancient virtu' is directed towards open and public ("in the sunshine") action in the present, rather than towards the passive and private ("in the shade") contemplation of history. (W,I,10)<13>

The recognition for the necessity to act is immediately linked by Machiavelli to the necessity to present a certain form of knowledge. Rucellai asserts that "you [Fabrizio] have now introduced a subject [voi avete aperto la via a uno

ragionamento] which I myself have wished to have discussed, and I therefore implore you to speak freely [sanza rispetto] about the matter, because I, on my part, will just as freely put questions to you [io senza rispetto vi domandero']. "(Ibid)<14> Rucellai states that Fabrizio has "opened" the discussion, yet it is the former's wish that has brought Fabrizio to introduce the theme of the dialogue. Fabrizio is to speak "sanza rispetto"--that is, freely, without regard to established social customs or usages--and Rucellai will in turn ask questions "sanza rispetto." The free interaction that will carry forward the "ragionamento" (reasoning) is based on the relation between the "domandare" (asking or questioning) and the "parlare" (speaking). It is through such a relation that one will come to the truth ("intendere la verita'"). But to speak "sanza rispetto" ("freely") is a method of proceeding which is quite similar to the "difendere alcuna opinione con le ragioni senza usare forza o autorita':" to speak freely is to reason without the use of force or authority. Or, as Fabrizio says, to state "my opinion...while speaking with friends" is to engage in reasoned discussion ("disputare le cose"). The beginning of Book I in the Art of War makes it clear that the conversation and the "ragionamento" can only be conducted within an environment (or social structure) where force and authority (such as established social habits and norms) are excluded. As in The Discourses, Fabrizio intends to discuss and to "defend with reason" what he proceeds to teach. Thus

the relationship that obtains between Fabrizio and the young interlocutors corresponds to the relation established in The Discourses between Machiavelli's new knowledge and the subject to which it is addressed.

It is interesting to note that in both works a parallel correspondence is established between Machiavelli-Fabrizio and the subject to whom they address themselves. The relation between the "io a voi" and the "voi a me" established in the dedication to The Discourses is almost exactly reproduced in Book I of The Art of War. Fabrizio says to Rucellai: "it will give me great pleasure that you question me. For I will learn through your questions in the same way that you will learn from my replies. Many times a wise questioner will make one consider aspects of a problem--or a new problem entirely--that would never have been recognized had he not been so questioned [mi sara' grato mi domandiate; perche' io sono per imparare cosi' da voi del domandarmi, come voi da me nel rispondervi; perche' molte volte uno savio domandatore fa a uno considerare molte cose e conoscerne molte altre, le quali, senza esserne domandate, non arebbe mai conosciute]." (W,I,479).<15> The new knowledge that Machiavelli intends to introduce is here established by the relation "io...da voi...come voi da me" ("I...through you...as you through me"), a relation which establishes the active dynamism of a knowledge which itself teaches the necessity for action.

This passage is laden with consequences regarding the nature of political knowledge and its relationship to a subject that knows it. In a thinker of the stature and power of Machiavelli it would be a grievous error of interpretation to attribute these parallels between The Art of War and The Discourses to a simple matter of coincidence--or, which comes to the same thing, to look at them as mere literary and stylistic devices which are repeated because of literary convention and usage.<16> Such an interpretation becomes even more tenuous when we consider the dedication to The Prince and relate these parallel dyads to Machiavelli's statement that "it is necessary to be a prince to know thoroughly the nature of the people, and one of the people to know the nature of princes."(P,)<17> Machiavelli considers political knowledge to be a product of an active interaction, where the relation between the terms of the dyads is a process through whose unfolding knowledge is developed and constituted.

The parallels, therefore, are significant, and they are so presented to establish a precise and specific point. Fabrizio asserts, as Machiavelli does in The Discourses, that error in the presentation of what he knows is quite likely, and that therefore his knowledge is not to be taken as the absolute fount of what is and of what ought to be: "but I shall not pretend to obtrude my opinions upon you as decisive and infallible. When you have heard them, you may judge for yourself [il che sara' vero o no, me ne

rapportero' al vostro giudizio]".(W,I,11)<18> What Fabrizio knows he himself wants subjected to the criticism and "judgement" of those to whom his knowledge is addressed. The "truth" of his teaching is thus a function of the reason and critical activity of the subject. This knowledge cannot exist outside the relation that gives birth to it. It is not a knowledge constituted by abstract principles whose truth is given by the degree of conformity to the "effective reality." When Fabrizio understands the truth of his knowledge to be related to the "judgement" of the subject he is addressing, he is not saying that this truth is a reflection of the empirical and objective conditions of the subject (in this case, the pre-existing beliefs, values, and ideas of Rucellai and his friends). There would be no point to the "ragionamento" if Fabrizio would passively accept the opinions of his friends (as there would be no point were the latter passively to accept Fabrizio's). The "judgement" to which he refers does not merely reside in Rucellai and his friends; rather, it is a product of the relation between those who ask and those who reply.

The relationship that Marx established between the educator and the educated, a relation that Gramsci elaborated in his formulation of the concept of hegemony, finds its antecedent in the Machiavellian relationship between knowledge and the subject to which it is addressed. It should be remembered that Gramsci offered a critique of the Crocean philosophy that posited an irreconcilable

rupture between politics and philosophy, and between politics and ethics. The Crocean formulation posits a form of knowledge that exists independently of social and political reality, such that this knowledge does not address a subject rooted within the practice of social life, a subject that emerges and acts "nel temporale" (as Machiavelli would put it), but rather this knowledge is capable of recognizing only itself, and the subject it addresses is merely the abstract reflection of itself as it contemplates itself. Gramsci attempts to svelare (uncover or reveal) the underlying socio-political roots of such a philosophy, in the same way that Machiavelli attempts to svelare the political and practical implications of a studia humanitatis and a Guicciardinian conception of politics that retreat into the hidden shadows of the private realm.<19>

Both Gramsci and Machiavelli attempt to formulate a form of knowledge that will bring out into the open the political and power bases of the Crocean and Guicciardinian conceptions of knowledge. Such a knowledge, therefore, as it uproots the pre-existing and accepted conceptions of the world, presupposes that it must simultaneously root itself within a historically specific subject whose very emergence will represent the negation of the established knowledge. If the latter sees itself and understands itself as the product of thought and contemplation, and since the new knowledge which attempts to oppose and over-come it understands itself as the continual product of an active

interaction with social reality, then this new knowledge is necessarily compelled to address a subject existing within the social reality. The critical posture of the Gramscian and the Machiavellian notions of knowledge requires that it address itself to a subject whose activity and consciousness are themselves the carriers of this knowledge. And such a critical knowledge must be a public and open discourse--it must be addressed in "the sunshine and not in the shade"--since its generation and development require the concurrent generation and development of a subject which, as the carrier of this public knowledge, embodies a conception of political action directed towards the overthrow of a political and cultural system whose "sommo bene" is located within the "shade" of the private.

The constructions--the "io a voi"/"voi a me" of The Discourses, and the "io...da voi...come voi da me" of The Art of War--establish what to Gramsci is a hegemonic relationship between Machiavelli-Fabrizio and the young men they address. Machiavelli, therefore, is a democratic philosopher or organic intellectual. The relation between the democratic philosopher and the subject is mutual and reciprocal, where the educator and those who are being educated stand in an active and dynamic posture towards each other, such that each educates the other, and each is the source and spring of the other's consciousness and knowledge. As we mentioned in an earlier chapter, the democratic philosopher is a type that issues from the

practical and life activity of his socio-political environment, where the relationship between Machiavelli and the subject is, in Gramsci's words, equivalent to "the relation between teacher and student...[an] active relation of reciprocal interaction, [so that] every teacher is a student and every student a teacher." (MS,26) <20> But such a relation cannot be limited to a "specifically 'scholastic'" field of activity. The relation between teacher and student is envisioned by Gramsci as the model through which he understands the entire complex of social and cultural relationships. The relation is generalized throughout society where he sees it as the motive force of change and transformation. Thus, to assert that an educational relationship is a social and political relationship, is to assert what is at the same time a hegemonic relationship: "every relationship of 'hegemony' is necessarily an educational relationship." (Ibid) <21>

This hegemonic and educational relation is seen as active and dynamic because each term of the relation continuously transforms the other, where the activity of the educator "modifies" the reality of which he is a part, which in turn reacts on the educator-philosopher--a process which constitutes a "continuous self-criticism." (Ibid) <22> It is a process based on the discourse and "conversation" established by Machiavelli in his major works, where the object is to arrive together at a common interpretation of reality ("disputare le cose...parlando con gli

amici") (W,I)<23>, but also where the process "constrains" (MS,26)<24> both elements of the dyadic relation ("I to you" and "you to me") to the formulation and defending of one's position through reason and free speech.

Machiavelli wants to present his knowledge without the use of force and authority: but such an argumentation presupposes the simultaneous existence of a socio-political reality that will make the giving of reasons possible and meaningful. To want to argue without force and without authority is to want to establish a socio-political structure wherein force and authority are excluded--it is to want to destroy or to transform the established complex of socio-cultural and socio-political reality founded upon the authority of traditio and past usage. As Gramsci asserts, "one of the most important demands put forth by modern intellectual groups in the political field is that of the so-called 'freedom of thought and of the expression of thought' ('freedom of the press,' and 'freedom of association'), because only where there exists such a political condition [my italics] will the educator/student relation realize itself; only then will the new type of philosopher which may be called the 'democratic philosopher' realize itself 'historically' and concretely." (MS,27)<25> Thus the nature of the knowledge that Machiavelli intends to introduce (as well as that of Gramsci) presupposes a form of political reality which both expresses this knowledge, and which also makes it possible as a concrete and historical

reality. In Gramsci's words, "the unity of science and life is an active unity, in which alone freedom of thought will be realized; it is the teacher/student relation, one between the philosopher and his cultural environment..."(Ibid)<26> A hegemonic relation, such as that established between the democratic philosopher and the subject to which he is related (and from which he emerges), demands a political relation whose characteristic elements provide the ground upon which such a type of educational relationship will flourish.

The Gramscian equation, educational relation = hegemonic relation = political relation, establishes the necessity for the unity of thought and action, where such a necessity means that a specific form of knowledge presupposes a particular kind of social reality, where this reality represents the concretization in action of the knowledge. It is for this reason that the question of whom does the knowledge address assume decisive importance; for it is through the addressing of the subject that the knowledge defines itself and unfolds "nel temporale." The type of knowledge, and the type of subject which is addressed and which knows it, are therefore necessarily of a similar and corresponding character. The knowledge that is the product of an educational relation determined by the "io...da voi...come voi da me," where the process requires a free and open form of reasoning and argumentation, is equivalent to the subject which is the product of a

political and social relation which is also open and public.

Both in Gramsci and in Machiavelli "intendere la verita'"(W,I)<27> (the knowledge of reality) is a process that assumes a social and collective practice: the "truth" emerges as the product of the reciprocity and mutuality that is given by the interaction between the democratic philosopher and the subject. This truth, and the knowledge that recognizes it, cannot stand above or outside the interaction. The dyad "parlare"/"domandare" (speaking and questioning), with which Machiavelli begins The Art of War, constitutes a process that negates the accepted conception of the world and the existing form of knowledge. It establishes a practice that negates metaphysical and speculative thought circumscribed within the boundaries of its own solipsism.<28> This process and this dyad are themselves a conception of the world which represents the negation of all existing thought and practice. Such a process, according to Gramsci, is similar to the theory of knowledge put forth by the philosophy of praxis, which "historicizes thought because it sees it as a conception of the world diffused throughout society (and such a diffusion would precisely not have been thinkable without rationality or historicity); it is diffused, moreover, in such a manner that the thought becomes an active norm of purposive action [norma attiva di condotta]." The relation between the teacher and student describes a form of knowledge that "teaches that reality does not exist on its own, in and for

itself, but rather it exists in a historical relationship with the men who modify it..."(MS,23)<29>

Gramsci's "realta'" and Machiavelli's "verita'" are themselves aspects or moments of the relation between the democratic philosopher and the people, where this relation is given by the discourse and the conversation that take place between the two. Thus Machiavelli's new knowledge expresses both the understanding of the "effective truth," and the necessity to "imitar" (imitate) and "preparare" (prepare) the new conception of virtu' in order to move towards a new reality.<30> Rucellai's desire for knowledge--the "intendere la verita'"--is translated by Fabrizio into the question of practice, and into the problem of introducing into the present the ancient virtu' of the Romans. To Fabrizio to know the "verita'" is a function of acting within it, such that the knowing and the acting generate the possibility of creating a new order of things.

It is significant that Machiavelli throughout his writings--but most especially in The Discourses, The Art of War, and The Prince--relates the introduction of the new knowledge with the introduction of a new political order. In all three major works his intention is to educate those whom he addresses in order that they may be prepared to "imitate" the ancient orders and virtu' of the Roman republic.<31> The subject addressed in all three is the same subject, and the relation between this subject and and the

political knowledge is an identical relation. The military discipline that is ostensibly the topic of discussion in The Art of War, the principe nuovo that Machiavelli addresses in The Prince, and the republican virtu' of the Roman people which Machiavelli deems necessary to the institution of a free political order, represent Machiavelli's attempt to formulate a new conception of the world in opposition to the existing one, and to introduce it "nel temporale" by addressing it to a subject that will embody it through its practical activity.

Gramsci's "norma attiva di condotta" (active norm of conduct or purposive action)--which is another way of saying that a conception of the world has become hegemonic--is equivalent to the Machiavellian virtu', and to the introduction of a new order of things through the activity of a subject whose consciousness and self-definition (Gramsci's "personalita'") are the knowledge that Machiavelli presents. It is through the subject addressed that the knowledge becomes a "disciplina" and an "educazione," which, in turn, transform it into practice and action. Education and discipline are two notions that are constantly stressed by Machiavelli (both in the major and in the minor writings).<32> The education and the discipline, which represent the realization of the knowledge within historical reality, presuppose the germination and the "diffusion" of a new conception of the world throughout society, where they become a new practice--in Gramsci's

words, a new "operare"<33>--that will express a new way of life.

In addition, if the educational relation that obtains between the teacher and the student is the prototype that expresses the emergence and development of a subject that can act and transform society, and if this relationship is universalized throughout society, as Gramsci asserts, then the relationship between the leaders and the led, between the intellectuals and the people, is a hegemonic relationship: it is hegemonic because it represents the diffusion of a conception of the world that posits a particular form of interaction between rulers and ruled, culture and politics. But if the relation is hegemonic, then it must also be political--that is, the operative and defining characteristic that describes the political relation between the rulers and the people is the interactive construction put forth by Machiavelli in The Discourses and in The Art of War. The political relation is founded upon the relation "io a voi/"voi a me" that describes the political knowledge of Machiavelli. Thus the new knowledge and the new politics are co-terminous, where one implies the other. To reason without force and authority, to arrive at the truth together by the giving of reasons,<34> assume a vision of politics that transcends the existing socio-political structure. The "questioning" and the "replying" "sanza rispetto" (freely and openly) can only occur within a socio-political topos that is itself founded

upon the very same relation. To address a knowledge that demands a radical posture towards the given, where the process of addressing demands a subject that is critical and questioning, is to introduce a political order where such an activity will become the "norma attiva di condotta."

The relation "io a voi"/"voi a me" is simultaneously a moral and intellectual, as well as a political and social, relation: the identity of the two relations establishes the subject of the knowledge as an active and conscious agent engaged in the world. To institute a new political order presupposes a subject conscious of the necessity and the potentiality inherent within the established order. Thus the unity of the new knowledge and of the new political order is expressed and incarnated in the new subject that focuses within itself the new political praxis. This new subject represents the transformation of the established feudal and traditional socio-cultural and socio-political order into a new political reality founded upon the "ordinata virtu'"<35> and the new conception of the world. This new reality is what Machiavelli calls the vivere politico and the vivere civile, where the latter are characterized precisely by the mutual and reciprocal interaction established by Machiavelli between the political knowledge and the subject that knows it. Indeed, the vivere politico would be incomprehensible unless it were based on such a relation: it is the reciprocal movement from the "voi" that questions to the "io" that replies, a movement

that conditions and modifies in turn each element of the relation, that defines the nature and character of the vivere politico e civile.

What Gramsci understands in his notion of the democratic philosopher and in his concept of hegemony, is anticipated, and finds its theoretical and historical source, in the Machiavellian vivere. Political life represents the over-coming of the thought and practice of the feudal past, the creation and institution of a new conception of the world that puts man at the center of the world and that puts the world as the conscious creation of man. The new knowledge and the new subject together express, in Gramsci's words, "an original conception of the world, which could even be called a 'philosophy of praxis' or 'neo-humanism' ["neo-humanism" because, we should remember, Machiavelli's thought opposes that of contemporary humanists as well as that of feudalism and Christianity] since it does not recognize any transcendent or immanent (in the metaphysical sense) elements, but bases itself entirely on the concrete action of man, who, through his recognition of historical necessity, operates on and transforms reality." Such a conception of the world presents a "critique of the present" in order to create a new "consenso permanente"--that is, a new socio-political order. (NM, 90) <36> Thus Gramsci makes a direct connection between the new Machiavellian knowledge and Marxism, where both express a conception of the world that seeks to

initiate a moral and intellectual reform of socio-political reality. The philosophy of praxis and the new knowledge of Machiavelli attempt to identify a subject that is present in the world, where this subject is the carrier of this knowledge which is, in turn, the consciousness and the expression of the subject acting in the world.

Gramsci understands the Machiavellian enterprise as the identification and development of a "progressive force in history" which will "break the [existing] unity based on the traditional ideology"--a destruction necessary to the emergence and self-becoming of the "new force."(NM,10)<37> The "critique of the present" that defines the new knowledge is at the same time the coming-to-be of the new subject; and the coming-to-be of the subject is a process delineated by the active interaction between the subject that bears this knowledge and the world of which the knowledge is a critique. The Gramscian philosophy of praxis and the Machiavellian "neo-humanism" (or "absolute laicism")<38> together represent the emergence and the unfolding of a developmental process whose motive force is the hegemonic activity given by the "I to you"/"you to me" relationship. This relation, as it develops through the interactive movement of its elements, constitutes both the new knowledge and the new subject. The two terms of the relation are not static entities, neither are they immutable "givens" whose nature is fixed a priori and whose movement is determined by a deus ex machina (or by the Crocean deus absconditus).<39>

The knowledge is the product of a particular posture towards the world; it is the outcome of a being in movement--indeed, this being in movement is itself what constitutes the knowledge, such that the consciousness of the subject is the consciousness of this active and dynamic becoming.<40>

What this means is that the Machiavellian intention and enterprise cannot be carried out and put into practice by Machiavelli himself. According to Gramsci, "[Machiavelli] interprets the [existing] reality and indicates the possible line of action. The fact that he was a 'private person' defines the boundaries [of his practical activity]....Machiavelli never says that he himself can change reality; he intends simply and concretely to show how the historical forces should have acted if they were to have succeeded."(NM,40)<41> What Machiavelli initiates is the relation between the new knowledge and the new subject: the relation between the educator and the student, transformed into a relation between knowledge and action, initiates the process by which the subject becomes the agent that will lead the "impresa" (enterprise) to its "destination"<42>--that is, the process by which the subject will finally and totally realize the new knowledge in the social reality. In The Discourses Machiavelli says that he "has chosen to embark on a road" whose final journey will be completed by "another:" his teaching is a guide and a plan that will point the "way for someone who, with greater virtu', and with more reason and better judgment, will be

able to satisfy my intention [to introduce new orders and systems]."(D,I,In)<43> We find a similar intention in The Art of War, where it is stated by Rucellai that Fabrizio "has opened the road" towards a discourse which the latter had desired, a voyage which will be undertaken by those he is addressing. Thus Fabrizio and Machiavelli are the guides who provide the direction and who point the way, but they cannot force the project to its final end. The very relation that Machiavelli establishes between himself (as the "democratic philosopher") and the subject of his new knowledge--the "io a voi"/"voi a me" as well as the "io...da voi...come voi da me"--indicates that the voyage and the "exploration of unknown seas and continents"(D,ded)<44> are a common and collective enterprise, whose eventual outcome depends upon the action of the new subject.

The "impresa" and the new knowledge are not introduced by Machiavelli and Fabrizio from a position superior and external to the subject; they do not emerge ab initio and full-blown from Machiavelli's head. Machiavelli describes the group around Rucellai as "friends" who all love one another--"giovani tutti amati"(A,478)<45>--and who ardently and fiercely love the study of ancient Roman virtu'. The "studi ardentissimi" of the young men is directly related to the "saro' animoso in dire manifestamente" of Machiavelli. What Machiavelli is teaching, and the subject the teaching addresses, are not totally and completely given at the beginning of the discourse and conversation. The

conversation does not present a knowledge already constituted, a body of knowledge which exists prior to, and outside, the process of addressing its subject. Fabrizio and Machiavelli do not mechanically transfer this knowledge to the young men. The conversation between Machiavelli-Fabrizio and the young men demonstrates that what is being presented is not a closed system of thought established and posited before the conversation is initiated.

It is true that both in The Prince and in The Discourses it is stated that the question is the introduction of new rules and methods that look towards the "effective truth of things" rather than to those that are imagined. But there is no assertion that posits the eventual destination of the new way being opened. Machiavelli points to the discovery of new seas and continents, but he does not claim that he knows the geographical and topographical contours, let alone the various forms of life to be found there. It is the nature of the new knowledge that the educator cannot posit the end of the "impresa." What is posited is the relation that establishes the interaction between the democratic philosopher and the subject, a relation that opens a process of "questioning" followed by the "replying," each alternating with the other, both together in their reciprocal action forming a conscious purposive subject, and a knowledge that expresses, and is expressed by, this

subject. Machiavelli does not impart an elaborated, "positive" body of knowledge because his knowledge and his project are in the process of formation and re-formation--in the same manner that the discourse and the conversation are in the process of becoming as it is carried forward by the questioning and the answering. Fabrizio and Machiavelli are themselves taught through this conversation. What they know at the beginning of the "ragionamento" is transformed, just as what Rucellai and his friends know is transformed, through the unfolding of the process. And the unfolding of the process is, at the same time, the development of the subject addressed by the knowledge of Machiavelli.

Machiavelli, who, as he says in his letters and in The Discourses,^{<46>} is condemned by the "malignity of fortuna" to live within the private sphere as a "private person," addresses himself and his knowledge to a subject which is also located within the private. The knowledge and the subject will together engender a movement that will lead to the "resurgence"(AW)^{<47>} of Roman virtu', and to the re-ordering of the present state of affairs. Such a transformation thus begins within the sphere of the private: the conversation and discourse are located within this sphere, where they initiate a movement that will propel the subject into a new level of being, a level defined by the new knowledge itself. To Rucellai's question--"what are these things you would introduce in imitation of the ancients?"--Fabrizio provides an answer which summarizes

Machiavelli's enterprise: "to honor and reward virtu'; not to scorn poverty; to value good order and discipline in their armies; to oblige citizens to love one another, to decline faction, and to prefer the good of the public to any private interest." (AW, I, 12) <48> The knowledge of Machiavelli teaches the subject to value the "public things" over the private, yet both he and those whom he addresses reside "nel privato." It teaches the citizens to love one another, yet the project is initiated precisely because the accepted usage of the times is to prefer one's particulare to the bene commune of the citizens. It asserts the primacy of action directed towards the "cose pubbliche," yet precisely because faction is not "declined" this "public thing" does not exist. The reality of the times--the essere--is such that what exists is the private sphere, and what is valued is the interest of narrow factions and particular groups.

The conversation, therefore, must begin within the private sphere. And the subject addressed and which carries the discourse forward can only be a subject whose existence is defined by the narrow and particular boundaries of this private world. In this sense Machiavelli is similar to Guicciardini: both recognize the necessity of the private, both understand the power and the force of particular and private interests. <49> Unlike Guicciardini, however, who remains mired within the irrefutable "objectivity" of the private and the particulare, Machiavelli recognizes within this necessity generated by private interests the potential

for its movement towards a higher form of social existence. He recognizes within this world of faction and competing self-interests a subject whose unfolding will lead to the establishment of a vivere politico and a vivere civile--that is, a subject whose activity will realize the knowledge that teaches the supremacy of the public realm over the private, a subject in whose active engagement with the world will negate the bene particulare and transform it into the bene commune.

This negation of the particulare located within the private is the negation of the realm of fortuna. We should recall that fortuna represents the subjection and domination of men to forces over which he appears to have little control. It is the subjection of man to the "iron" objectivity of external events. Thus the realm of fortuna may be seen to correspond to the realm of the private: in both man confronts the world as an isolated individual, whose power and virtu' are not adequate to repulse or to over-come the violence and unpredictable forces that surround him. To remain, therefore, within the sphere of the private is to remain subject to forces one does not understand, to forces that appear alien to the ends and values of men. On the other hand, to move from the private into the public is to move from a condition of domination and subordination to a sphere where external events are, and are recognized to be, the product of man's virtu'. Such a movement can only occur when a subject is identified within

the private realm that possesses the knowledge and the virtu' that will engender a movement towards the public and the political. This subject must embody a consciousness that sees this movement as the product of its own activity--of a virtu' which is generated internally within itself, such that the movement is nothing other than the self-formation of the subject.

In effect, the transformation of the particular good into the common good, the establishment of an order where the public sphere prevails over the private, represent the self-transformation of a subject previously defined by the particularistic forces of the private realm, into an entity that sees its self-realization within the realm of the public, and whose nature and end are given by the vivere politico. The movement from the private to the public, from the particular to the universal, is a movement which can only occur with the simultaneous transformation of the subject from an entity subject to the forces and necessity of private interests, into one that posits itself as the autonomous actor whose interests and activity embody the new political order. To address the subject which is located "nel privato" of the existing reality is to initiate a moral and intellectual reform that will re-define the nature of the subject and re-structure the social space. The emergence of a subject, whose practice and consciousness represent the forms of discourse and speech developed by the new knowledge, is equivalent to the emergence of a public

realm that makes such speech and discourse socially and politically possible. Thus the development of such a subject signals the dissolution of the previously existing private realm and the concomitant expansion of the public realm.

Notes

<1>Antonio Gramsci, Note sul Machiavelli, sulla politica e sullo Stato moderno (Torino: Einaudi Editore, 1966), henceforth cited as NM, p. 10. See also, Gramsci, Il materialismo storico e la filosofia di Benedetto Croce (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), henceforth cited as MS, pp. 10-11.

<2>The Discourses, Dedication: "...mi pare essere uscito fuori dell'uso comune di coloro che scrivono, i quali sogliono sempre le loro opere a qualche principe indirizzare; e, accecati dall'ambizione e dall'avarizia, laudano quello di tutte le virtuose qualitadi, quando da ogni vituperevole parte doverrebbero biasimarlo. Onde io, per non incorrere in questo errore, ho eletti non quelli che sono principi, ma quelli che, per le infinite buone parti loro, meriterebbono di essere; non quelli che potrebbero di gradi, di onori e di ricchezze riempiermi, ma quelli che, non potendo, vorrebbero farlo. Perche' gli uomini, volendo giudicare dirittamente, hanno a stimare quelli che sono, non quelli che possono essere liberali; e cosi' quelli che sanno, non quelli che, senza sapere, possono governare uno regno. E gli scrittori laudano piu' Ierone Siracusano quando egli era privato, che Perse Macedone quando egli era re: perche' a Ierone ad essere principe non mancava altro che il principato; quell'altro non aveva parte alcuna di re, altro che il regno. Godetevi, pertanto, quel bene e quel male che voi medesimi avete voluto...." Compare this to The Discourses, II, Introduction; and to The Art of War, Book, VII, the last remarks of Fabrizio. It is important to note that Machiavelli reverses the distinction between chi sa (those who know) and chi non sa (those who do not know): Machiavelli goes outside the "uso comune" of previous authors and locates the new political subject--that is, the new ruler that possesses the new knowledge--outside the established structure of power. This new knowledge asserts that those who in fact rule do not know how to rule, and those who do not rule do indeed know how to rule. At the very beginning of The Discourses, therefore, Machiavelli alerts the reader that "quanto io so" and "quanto io ho imparato" stand outside the established social and political order, and are generated in opposition to the established conception of the world. What this means is that the very notion of "rule" as it is commonly accepted is being questioned. See below, note 34.

<3>On the Orti Oricellari see Felix Gilbert, Machiavelli and Guicciardini (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp. 140-141, as well as his "Bernardo Rucellai and the Orti Oricellari: A Study on the Origins of Modern Political Thought," The Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 12 (1949), pp. 101-131, and also his "Machiavelli in modern historical scholarship,"

in Machiavelli nel V centenario della sua nascita, AA.VV., (Bologna: Boni, 1973), pp. 165-167. It is interesting to note that Machiavelli dedicates "questi mia scritti" on republican institutions and on the conditions necessary for the development of the "virtu' of the masses" to Cosimo Rucellai, the grandson of the Bernardo who had originally initiated the discussion circles in his Orti, around which, according to Guicciardini, the opposition to the republican government of Florence was organized and blossomed: "Di quell'orto, come si dice del cavallo troiano, uscirono le congiure, uscinne la ritornata de' Medici, scinne la fiamma che abbrucio' questa citta," cited in Gilbert, ibid., p. 81. See Machiavelli's The Discourses, Book, III, chapter 1, in which he discusses conspiracies. In addition, see Felix Gilbert, "The Composition and Structure of Machiavelli's Discorsi," The Journal of the History of Ideas, 14, No. 1 (1953), pp. 136-156., and his "The Venetian Constitution and Florentine Political Thought," in Florentine Studies, ed. Nicolai Rubinstein, (London, 1968), pp. 463-500. See Nicolai Rubinstein, "Politics and Constitution in Florence at the End of the Fifteenth Century," in Italian Renaissance Studies, ed. E.F. Jacob (London: Faber and Faber, 1960), pp. 148-183. Also, J.G.A. Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 120-121, 154, 185-186, 240. The fact that Machiavelli, who had been a secretary and an active supporter of the republican government in Florence, addresses The Discourses to a grandson of the Bernardo who had been active in the aristocratic movement against the governo of the republic, is laden with political and theoretical importance. Machiavelli intends to present a republican and "popular" work, and he addresses it to a descendant of one who represents the aristocratic and "Venetian" alternative to the erection of republican institutions--that is, a governo stretto based on the savi and boni as opposed to a governo largo based on the popolo minuto--and such an addressing is done in the very place and setting that had initially served as the focus of the opposition to a governo largo. See Hans Baron, "Machiavelli: the Republican Citizen and the Author of The Prince," English Historical Review 76 (1961), pp. 217-253. In addition, see Machiavelli, The Discourses, Book I, chapters 2, 5, 6, 36, 55; Book II, chapters 3, 24, 31, in which Machiavelli compares the Roman republic to the aristocratic republic of Venice and the oligarchic politics of Sparta (that is, a governo largo to a governo stretto): the Roman republic achieved greatness and greater liberty because its socio-political institutions--and hence its military power--rested upon a popular foundation that supported a governo largo. See Machiavelli's Florentine Histories, Book I, chapter 29.

<4>The Discourses, Dedication.

<5>Leo Strauss, Thoughts on Machiavelli (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 121-150, and see especially pp. 115-116, 141-142, and 143-144. Strauss' position, that Machiavelli intended to formulate a body of thought that would serve as a counter-system of beliefs to that prevailing at the time, is reminiscent of the de Sanctian and Gramscian positions that view Machiavellian thought not merely or purely as a "scientific" body of knowledge, but also as a novel conception of the world that tends towards the moral and intellectual reform of the established political and cultural verita' effettuale. Such a parallel between Gramsci and Strauss must be viewed in a precise and circumscribed manner: To Strauss such a reform delineates the "immoral" character of Machiavellian thought, while to Gramsci and to de Sanctis it exemplifies the "moral" engagement and "passionate" stance of Machiavelli toward his project and toward the world. On the one hand, in Strauss philosophy is "beyond" the grasp and scope of the demos, and, on the other, in Gramsci demos and theoria presuppose each other, and define each other. See Strauss, pp. 296-297. And Benedetto Croce, Etica e politica (Bari: Laterza, 1931), passim, on the demos and its relationship to thought and culture. But see Sir Isaiah Berlin, "The Originality of Machiavelli," in Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas, ed. and with a bibliography by Henry Hardy, introduction by Roger Hausheer (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1982) for a discussion of Machiavelli's "morality" and Berlin's argument that Machiavelli wanted to introduce a new conception of politics and ethics.

<6>The Discourses, Dedication. "Io vi mando uno presente, il quale, se non corrisponde agli obblighi che io ho con voi, e' tale, senza dubbio, quale ha potuto Niccolo' Machiavelli mandarvi maggiore. Perche' in quello io ho espresso quanto io so e quanto io ho imparato per una lunga pratica e continua lezione delle cose del mondo. E non potendo ne' voi ne' altri desiderare da me piu', non vi potete dolere se io non vi ho donato piu'. Bene vi puo' increscere della poverta' dello ingegno mio, quando siano queste mie narrazioni povere; e della fallacia del giudicio, quando io in molte parte, discorrendo, m'inganni. Il che essendo, non so quale di noi si abbia ad essere meno obbligato all'altro: o io a voi, che mi avete forzato a scrivere quello che io mai per me medesimo non arei scritto; o voi a me, quando scrivendo, non vi abbi sodisfatto." The difference between the new knowledge and the old is immediately established, and it does not issue from an extra-historical source, nor does it rely upon the gratuitous and unmerited gratias of the Word Incarnate. In addition, it should be pointed out that the subject to which the new knowledge is addressed, and the subject to which the old and established thought has been (or had been) addressed

are quite different in character: the latter is passive, the former is active--that is, the new subject does not "receive" this knowledge, rather the knowledge is one which comes into existence because the subject itself wants it and desires it, and, therefore, because the new subject itself initiates the interaction from which results the formulation of the new knowledge.

<7>The Discourses, Book I, chapter 58.

<8>Ibid. See also The Discourses, Book, chapters, 2, 5, 6, 16, 37, 44. And The Prince, chapters VIII, IX; as well as the Florentine Histories, the speech given by plebians to the assembled plebs of Florence in 1378 (III, 3). Also, see Strauss, pp. 128-133. Machiavelli criticizes Livy and the classical writers, but the critique is also a polemic against the aristocratic humanists of the Orti Oricellari. Machiavelli asserts that "Nessuna cosa essere piu' vana e piu' incostante che la moltitudine, cosi' Tito Livio nostro, come tutti gli altri istorici, affermano....Io non so se io mi prendero' una provincia dura e piena di tanta difficulta', che mi convenga o abbandonarla con vergogna, o seguirla con carico; volendo difendere una cosa, la quale, come ho detto, da tutti gli scrittori e accusata. Ma, comunque si sia, io non giudico ne' giudichero' mai essere difetto difendere alcuna opinione con le ragioni, senza volervi usare o l'autorita' o la forza." Here we see that Machiavelli places himself, and his new knowledge, in opposition to "tutti gli altri istorici" and to "tutti gli scrittori"--a position that encompasses a critique of past and present writings and thinkers. In addition, Machiavelli is saying that the accepted position, and the established knowledge, exists as a force and as a power in the world because it does not "difendere alcuna opinione con le ragioni," but, on the contrary, the established conception of the world and the established way of life endure, and have endured, because of the "usare la autorita' e la forza." Compare this, The Discourses, I, 58, to the Dedication--"mi pare essere uscito fuori dell'uso comune di colore che scrivono...."--as well as to I, Introduction.

<9>See Quentin Skinner, Foundations of Modern Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 87-88, 126, 161-164. And Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment, chapter IV, and especially pp. 60-65, 96-99. In addition see Eugenio Garin, Italian Humanism: Philosophy and Civic Life in the Renaissance, trans. Peter Munz (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), chapter III, and pp. 31-36.

<10>Machiavelli, Letter to Francesco Vettori, 10 December 1513, No. 137, in The Letters of Machiavelli, ed. and trans. Allan H. Gilbert (New York: Capricorn Books, 1961), pp. 139-144. "...I enter the ancient courts of

ancient men, where, received by them with affection, I feed on that food which only is mine and which I was born for, where I am not ashamed to speak with them and to ask them the reason for their actions; and they in their kindness answer me....And because Dante says it does not produce knowledge when we hear but do not remember, I have noted everything in their conversation which has profited me, and have composed a little work On Princedoms....and by a prince and especially a new prince, it ought to be welcomed...."(Ibid., pp. 142-143). Machiavelli's conversation with the past is at once a conversation with the present, for his attempt to ask the ancient writers the reason for their actions is immediately related to his attempt to discover the verita' effettuale of the cose del mondo. See Gramsci, MS, where the point is made that to interpret the past is to act in the present. In addition, this letter should be related to the dedication in The Prince, where Machiavelli, a man of "humble and obscure condition," establishes a reciprocal movement between the action of the prince and action of the people. Also, compare this to Letter No. 120, to Francesco Vettori, April 9, 1513, where Machiavelli states that "I have to talk about the government, and I must either make a vow of silence or discuss that." (In Allan H. Gilbert, p. 104).

<11>The Discourses, Dedication. "E crediate che in questo io ho una sola soddisfazione, quando io penso che, sebbene io mi fussi ingannato in molte sue circostanze, in questa sola so ch'io non ho preso errore, di aver eletti voi, ai quali, sopra ogni altri, questi mia Discorsi indirizzi...."

<12>Machiavelli, The Art of War, re. ed. of Ellis Farnesworth translation, introduction by Neal Wood (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1978), Book I, pp. 7-9. In addition, see above, note 3, on the Orti Oricellari.

<13>The Art of War, I, p. 10. "Se io non credessi offendere, io ne direi la mia opinione; ma io non lo credo fare, parlando con gli amici, e per disputare le cose e non per calunniarle. Quanto meglio arebbono fatto quelli, sia detto con pace di tutti, a cercare di somigliare gli antichi nelle cose forti e aspre, non nelle delicate e molli, e in quelle che facevano sotto il sole, non sotto l'ombra, e pigliare i modi della antichita' vera e perfetta, non quelli della falsa e corrotta; perche', poi che questi studi piacquero ai miei Romani, la mia patria rovino'." (Fabrizio).

<14>Ibid. "Voi avete aperto la via a uno ragionamento quale io desiderava, e vi priego che voi parliate senza rispetto, perche' io senza rispetto vi domandero'; e se io, domandando o replicando, scusero' o accusero' alcuno, non sara' per scusare or per accusare, ma per intendere da voi

la verita'." (Cosimo) Note the use of "sanza rispetto" in The Discourses, dedication, and here in the Art of War. See also Machiavelli's Letter to Vettori, April 9, 1513, Allan Gilbert, p. 104.

<15>The Art of War, I, p. 11. "E io saro' molto contento di dirvi quel che io intendero' di tutto quello mi domanderete; il che sara' vero o no, me ne rapporero' al vostro giudicio. E mi sara' grato mi domandiate; perche' io sono per imparare cosi' da voi nel domandarmi...." (Fabrizio) Compare this to the Dedication in The Discourses.

<16>On humanistic literary usages and conventions, see Skinner, Foundations, vol. I, chapter 2, "Rhetoric and liberty;" Jerrald E. Seigel, Rhetoric and Philosophy in Renaissance Humanism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), as well as his "'Civic Humanism' or Ciceronian Rhetoric? The Culture of Petrarch and Bruni," Past and Present 34 (1966), pp. 7-78. See also, Allan Gilbert, Machiavelli's 'Prince' and Its Forerunners: 'The Prince' as a Typical Book de regimine principum (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1938), and Felix Gilbert, Machiavelli and Guicciardini; and Eugenio Garin, Italian Humanism: Philosophy and Civic Life in the Renaissance, trans. Peter Munz (Harper and row, 1965), pp. 19-20.

<17>The Prince, Dedication. "Ne' voglio sia reputata presunzione se uno uomo di basso ed infimo stato ardisce discorrere e regolare e' governi de' principi; perche', cosi' come coloro che disegnano e' paesi si pongono bassi nel piano a considerare la natura de' monti e de' luoghi alti, e per considerare quella de' bassi si pongono alti sopra e' monti, similmente, a conoscere bene la natura del populi, bisogna essere principe, e a conoscere bene quella de' principi, bisogna essere popolari." It should be noted that Machiavelli refers to himself as a "uomo di basso ed infimo stato"--that is, he is of the infimo populo, or infima plebe--one who nevertheless strives and desires--"ardisce"--to "discorrere" on the nature of politics and of ruling. See Felix Gilbert, Machiavelli and Guicciardini, p. 24, on the political vocabulary used in Machiavelli's Florence.

<18>The Art of War, I, p. 11.

<19>Gramsci, MS, and NM, pp. 10-11. See also The Prince, XVIII; and Strauss, op. cit., chapter II.

<20>Gramsci, MS, p. 26. On Gramsci's concept of education, see Mario Alighiero Manacorda, "La formazione del pensiero pedagogico di Gramsci 1915-1926," in Gramsci e la cultura contemporanea, Atti del Convegno tenuto a Cagliari il 23-27 aprile 1967, a cura di Pietro Rossi (Editori Riuniti-Istituto Gramsci: 1975), vol. II, pp. 227-261,

especially see pp. 234-238, 240-241. And see Lamberto Borghi, "Educazione e scuola in Gramsci," in Studi gramsciani, atti del convegno tenuto a roma nei giorni 11-13 gennaio 1958, Istituto Gramsci (Roma: Riuniti, 1973). In addition, see Giancarlo Bergami, Il giovane Gramsci e il marxismo 1911-1918 (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1977), pp. 50-62, 156-159. Note Gramsci, in Scritti giovanile (Torino: Einaudi): "L'educazione, la cultura, l'organizzazione del sapere e del esperienza, e' l'indipendenza delle masse dagli intellettuali....E' lotta contro il despotismo degli intellettuali di carriera." (*Ibid.*, p. 301) And in MS, Gramsci states that "tutti gli uomini sono filosofi." Moreover, in Socialismo e Fascismo (Torino: Einaudi), Gramsci says that the worker is a "filosofo senza saperlo." (p. 13) See MS, pp. 3-7, 11-24, as well as Gli intellettuali e l'organizzazione della cultura (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), p. 6. And see L'Ordine nuovo (Torino: Einaudi), p. 469, where Gramsci asserts "Volete che chi e' stato fino a ieri uno schiavo diventi un uomo? Incominciato a trattarlo sempre come un uomo."

<21>Gramsci, MS, p. 26.

<22>*Ibid.*

<23>The Art of War, I, p. 9. And note Gramsci's observation, in NM, p. 4, in which he asserts that throughout The Prince "Machiavelli deals with how the Prince should act to lead the people to the founding of a new State...in his conclusion [the exhortation] Machiavelli himself becomes the people, identifies himself with the people, but not with a people generically understood, but with the people Machiavelli has convinced with his preceding arguments, with whom he merges and feels himself to be the conscious expression, and with whom he feels himself united: it seems that all the 'logical' work is but the self-reflection of the people, an internal rational discourse, which takes place within the consciousness of the people and concludes with a passionate, direct cry." The self-reflection of the people is an internal rational discourse--that is, the conversation between Machiavelli and the subject which he addresses is in itself the new knowledge that Machiavelli is introducing; and this new knowledge, in turn, is the consciousness of the people dynamically generated by a rational discourse which is internal to the relation established between the domandare and the rispondere, and between the "io a voi" and the "voi a me."

<24>Gramsci, MS, p. 26.

<25>*Ibid.*, p. 27.

<26>Ibid.

<27>The Art of War, I, p. 10.

<28>Gramsci, MS, pp. 23-25.

<29>Gramsci, MS, p. 23.

<30>The Prince, XV; and The Discourses, II, Introduction; and The Art of War, I, p. 10.

<31>The Prince, dedication, XVIII; and The Discourses, dedication, and Book I, introduction, and II, introduction; and see The Art of War, proemio, and I, pp. 3-5, 12-13.

<32>The Discourses, I, 4; and The Prince, XVIII; and The Art of War, VII, pp. 207-209. See also the Florentine Histories. It should be noted that Machiavelli's proposals for the reform of military institutions of the Florentine republic presuppose a close relation between the establishment of a particular socio-political order, and the specific organization of its military institutions. See Machiavelli, Discorso dell'ordinare lo stato di Firenze alle armi, and the Discorso sopra l'ordinanza e milizia Fiorentina, and the Discorso sopra il riformare lo stato di Firenze ad istanza di Papa Leone X. See Gramsci, NM, pp. 116-119, 122-123. See also Pocock, op. cit., where, following Gramsci, he establishes the connection between popular institutions and a popular army--a connection which explains Machiavelli's preference for infantry over other military units. On the necessity for education and discipline, see Gramsci, MS, pp. 8-9, 225-226, NM, pp. 150-151; Int, pp. 101-103; Passato e presente (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), pp. 65-66; Sritti giovanili, pp. 10-18, 80-82, 133-135, 300-302; Ordine nuovo, pp. 11, 22-27, 34-38, 394, 466, 469-470, 481. See also Manacorda, op. cit., and Borghi, op. cit.

<33>Gramsci, MS, p. 21.

<34>Gramsci, L'Ordine nuovo. And Selections from the Political Writings 1910-1920 selected and ed. by Quintin Hoare, trans. John Mathews (New York: International Publishers, 1977), p. 68, where Gramsci says: "To tell the truth, to arrive together at the truth, is a communist and revolutionary act." (L'Ordine nuovo, 21 June 1919, vol. I, no. 7. In the same article, Gramsci notes that "collective discussion, which sympathetically alters men's consciousness, unifies them and inspires them to industrious enthusiasm." (Ibid., p. 68) See Machiavelli's Letter to Vettori, 10 December, 1513, No. 13, in Allan Gilbert, p. 139: "to ask them the reasons for their actions." And see The Discourses, dedication, and I, introduction, and see note 10, above. The notion of "reasoning without force or

authority," and to give reasons for one's actions, is, of course, traceable to the Socratic and original notion of theoria, in which is central the questioning and the uncovering of the pre-existing "truth" or reality. In addition, theoria, as the process by which the established given is questioned, is related to logos, where one of the senses of the latter is to give an account of oneself (See Barker, Sinclair, Ehrenberg). To give reasons for one's actions--Machiavelli's very demand--is the crucial, substantive meaning that may be ascribed to logos. But if theoria and logos are closely related, then the notion of "truth"--the very status of "truth"--is dependent upon an interactive process which is co-extensive with this "truth": that is, "truth" is now the product of a continual movement between that which "asks" and that which responds (the domandare and the rispondere in Machiavelli's The Art of War). Domandare/rispondere thus describe a process which in Gramsci becomes rimformazione morale e intellettuale, or egemonia. To demand an answer, to demand a reason from established reality, or from authority, is in effect to hold that reality and that authority accountable to one's self (Gramsci's "personalita'," NM, p. 10), and it is to understand that reality as one open to change and to modification through one's own reasoned and purposive activity. As a consequence, to arrive at the truth together, to ask for reasons, is to engage in theoria, which is to engage in politica as Gramsci understands it. For to demand reasons is to assert one's political and moral autonomy from the pre-existing socio-political (as well as moral-intellectual) order. See Gramsci, Scritti giovanili (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), pp. 260-261; and MS, pp. 21, 93-94. On the relationship between reason and discourse (logos) and politics, see Thucydides, The Peloponnesian War, the Mytilenean Debate, Book III, 33-52. See also Hannah Arendt, On Revolution (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1981), where she discusses the Aristotelian notion of politics as an activity based on speech and discourse. Following Aristotle, Arendt seriously circumscribes and reduces the topos where discourse (and thus politics) is possible, limiting it to a narrow cultural and intellectual circle from which is excluded the mass of the people, and within which only the aristocratic master-citizens define the political space of discourse and reason.

<35>The Discourses, II, 1, 2. See also Neal Wood, "Introduction" to The Art of War, pp. iv.

<36>Gramsci, NM, p. 90.

<37>Gramsci, NM, p. 10.

<38>Ibid., p. 90. On "absolute laicism," see Eugenio Garin, "Gramsci nella cultura italiana," in Studi gramsciani; and Giorgio Nardone, Il pensiero di Gramsci

(Bari: De Donato, 1971), pp. 447-457.

<39>Gramsci, NM, p. 11. See Nardone, pp. 461-480. And Gramsci, MS, pp. 141-143.

<40>See Norberto Bobbio, "Nota sulla dialettica in Gramsci," in Studi gramsciani, pp. 73-86; also, Nardone, pp. 300-306, 454-457. And see Alfredo Sabetti, "Il rapporto uomo-natura nel pensiero di Gramsci e la fondazione della scienza," in Studi gramsciani, pp. 243-252.

<41>Gramsci, NM, p. 40.

<42>The Discourses, I, Introduction. "E benché questa impresa sia difficile, nondimanco, aiutato da coloro che mi hanno, ad entrare sotto questo peso, confortato, credo portarlo in modo, che ad un altro resterà breve cammino a condurlo a loro destinato." See II, Introduction; and The Art of War, Book VII, the last words of Fabrizio.

<43>The Discourses, II, Introduction. "Ma essendo la cosa sì manifesta che ciascuno la vede, sarò animoso in dire manifestamente quello che io intenderò di quelli e di questi tempi; acciocché gli animi de' giovani che questi mia scritti leggeranno, possano fuggire questi, e prepararsi ad imitar quegli, qualunque volta la fortuna ne dessi loro occasione. Perché gli è ufficio di uomo buono, quel bene che per la malignità de' tempi e della fortuna tu non hai potuto operare, insegnarlo ad altri, acciocché, sendone molti capaci, alcuno di quelli, più amato dal Cielo, possa operarlo." And compare this to The Art of War: "E io mi dolgo della natura, la quale o ella non mi doveva fare conoscitore di questo, o ella mi doveva dare facoltà a poterlo eseguire. Ne' penso oggimai, essendo vecchio, poterne avere alcuna occasione; e per questo io ne sono stato con voi liberale, che, essendo giovani e qualificati, potrete, quando le cose dette da me vi piacciono, ai debiti tempi, in favore de' vostri principi, aiutarle e consigliarle. Di che non voglio vi sbigottiate o diffidiate, perché questa provincia pare nata per risuscitare le cose morte, come si è visto della poesia, della pittura e della scultura." (Fabrizio).

<44>The Discourses, I, Introduction. "Ancora che, per la invida natura degli uomini, sia sempre suto non altrimenti pericoloso trovare modi ed ordini nuovi, che si fusse cercare acque e terre incognite."

<45>The Art of War, I, p. 9.

<46>The Discourses, II, Introduction. And Letter to Vettori, No. 137, 10 December, 1513, in Allan Gilbert, pp. 1390144.

<47>The Art of War, I, pp. 10-11, and VII, p. 212.

<48>Ibid., I, p. 12. "Cosimo: Quali cose sono quelle che voi vorreste introdurre simili all'antiche?" And Fabrizio answers: "Onorare e premiare le virtu', non dispregiare la poverta', stimare i modi e gli ordini della disciplina militare, costringere i cittadini ad amare l'uno l'altro, a vivere senza sette, a stimare meno il privato che il pubblico e altre simili cose che facilmente si potrebbero con questi tempi accompagnare."

<49>Felix Gilbert, Machiavelli and Guicciardini, chapters on "Guicciardini," and on "Machiavelli."

Chapter VII

The distinction that Machiavelli establishes between the vivere privato (private life) and the vivere politico (political life) is one that defines the Machiavellian problematic. This distinction is re-produced in various forms throughout his writings. It is possible, moreover, to formulate a series of opposing dyadic polarities where the first and second term of one polarity correspond to the first and second term of the succeeding polarities. Thus we have:<1>

vivere privato<----->vivere politico
forze private<----->forze pubbliche
particolare<----->bene commune
cose private<----->cose pubbliche
vivere con sette<----->vivere civile
tirannide<----->vivere libero
fortuna<----->ordinata virtu'

These dyads resume and summarize fundamental questions posed by political theory since its emergence in classical antiquity. These questions address the nature of the political in the construction of a "space" within which man can act as a moral, cultural, and intellectual being. Machiavelli's "return" to the classical texts--especially

his reading and "conversation" with the Romans--represents a profound awareness that in contemporary Italy such a state no longer exists. Thus his enterprise--the search for a subject that will embody and concretize his political knowledge--represents an attempt to recover the notion of the political as that public "ground" wherein men as collective actors engage the world such that this very engagement is the self-definition and self-formation of humanity. Such an awareness, however, also represents the recognition that this ground is alien to the practice and thought of both a feudal system of power and that which prevailed within the Italian city-states in Machiavelli's time.

Machiavelli criticized both the fundamental bases of feudal society and the political and social structures of contemporary Renaissance society.<2> The criterion he employs in launching his attack is the classical notion of the political. To Machiavelli the "political" has been re-defined and transmogrified in such a way that what was considered pre-political or anti-political by the Greeks and the Romans is in his day brought into the foreground and elevated as the "uso comune" or as the accepted "norma di condotta."<3> Politics is no longer seen as the activity that looks towards those goals which are common to all men; it no longer represents the attempt to establish a socio-political structure within which men compete for glory and mutual recognition, and through which they pursue

public, universal goals. On the contrary, in the modern world, Machiavelli asserts, the political and the public have been exploded, such that the prevailing forms of activity are those which he regards as properly belonging to the private sphere.<4> To the Greeks and Romans the latter existed for the sake of the public sphere, whereas in the contemporary world what passes for the public sphere is used as an instrument to attain merely private ends. Thus Machiavelli laments the corruption of Italian rulers and princes, and thus he addresses himself to those who, though located within the private, still deserve to rule because they recognize these distinctions that define the opposition between the corruption of contemporary virtu' (especially within those groups who in fact rule) and the vivere politico made possible by Roman virtu'.<5>

The Machiavellian emphasis on the "return" to the institutions of classical Rome--especially his attempt to introduce into Florence the institutions and tactics of Roman military practice--is fundamentally an attempt to recapture the notion of the political defined by the "bene commune" and by the public space within which such a good could be attained. The conversation with Livy and the Romans, therefore, represents a search for the uncovering of the conditions within the present reality whereby a new form of rule, and a new relation between "ruling and being ruled" could be established. Such a form of rule, presented in opposition to the feudal and to the contemporary Italian

forms, is based upon the relation between the democratic philosopher and the people mentioned earlier, a relation which in turn is founded upon the mutual and reciprocal interaction between the subject who questions and the knowledge which is addressed to the subject.

In classical thought to be political is to be a free actor within the public space known as the "polis"--an association composed of free men who are equal in their mutual recognition and in their citizenship.<6> The internal strife and class conflict in Athens recorded by Thucydides, and in Rome by Livy and Tacitus, as well as the political and theoretical debates between Plato and Aristotle, revolve around this central question: what are the criteria for citizenship, and who is eligible for citizenship within this political association? To be excluded from this public association is to be condemned to the private or pre-political sphere. Thus the political is the public space or topos that delineates the "realm of freedom," whereas the household and the economy describe that private sphere that constitutes the "realm of necessity" (or what is to Machiavelli the domain of fortuna).<7> In the politics and thought of the classical age (Greece and Rome) it is the latter that makes possible the former: it is the necessity of the slave that establishes and insures the freedom of the citizen-master. Put another way, the private sphere is subject to the necessary laws of nature, while the public space of the Greek polis or the Roman civitas enables the

citizen-masters to escape this realm of necessity and consequently to act as free subjects within this artificially created political arena. The masters mutually recognize themselves as citizens--the city-state, in fact, is precisely this association of citizens. On the other hand, no such recognition is possible to those relegated to the private sphere--slaves, wage-laborers, women, metics, etc. (in fact, to all those who are subject to the necessity of labor in order to exist). Political man acts (and this "acts" is pregnant with loaded energy: competing, striving, struggling) within a public topos which is the polis or the civitas, which is an association of citizens who mutually recognize each other, which constitutes the realm of freedom--all of which rests upon the non-political or pre-political private sphere, the realm of necessity.

The political thus becomes the space where speech, language, and discourse are located, and where outside this space violence and brute necessity predominate. To the Greeks and Romans (at least in theory) the ruling activity within this space is discourse and rhetoric (or oratory), which in turn presuppose an association of free citizens. Where mutual discourse and mutual recognition are not the bases of a relation between two actors, then this relation is one of subjection and domination: the master does not engage in a discourse with the slave, for the slave cannot respond in the same language: he can only submit. In this context, tyranny (or, to use terms more faithful to Greek

and Roman political usage, despoteia and dominium) is that condition where the civitas--the political space where discourse is possible--has been possessed or appropriated by a particular individual, group, or class to the exclusion of all others. The despot or master narrows the political space simply and only to himself. The relation, therefore, between the despot and the others cannot be political, because the relation is no longer based on discourse and persuasion: mutual recognition and mutual discourse no longer exist. In this sense, all forms of despotism and domination are pre-political or apolitical (indeed, to Aristotle and to Plato they are anti-political).^{<8>} The public space--the realm of freedom--has been reduced to the particular activity of the despot or of the dominant group, while the private sphere--the realm of necessity--extends to and encompasses everyone but the tyrant or the ruling group. In these terms, therefore, despotism and domination represent the use of the public space for private ends, which means that the realm of the public has been destroyed.

To Machiavelli^{<9>} the institutions that defined the public space of republican Rome were the Senate, the magistrates, and the people organized into the popular assemblies. The Senate and its magistrates were the operative political actors within a public arena that was founded upon the assemblies of the people. Within this space politics represented the competitive pursuit of power and glory at the service of the res publica--the common or

public business. Discourse and speech--oratory, debate, court and jury duty, elections--were the primary vehicles through which the struggle for power was conducted. The public space, in other words, was in the hands of an oligarchy whose members competed against each other for magistracies, public recognition, and service to the republic (which provided the justification for the ambition).<10>

Under the republic the powers of the magistrates were strictly limited and delineated. These powers rested upon a fundamental distinction (one that was also basic to the Greek polis) that was established between those proper to and exercised within the boundaries of the civitas (the imperium domi) and those powers proper to and wielded without and beyond these boundaries (the imperium militiae).<11> The imperium of the magistrates was limited within the city by the right of appeal and by the tribunician veto. In addition, power within the city was further circumscribed by the limitations imposed by the systemic and institutional competition resulting from the plurality of offices and from the principle of collegiality. Outside the confines of the city, however, the imperium of the magistrate was unlimited, absolute and without appeal: the power of a general on campaign. Such a distinction should be related to the earlier discussion of the political as a public space where mutual recognition and discourse take place, and from which force and violence are

excluded.<12>

Machiavelli's discussion of the class wars and civil strife that led to the fall of the republic and the introduction of imperial and despotic rule shows that his notion of the vivere politico is based upon this very distinction between the speech and discourse that define power within a political space, and the absolute domination that defines the military power of a general. He notes that a "well-governed kingdom never gives absolute power to its prince in anything but the command of its armies, because sudden resolutions are often necessary in this one sphere [that is, a sphere which is outside the political space and thus most subject to the unpredictable forces of fortuna], so that there must be a supreme command [*unica podesta*']. In other matters, a prince should do nothing without his council." (AW, I, 19).<13> But the fall of the republic occurred because the power struggle between the plebians and the patricians led to the destruction of the space that made this distinction possible. The destruction of the republic represented the introduction into a space originally made politically meaningful by speech and discourse of the military and absolute power of the contending generals. As Machiavelli puts it, "Caesar and Pompey, and almost all the Roman generals who lived after the Second Punic War, acquired their reputation as skillful men, not as good citizens....[for they] made war their sole occupation" by recruiting and arming troops loyal to the personal and

private interests of the military leaders.(AW,17) <14>

The destruction of the political space of the republic was signaled, according to Machiavelli, by the "disarming of the citizens" by Augustus and Tiberius and the introduction into Rome of a Praetorian Guard which "served not only to guard the emperor's person but to bridle the people."(AW,20)<15> Thus the decline of the republic was marked by a lengthy process characterized by civil wars which saw the rise of private citizens who controlled and led personal armies of retainers. The emergence of imperial rule represented the constriction of the public and political space, where this space now became the res privata of the emperor. What emerges from Machiavelli's analysis of the class conflict and power struggles of ancient Rome is a theoretical and political construction that enables Machiavelli to identify the defining elements of the vivere politico and the vivere popolare.<16> The political is defined by what it is not: despotism or tyranny reduces all political space to itself, such that the relation between Caesar and the citizens is no longer one of mutual discourse (as it would be if he were an ordinary magistrate) and has now become equivalent to that between the pater or dominus and his familia, that is to say, the public space has been transformed into that of the private, and the civitas has become a dominium. The space described by the dominium is a private space where the absolute power of the master reigns, a space which is defined precisely by the use of force and

violence over the subjects. Tacitus, writing in the late first century A.D. (over a century after the fall of the republic) provides striking support for the foregoing discussion. Contrasting the oratory--that is, public speech and discourse--of imperial times with that of the republic, he remarks that in the latter there was a "more vigorous eloquence" where the magistrates "even against their own wish had to show themselves before the people. It was little good for them to give a brief vote in the senate without supporting their opinion with ability and eloquence....it was thought a disgrace to seem mute and speechless."(764-765) On the other hand, under imperial rule "...the orator gets an inferior and less splendid renown....What need of long speeches in the senate...or of endless harangues to the people, when political questions are decided not by an ignorant multitude, but by one man of pre-eminent wisdom?"(769)<17> To be mute and speechless is to be condemned to the private sphere, the realm of brute nature and fortuna, to the household where the slave cannot answer back.

The Machiavellian critique of feudal society and his attack on the socio-political, cultural, and military institutions of Renaissance Italy are not unrelated to the above discussion of the political. The critique of feudal society represents the attempt to destroy a particular form of rule and of power--a form which to Machiavelli is antithetical to the mutual discourse and free speech

necessary to his concept of the political. To Machiavelli feudal relations of power are equivalent to the master-slave relation that existed within the private sphere of the familia in ancient Rome. Since these relations exist only within the private realm, and since they establish a system of power which is essentially founded upon the dominatio of the dominus, it is impossible to establish a public space characterized by the vivere politico e libero without the destruction of these private relations of power that rest upon the personal subordination of the people to the lords.

The relations of subordination/domination (the dominatio that exists in the realm of the private) may be seen in that section of The Discourses that discusses the necessary structural and systemic bases of republican government, where Machiavelli asserts that it is least difficult to establish a republic "in that city where the masses are not corrupt" and where equality is a universal condition. He adds that "those republics which have preserved their political existence uncorrupted do not permit any of their citizens to be or to live in the manner of gentlemen, but rather maintain amongst them a perfect equality, and are the most decided enemies of the lords and gentlemen that exist in the country." The "gentiluomini" (nobility) and the "signori" (lords) "live idly upon the proceeds of their extensive possessions, without devoting themselves to agriculture or to any other useful pursuit to gain a living. Such men are pernicious to any country or

republic; but more pernicious even than these are such as have, besides their other possessions, castles which they command, and subjects who obey them....no republic has ever been able to exist in those countries [ruled by such a class of men, as in the Romagna, Naples, Tuscany, and the Papal states]; nor have they been able to preserve any regular political existence [vivere politico], for that class of men are everywhere enemies of all civil government [civiltà']. "(my italics; D, I, 55) <18> Thus civil and political life is possible only where the signori di castella (lords who possess castles) and the "gentiluomini" do not hold power or where they have been exterminated.

In order to reform those countries where the lords are entrenched and possess a preponderance of power Machiavelli deems it necessary that a strong monarchical form of government be established, for there the "body of the people is so thoroughly corrupt [la materia e' tanta corrotta] that the laws are powerless for restraint." (Ibid) <19> The corruption and servility of both lords and people are such that reform and renovation are possible only through the "mano regia" (kingly authority) and the "absolute power" of a prince. It is interesting to note--as Gramsci himself points out <20>--that Machiavelli presents a method that was put into practice by the emerging dynastic monarchs outside of Italy (in France, Spain, and Russia): the creation of a new class whose power and position depended upon the favors of the dynast, and the simultaneous destruction of the

traditional lords (such as the boyars in Russia) whose power was independent of the central authority. In any case, to Machiavelli the elimination of the independent lords is essential whether one intends to construct a republic or a civil monarchy: the former requires a condition of equality, which is antithetical to the feudal relations of power, and the latter presupposes a centralized structure of rule which is opposed to the independent centers of power of the landed nobility. In both instances the elimination of their power is the primary prerequisite, for the lords are the embodiment of that "ozio" and vice against which Machiavelli contrasts his conception of virtu'.<21>

What is especially odious to Machiavelli is the class of lords<22> ensconced in their castles and in control of their territory--that is, the very nature of lordly rule Machiavelli finds antithetical to his conception of ruling. The relation that obtains between the lord and his subjects is not one based on equality and mutual recognition. Such a relation, which defines and fixes the positions of the dominant group and the subordinate "sudditi" (subjects), is located outside the realm of mutual discourse and open speech--that is, the relation is not political in the classical sense, but is rather private, pre-political, and therefore despotic and oppressive. Because the relation is based on dominatio and therefore outside the political space (as understood by Machiavelli and the ancients) the interaction between the dominant and subordinate groups

revolves around only two possible modes of action: mute passivity, or violent and active resistance. But it is to be noted that such action is impossible without the prior establishment within the subordinate group of an autonomous structure of speech/discourse which will empower it to answer back and respond to the actions of the oppressor. Indeed, without the structure of discourse violent resistance is quite literally speechless and therefore politically meaningless. Speech and discourse are therefore the necessary bases that make violence, force, and fraud possible (in the context of revolution and rapid change).

From the perspective of the subaltern group the demand for mutual recognition must be accompanied by force and violence (or the threat of their use) because the dominant group is defined by a socio-cultural and political consciousness different from that of the class it rules: the two groups speak a different language and possess quite different discourse structures. Nor would the dominant group recognize the moral and intellectual validity of the demands and problems posed by the subaltern group could the former understand the language of the latter. Since there is no common political space--that is, since the realm of discourse does not exist as a universal reality--the only possible basis of interaction between the two is force and fraud. To put it another way, there is no political structure that permits the Machiavellian form of ruling which is based on the ability to "reason without the use of

force and authority." Indeed, the very nature of the relationship between the lord and his subject is based on the military force of the lords and on the authority of past usages and customs. The lords assert a "natural" and traditional supremacy over those not of the same class, status, or group. Such a relationship, therefore, precludes any form of dialogue or "conversation" between the two groups--a dialogue which, to Machiavelli, must be based on "ne' sangue ne' autorita'" ("neither blood nor authority") (AW) <23> if it is to be mutual and reciprocal.

It is in the context of the foregoing discussion that the Machiavellian attempt to establish a "new prince" and a "civil principality" is to be understood. The new prince embodies the new knowledge of the Machiavellian Centaur--force and consent, organized violence and a structure of discourse, the dittatura and egemonia of Gramsci--that will establish a new political order which is superior to that founded upon feudal relations of power. <24> It is significant that Cesare Borgia, whose methods were greatly admired by Machiavelli, and who some interpreters have seen as the model for the new prince, attempted to create a centralized and rational state within the Romagna, a territory which according to Machiavelli was under the domination and rule of the signori di castella. <25> Force and violence are required to break the private and personal relations of dominatio in order to establish a civil principality whose rule is based on the vivere civile of the

people. This "method of beasts" is necessary because the new political space is not yet in existence. However, once the new space is established force and violence, given the premises of Machiavelli's notion of the political, must be excluded from the new order. Machiavelli makes this point very clearly, when he says "that kingdoms which depend entirely upon the virtue of one man endure but for a brief time....[and thus] the welfare of a republic or kingdom...consists in having [a prince] who will give it such laws [that is, a structure where discourse is possible] that it will maintain itself even after his death."(D,I,XI)<26> To establish, therefore, a structure of rule where the relation between the rulers and the ruled is no longer based on force, "blood," or authority, it is first necessary to employ force and violence against the pre-existing power structure. But once the new structure has been established the vivere civile requires that force and dominatio be directed outside and beyond the boundaries of the republic or the civil principality.<27>

Rule defined by force and domination represents the negation of the hegemonic and political rule established by Machiavelli in the relation between the subject who questions and the democratic philosopher who answers and replies. Here rule is private and personal rather than public and universal. Such a system possesses no common political space that defines the relations of ruling and being ruled, and the end to which it is addressed is a

particular good rather than a common good. To establish a vivere politico the relations of dominatio that prevail within the privatized space described by the master/subject relation must be destroyed, such that the domination/subordination structures--which are personal, non-rational, and enveloped within the legitimizing sanctions of tradition and past usage--are exploded and replaced with differing and superior structures. The over-coming of these relations of domination and the introduction of new relations represent the construction of a new conception of the world that posits a new and radical notion of what it means to rule and to be ruled.<28>

To Machiavelli, therefore, feudal relations of power are equivalent to the relations of dominatio that the pater familias exercises within the private sphere of his household. The relation between the lord and his subject assumes the same form as that established by Aristotle between the master and slave:<29> the former possess a moral and intellectual personality which is denied to the latter. And since the subordinate subject is stripped of any autonomous cultural and ethical identity, the rule of the master and the lord is fundamentally rule based on force and authority. It is a rule that describes a structure of power which in Gramsci is expressed by the two notions of dittatura and dominio: pure domination and pure force.<30> Domination is the form of rule necessary to a system where all social relations are privatized, where there exists no

bene commune that provides the common ground for the development of rule based on speech and discourse. Such rule, in effect, is identified by an ossified and crystallized relation where those in authority speak, and therefore command, yet those over whom authority is exercised can neither respond nor question, and must therefore simply obey.

In the same way that the conversation between the "I to you" and the "you to me" delineates the Machiavellian concept of the political as a discourse founded upon mutual recognition the relation that Machiavelli discusses between the lord and his subject establishes a paradigmatic model for a form of rule which is pre-political and anti-political. Such a model establishes the basic and fundamental distinction between rule as an activity that occurs within a political structure that makes discourse and the vivere civile possible, and rule as an activity characterized by the speechless obedience and subordination of the slave to his master. This distinction provides the common strand that links Machiavelli's analysis of the relation between the social and political institutions of the ancient Greeks and Romans and his attempt to introduce a new political knowledge which is reflected within the life and activity of a new political subject.

Machiavelli's conversation<31> with the ancients, and his conversation with his contemporaries, together form the "free and open" process of reasoning through which the subject which is being addressed comes to be formed and to know itself. The interaction between the subject and Machiavelli, which takes place within a space where force and authority are excluded, is founded upon a relation of mutual recognition and equal speech or discourse. This conversation which is both the cause and the product of mutual recognition and equality becomes in Machiavelli the critical and distinguishing relation that delineates his conception of the vivere politico and the vivere libero, in the same way that the relation between the democratic philosopher and the people is the fundamental basis for the Gramscian notion of the political envisioned as a hegemonic (and thus educational) relationship between the rulers and the ruled. In Machiavelli, as in Gramsci, the political relation--the very concept of ruling and being ruled--is founded upon a moral and intellectual system of discourse which presupposes a mutuality and reciprocity between the "student" and the "teacher" such that the two terms of the relation become interchangeable. As the dynamic movement of the interaction represented by the "I...through you...as you through me" construction unfolds, the teacher as teacher becomes superfluous, and the student as conscious and autonomous subject emerges. The classical, especially Aristotelian, parallels are obvious,<32> but what is not as

obvious is the Machiavellian re-translation of the ancients in order to establish a political order based upon the widest possible foundations--that is, the people.<33>

The political relation in classical thought is envisioned as a relation based on reason and discourse: as Isocrates puts it, "logos hegemon panton" ("speech and language are the ruler and guide of all things"), and both Plato and Aristotle elaborate and expand upon this principle.<34> Aristotle, in particular, identifies the logos as both the foundation and the product of the political association.<35> But whether the subject that is the carrier of the logos is located within an aristocratic elite, as in Plato, or it is identified within a political association formed by a demos narrowly defined and extremely restricted in numbers, as in Aristotle, the ancient thinkers never considered the "people" as a universality possessed of the ability to reason "without force or authority." Indeed, the people considered as a universality, and the people envisioned as a subject which is capable of moral and intellectual autonomy, did not exist in classical times or in the medieval era.<36> The Roman populus, though more universal than the Athenian demos, was nevertheless a people subject to the moral and political authority of the Roman aristocracy.<37>

It is Machiavelli, as both Gramsci and Wolin have pointed out,<38> that recognized the populo as a significant and revolutionary force that could transform the socio-political contours of the existing reality. Such a recognition was made possible by Machiavelli's conversation with the ancients, a conversation influenced and colored by the new political project he intended to introduce. For, although the people as a moral and conscious body had been narrowly defined, and although the Roman aristocracy had reduced the people to an undisciplined mob, the very concept of the people as the basis and foundation of rule (either in the Roman comitiae or in the Athenian ekklesia) was nevertheless present in various guises within classical thought and practice. Machiavelli takes the classical logos and identifies it as the product of the interaction between the subject and the teacher: but this subject is a revised version of the Roman populus, for Machiavelli does not accept Livy's and the generally aristocratic opinion that views the nature of the people as corrupt, ignorant, and impossible to educate.<39>

Machiavelli, both as a man of action and as a theoretician, goes to great lengths to refute the notion of the people as an "emotional," violent, and unpredictable "volgo" (to use a Crocean term), nor does he see the people as a fixed and immutable entity, as a "materia" whose nature and form are predetermined by inevitable and necessary laws (as Croce and his school would have it).<40> To Machiavelli

the people is not a mere passive "vulgus" defined by its objective and empirical reality: he sees the people as a force that can move from the pre-existing reality and create a new reality, a people become the subject of its activity within this reality. This is Machiavelli's intention, and this is the basis for the discourse on Livy: an attempt to recapture, and in the process, redefine the concept of the people and transform it into the subject of his knowledge and the subject of political rule. The Aristotelian notion of ruling and being ruled in turn, which is based on mutual discourse and reciprocity, is taken by Machiavelli and it is universalized throughout the "moltitudine," such that the latter undergoes a process of becoming through "disciplina" and "educazione" that eventually changes it into a collective force. Machiavelli's admiration for the "religion of the Romans" (in opposition to "our religion"), and his stress on "good education," point to his attempt to introduce into the mass of the people a new conception of the world whose realization depends upon the emergence of the "moltitudine" as a social and political force. Indeed, in the same manner that Gramsci employs Machiavelli to construct an anti-Croce and launch a critique of the liberal-bourgeois antipathy towards the popular masses, Machiavelli's conversation with the ancient writers may be seen as an "anti-Livy" employed as a means to re-constitute the mass as a new political actor: the process constituted by the civil strife and civil wars that led to the

destruction of the "publica liberta'" with the fall of the Roman republic and the emergence of despotic rule (in the exact classical sense) under the emperors is simultaneously the process through which the Roman populus as an organized people degenerated into an inert mass.

Thus in The Discourses Machiavelli takes issue with the opinion of Livy and "other historians" that the people are unstable and unreliable: "The difference [in the conduct between the princes and the people] is not due to any difference in their nature (for that is the same, and if there be any difference for good, it is on the side of the people); but to the greater or less respect they have for the laws under which they respectively live....The excesses of the people are directed against those whom they suspect of interfering with the public good; whilst those of princes are against apprehended interference with their individual interests."(D,I,58)<41> The nature of the people is not inferior to that of princes; indeed, the people, when educated and disciplined, is superior to them, for the former look to the "bene commune," while the latter look to the "il bene proprio" (the private and particular interest). It should be remembered that it is in this same chapter (I,58) that he presents his intention to reason without the use of force and authority, a statement that acquires not just theoretical but also practical-political significance when it is linked to an observation regarding the people that Machiavelli makes towards the end of the same chapter:

"words suffice to correct [the defects] of the people, whilst those of the prince can only be corrected by violence."<42> A "good man"--that is, an educator, or the Gramscian democratic philosopher--may talk to a "licentious" and "tumultuous" people: the people may be transformed by means of speech and discourse into a disciplined and collective entity. On the other hand, to reform a prince who does not "possess the friendship of the people"(P,IX)--that is, whose rule is based on relations of domination--violence and force are necessary.<43> The phrase "defects of a prince" points to the transformation of a civil principality based on the mutual discourse between prince and people into a despotism founded upon the relation between master and slave, lord and subject.

The reformation of a prince is nothing other than the introduction of a form of rule that is directed towards the "bene commune," which is the good that defines the character of the people. Thus to reform the established rulers means to establish a new form of rule which is based on mutual discourse and on speech. Machiavelli makes a specific and direct connection<44> between the "moltitudine sciolta" and the prince who looks to the private and particular interest: in both cases the vivere politico as Machiavelli understands it is lacking. In the first instance, the masses viewed as the "moltitudine sciolta" means that the people as a collective and purposive subject does not exist; the mass is a mere aggregation or collection of individuals that look to

their own private or particular interest in opposition to that of others. In the second case, the prince whose rule is defined by the bene particolare is not a prince who knows how to rule, for ruling to Machiavelli means the mobilization and organization of a collectivity directed towards a common end. Such a concept of ruling, therefore, necessarily implies that the transformation of the masses into a collective subject is at the same time the transformation of the ruler into one who functions within a public space defined by the "bene commune;" similarly, the transformation of a ruler into a "new prince" who rules according to the new Machiavellian knowledge is simultaneously the transformation of the "moltitudine sciolta" into a "populo."

It is significant that the principato nuovo outlined in The Prince (chapter IX), the republic discussed in The Discourses, and the military institutions (the vita militare) presented in The Art of War, each represent to Machiavelli a vivere politico and a vivere civile. These works address the problem of the movement from the bene particolare to the bene commune, from the private to the public, and from the individual to the universal.<45> In all three Machiavelli "openly and freely" addresses what is the fundamental and common element that organizes the various arguments and directs them towards Machiavelli's goal: the resurgence of ancient virtu'. This common element--which is also found in the minor political works--is the the nature

and role of the masses, or rather, the problem regarding the process through which the "moltitudine" or the "universale" becomes the "populo." Whether Machiavelli formally addresses himself to a prince by means of the stylistic device of the "mirror of princes," or he addresses the problem of military tactics and valor, or he inquires into the elements that generally constitute the nature of politics and of ruling, the underlying theme is that there can be no vivere politico without first establishing a structure that looks to the bene commune, and there can be no such structure without the emergence and development of the masses into a people that "esteems more the public than the private."<46> As Gramsci points out, there is no contradiction between The Prince and The Discourses: the former is a "treatise on dictatorship (the moment of authority and of the individual)," and the latter is a work on "hegemony (the moment of the universal and of liberty....although even in The Prince there are signs and allusions to the moment of hegemony or of consent juxtaposed to those of authority or of force....thus [there is no] contradiction in principle between principality and republic."(NM,141)<47>

What connects the two is precisely the Machiavellian conception of rule and of the political which is defined by its relation to the people. In both works there can be no rule in the Machiavellian sense without the emergence and formation of the people as a political and historical subject. In both the problem regarding the construction of

the vivere politico is posed in terms of the generation of a subject that is not only conscious of the bene commune, but is also politically and militarily organized to realize it in practice. The moment of hegemony is the proliferation and universalization of the interactive and reciprocal relation between Machiavelli the democratic philosopher and the subject that carries the consciousness of the new knowledge which is itself constituted by this relation. The vivere politico and the vivere libero are given by this relation: they are the end towards which the hegemonic process moves. Thus the vivere politico presupposes the educational and hegemonic relation, while the latter can only realize itself through the introduction and construction of the former within the existing reality. The moment of force--or the political understood in the narrow and Crocean sense of "pure politics" or pure technique--is a contingent moment defined by its instrumental character: if the end is the construction of a vivere libero (the moment of the universal), then the moment of force is a technical problem whose solution is contingent upon the relation between the end and the means. The moment of force and of the individual, as Gramsci recognizes, is translated by Machiavelli into the moment of liberty and of the universal through the creation of a people as a "hegemonic force." What this means is that the private and particular interests of the "moltitudine"--which is always acting within the sphere of the private since there is no universalizing

principle to make it into a collective subject--must be transcended and transformed, such that the discrete individuals of which the mass is composed acquires an autonomous and moral personality as a subject. But this universalizing principle can be nothing other than the hegemonic relationship established between the subject addressed by Machiavelli "nel privato," and the new knowledge which teaches the primacy of the public over the private, and the "bene commune" over the "bene particolare."

The movement from the private to the public and from the particular interest to the common interest is realized within the moment of hegemony. For it is the hegemonic relationship described by the mutual recognition and the mutual discourse that we outlined earlier that creates a new form of political action and a new type of subject that together constitute the new socio-political reality characterized by the vivere politico and the vivere libero. The moment of hegemony exists within the circle created and defined by the new political subject. It is within this circle that discourse and speech are possible; and it is outside this circle that the moment of force becomes necessary and meaningful. In other words, violence and force presuppose a condition where the vivere politico e civile are not yet the operative and defining principles of political action, a condition where the hegemonic relation is not yet universalized. As such the moment of force--or the Crocean "pure politics"--is a moment prevalent within

that area where action is not based on mutual discourse and on equal speech, and where to reason "without the use of force or authority" is not politically and socially possible. The moment of force becomes transformed into the moment of hegemony only within the new political structure where speech and discourse are possible. Such a transformation occurs when authority and force are no longer subject to the individual and particular interests of the private sphere, but are rather subordinated to the public and political space created by the new subject.

But what is important to realize is that the transcendence of the moment of force is equivalent to the transformation of the "moltitudine" into the "populo," and to the universalization of the new knowledge by the conscious activity of the subject that expresses it. The moment of force loses its individual and particular character when it becomes the instrument of the new subject organized and mobilized into the collective and public force of the people. The point at which the moment of force achieves such a transformation and transvaluation is precisely the point where in Machiavelli the "moltitudine" coalesces into the "populo armato"--that is, the point where force and the conduct of war have become the public and open activity of the people organized into a citizen army.

If, therefore, there is no contradiction between The Prince and The Discourses--between the moment of force and that of hegemony--it is because the vehicle for the resolution is provided by the mediation of the people envisioned as the collective and armed subject. Thus The Art of War provides the link between the first two works. The former, indeed, may be seen as a discourse on the transvaluation of force from an instrument subordinated to the "privato" and to the bene particolare, into one determined and directed by the "pubblico" and the bene commune. The organization and deployment of force--whether it be by the "new prince" whose power is based on the collective action of the people, or by the republic which is the political space coextensive with the "populo"--is viewed by Machiavelli as a problem that requires the "resurgence" of the ancient virtu' without which the Romans would never have established a stable and successful "armed republic."<48> To Machiavelli the moment of force is always the moment of organized violence-- that is, the deployment and organization of the popular masses. But such an organization presupposes the prior existence of the people as a political force. In turn, the people organized into a political subject implies the creation of a vivere politico as the space and ground where discourse and speech without the use of force or authority can take place.

In The Art of War Machiavelli makes it clear that the moment of force--military organization and military tactics--is a means to the erection of a political and civil space which end conditions and determines the nature and character of the military art.<49> Without such an end the military art becomes a merely particular form of action defined by narrow and limited interests. The transformation of the particularity of the military art into an activity that serves the public and common good is the object of the argumentation and the conversation between Fabrizio the general and the young men of the Rucellai Gardens. As Gramsci notes, "Even in The Art of War Machiavelli should be seen as a politico [political actor] who must concern himself with military theory and practice....the center of his interest and of his thought is not found in the question of military technique, rather he considers the latter only to the extent that it is necessary to his political construction."(NM, 14-15)<50> To Gramsci, as to Machiavelli, it is the construction of a political edifice that defines the nature of the military problem. The problem that Machiavelli poses is the translation of military virtu' into political virtu'. To state it somewhat differently, it is to reform a military institution whose activity in the Italy of Machiavelli's day was directed towards the particular interest of the mercenary captains. The military virtu' of these "compagnie di ventura" (mercenary armies) Machiavelli saw as a prime factor contributing to the instability,

weakness, and corruption of the Italian states. The existing military arrangements, rather than making the Italians master of their own country, subjected them to the violent power of fortuna.<51>

Those interpreters<52> of Machiavelli who engage in minute and pointless debates regarding the "nature" or essential quality of Machiavelli's virtu', whether it is an aristocratic and purely military notion, whether its meaning is exhausted by the bellicose nature of man--courage, impetuosity, audacity, force, etc.--fail to consider the movement and direction of the Machiavellian project. Neal Wood, for example, asserts that Machiavelli re-defines the concept in such a way that virtu' becomes "a pattern of behavior distinctively exhibited under what might be described as battlefield conditions." (Political Studies).<53> Felix Gilbert, in his classic Machiavelli and Guicciardini understands the Machiavellian critique of the contemporary age as an attempt to establish the importance of "brute power" in politics (154).<54> In a similar vein, Quentin Skinner argues that virtu' is re-defined in such a way that Machiavelli must "in part give an exceptionally strong emphasis on the military power of the prince." (FMPT, 129, 131)<55> In addition, Federico Chabod asserts that the only novelty in The Prince is the demand that the prince possess his own militia--a demand which is repeated both in The Discourses and in The Art of War.<56> To Chabod the Machiavellian political and theoretical

project sets up as the sole criterion for the interpretation of history and politics a military principle regarding the organization of the militia. (MR, 74, 84) <57> This critique is based on Chabod's discovery of a "profound" contradiction between Machiavelli's call for the reform of the militia and the lack of recognition that such a demand would entail radical changes in the "political and moral system" of contemporary Italy. (MR, 16-17, 99-100). <58> These students of Machiavelli, in effect, are echoing in different ways the fundamental interpretation of Machiavellian politics originally advanced by Croce: politics as pure force and politics as an instrumentality.

Yet the reduction of the Machiavellian renovation to brute force or to mere military virtu is possible only if one overlooks the role of the particular good and the private in Machiavelli's discussion of the theory and practice of war. To Machiavelli the "art" (arte) <59> of war has a precise and concrete meaning: the art of war should be understood in the sense that most Renaissance thinkers understood the particular actions and operations that defined a given craft. Thus the arte in The Art of War refers to a craft, in the same sense that Machiavelli would refer to a craft when discussing the arte della lana (the craft of wool-making). But the wool-making craft is more than the skill required to perform the particular activity. The concept of craft also refers to a concrete and historically specific social group: the activity of

wool-making is a social activity embodied in the organization of the guild.<60> Renaissance society, especially in Florence, is organized into various guilds whose struggle and competition for power formed the political experience of most Italian communes. The struggle for power among the various particular interests of the guilds is recounted by Machiavelli in his Florentine Histories, where he sees the collapse of republican liberty and the rise of the despotism of the Medici as the results of the inability to transcend the narrow and private interests of the guilds for the common good of the republic.<61>

If, therefore, the art of war is understood in the sense of not merely military skill, but also as a social institution, then we will see that the reform of the military is not a question of mere technique, and that the virtu' necessary for such a reform is more than pure and "brute power." The virtu of the military craft, as that of wool-making or silk-making, recognizes the bene particolare of its own corporate and social activity. To assert that military virtu' is the foundation of Machiavelli's new knowledge is to assert that Machiavelli reduces the vivere politico and the vivere civile to the absolute power (the "unica podesta'" or the imperium militiae) that a general must possess during the conduct of military operations against an enemy. The reduction of the political to an aspect of military virtu' would mean the transformation of

the public space that makes speech and discourse possible into a space where relations of force and dominatio prevail. It is to make the private and individual good of a particular social group or guild into the universal "bene commune" that defines political life. As Machiavelli says in the proemio to The Art of War,^{<62>} there is a close and intimate relation between politics and war, between political institutions and military organization. But precisely because of such a close relation it becomes necessary to construct military institutions that will not vitiate the vivere politico through which these institutions acquire purpose and meaning.

It should be noted that the demand to "value military discipline" is linked by Fabrizio with the demand to "value more the public than the private" which is in turn linked to the demand that citizens reject factionalism.^{<63>} Thus to reject factionalism--which is to reject the particular good for the common good--is to value the "public things" over the private. The military discipline which should be valued is that conducive to the establishment of the supremacy of the public over the private. Military institutions and the practice of war in Machiavelli are stripped of their private and particular character--which was prevalent throughout the feudal era (in the form of armies composed of the private retainers of lords and aristocrats) and throughout the Renaissance (in the form of mercenary troops led by condottieri). To destroy the particular character of the

established military system is to establish, at the same time, a social and political body that expresses and represents the common and universal interests of society. To demand that the military should be subordinated to the political presupposes that the political exists as a structure that can direct the military art to universal ends--that is, in order to subordinate the military to a public good and purpose, the public (both as a value and as socio-political order) must also exist. The reform of the military is defined by the attempt to move from the private to the public: in concrete terms it is to remove the military--both as a practical art and as a social organization--from the realm of the private and transfer it to the public sphere, such that it comes under the control and direction of the political will of the society. "War should not be followed as a business by anyone but a prince or governor of a republic; and if he is a wise ruler, he will not allow any of his subjects or citizens to make that his particular profession; indeed, no good man has ever practiced or made war into his private or particular profession." (AW, I, 482-483; Wood, 14-15). <64>

The social and political history of Florence during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was characterized by the struggle of the communal bourgeoisie to destroy the power of the landed aristocracy (the "magnati"). To the extent that the "magnati" were eliminated as a force within the city-state, to that extent was a res publica--that is, a

public realm that defined the bene commune--realized as a tangible reality. Such a transformation, as Machiavelli points out,<65> was accompanied by a concurrent change in the military institutions of the new communal republic. The elimination of the private rule of the landed lords also meant the elimination of the military system that had prevailed under a feudal system of power. Thus the victory of the people in their struggle against the domination of the "magnati" meant the subordination of the military organization to the newly-established public sphere. The military organization, however, is but the political association of free citizens that establishes itself as the "populo armato." Machiavelli's Florentine Histories describes the process by which the communal republic degenerated into the Medici despotism through the disintegration of the people into factional and civil strife, a process that was simultaneously paralleled in the destruction of the citizen army and the introduction of mercenary troops. The Histories echoes and summarizes the political and theoretical arguments Machiavelli presents in his political writings:<66> the struggle for power between the grandi and the populo, the problem of factions and its relation to the creation or degeneration of the public space, the relation between the populo armato and a free political order. Machiavelli addresses these themes by presenting Florentine history as the progressive and cumulative corruption of the political virtu' of the

commune, where the culmination of this long degeneration is reached during the last decades of the fifteenth century when Florence as an independent state lost its freedom of movement and became subject, together with the other Renaissance city-states, to either external powers or to the Papacy.<67>

The ravaged and despoiled state of Italy is not a simple outcome of the lack of military technique and practice; Machiavelli links the military weakness of the Italian states to a conception of the world--and to a notion of virtu'--that locates the summum bonum within the private and the particular. It is not that Italians lack the skill and technique to wage war successfully; it is that war in Italy is a profession undertaken by private individuals in the pursuit of the bene particulare.<68> The socio-economic competition for self-interest which defined the power struggles of the Renaissance city-states is of a nature similar to the military and diplomatic competition pursued by the various leaders of the mercenary bands: both take place within an environment where no bene commune exists, and where as a consequence military action and social struggles merely result in the further reproduction of factionalism and the anarchy of civil war. The existence of private armies, whether in the form of feudal retainers or in the form of compagnie di ventura, represents the material and concrete embodiment of the forces of fortuna: it means the predominance of the private over the public, and it

therefore signals the destruction of the political space that makes a vivere civile possible.

The relation between the new art of war and the new political order is expressed by Machiavelli in those passages of his writings where he criticizes the erection of fortresses.<69> Machiavelli compares the methods and practices of "my Romans," who, as long as they were free ("mentre che Roma visse libera") never had recourse to fortresses, to those of contemporary times, where reliance on fortresses is the established and general custom. Fortresses are both useless and dangerous because they embody the divorce between the rulers and the ruled, where this divorce is expressed by the relation of domination between the ruler and the people. As Machiavelli puts it: "whenever either princes or republics are afraid lest their subjects should revolt, it results mainly from the hatred of the subjects on account of the bad treatment experienced from those who govern them; and this comes from either the belief that they can best be controlled by force, or from the lack of sound judgement in governing them." Thus a fortress expresses a form of rule which is based on force and coercion. But "all the measures of force and violence [employed] to hold a people amount to nothing...either you must keep a good army always ready to take the field, as the Romans did; or you must scatter, disorganize, and destroy the people so completely [dissipi, spenga, disordini e disgiunga] that they can in no way injure you...." It is not

fortresses but the "will of men" that is the basis for stable and well-ordered rule: "non le fortezze, ma la volonta' degli uomini mantenevono i principi in stato."(D,II,XXIV)<70> This argument is echoed in The Prince, where it is asserted that a new prince will always arm his people, but only a prince "who fears his own people more than foreigners ought to build fortresses....Therefore the best fortress is to be found in the love of the people, for although you have fortresses they will not save you if you are hated by the people."(P,XX)<71>

These passages establish a direct connection between the dominatio of the lord/subject relation, which exists in the sphere of the private, and the privatization of the public that occurred with the breakdown of the Roman republic and the advent of tyrannical rule. Princes and rulers who rely on fortresses, and who hire mercenary troops, are equivalent to the "signori di castella" who wage war through the use of private and personal retainers: both forms of military organization and military conduct presuppose and express a type of rule which is the negation of the political rule Machiavelli's new knowledge teaches. In both instances the public space of speech and discourse is transformed into the private space where the people are rendered "mute and speechless."

Such a privatization signals the destruction of the people--"scatter, disorganize, destroy"--as a collectivity and their reduction to a disaggregated mass of individuals subject to the domination of the lord or the tyrant. Fortresses and mercenary armies imply a form of ruling which is dependent upon the non-existence of the people as an organized and collective force. Whether the ruler is a feudal lord, or a condottiere who has seized power (such as the Sforza in Milan), or a ottimato who has acquired power through the manipulation of internal factional strife (such as the Medici in Florence), the necessary preconditions are identical in each case: the people as subject must be destroyed, and transformed into a "materia tanta corrotta." It is the non-existence, or the disintegration, of a people and its transformation into a mere series of isolated ("disgiunga") and competing individuals that is the foundation of a non-political and a pre-political form of rule. The distinction between the people as a moral and collective body, and the people as an amorphous amalgam particularized and reduced to "sudditi," finds its complementary parallel in the distinction between a military institution founded upon the people as an organized and disciplined entity, and a military system dependent upon the private organization of mercenaries and the erection of fortresses and fortifications whose very essence is to ensure the domination of the despot or the condottiere.

On the other hand, a new prince and the new form of rule which he embodies establish military institutions--a citizen army--that will both reflect and presuppose this new form of rule. Thus Machiavelli writes, "A new prince has never been known to disarm his subjects, on the contrary, when he has found them disarmed he has always armed them, for by arming them these arms become your own, those that you suspected become faithful and those that were faithful remain so, and from being merely subjects become your partisans....[therefore] a new prince in a new principality always has his subjects armed." (P,XX)<72> This quote acquires full significance when it is related to the passage just cited earlier--"either you must keep a good army to take the field, as the Romans did, or you must" destroy and scatter the people. (D,II,XXIV)<73> Machiavelli establishes an antithesis between a "good army" (which is equivalent to his often-repeated "good arms") and a well-constituted and disciplined people ("populo ordinato").<74> It is an organized people that leads to an effective and loyal military institution, and it is a people constituted as an armed and disciplined army that leads to a well-ordered form of rule. The people armed is the foundation for that political space wherein speech and mutual discourse are the prevailing modes of interaction between the rulers and the ruled. The "new principality"<75> embodies such a relation between the military institutions and the political order, a relation which finds its common denominator in the people as

a collective subject and an active political entity: the people is the foundation of the new military institution organized as a mass and popular army, and the people is the foundation of the public space which is defined by the bene pubblico e commune, which is, in turn, the moral and intellectual bond through which a "multitude" becomes a people.

It is precisely the mass and popular nature of the new political form of rule that defines the essential character of the "new principality"--a novel political order which establishes--or re-establishes--the activity of ruling and being ruled on a basis similar, but not identical, to the political and social structure of the ancient Roman republic. The transformation of the "sudditi" into "partisans"--the call to institute a rule based on the "friendship" and the "love" of the people--implies the re-formulation and the re-definition of the established socio-political reality whose continued existence required the production and re-production of a moral and intellectual conception of the world that posited the "volgo" or the "universale" as a subordinate and static entity. Indeed, in feudal society--in those countries where the "signori di castella" hold sway--the very notion of the people as a "mass" or as a "bulk" is alien to its socio-cultural and moral-intellectual structures: the master/subject relation precludes the emergence of the people considered either as an unruly multitude or as a collective and disciplined body.

Thus the Machiavellian call for the establishment of a civil principality represents the recognition that the "populo," whether as an undifferentiated mass or as an "ordinata materia," has become a force whose political and practical consequences depend upon the nature and character of the mass. The people understood as an unthinking and uneducable mass--"disgiunta" and "dissipata"--leads to a conception of the world that assumes the necessary and inevitable relations of domination and subordination which form the core of both despotic and lordly rule. On the other hand, the people envisioned as an entity whose nature is the product of its own activity in the world, which nature is thus constantly becoming, leads to a conception of politics that posits itself as the product and outcome of the very activity of the people.

Notes

<1>These opposing dyads are found throughout Machiavelli's writings, both in the major works--The Prince, The Discourses, The Art of War, and the Florentine Histories--as well as in his minor political writings, such as the Parole da dirle sopra la provvisione del danaio, Sommario delle cose della citta' di Lucca, Relazione di una visita fatta per fortificare Firenze, and the Discorso sopra il riformare lo Stato di Firenze ad istanza di Papa Leone X. In the Florentine Histories, for example, an opposition is established between the vivere privato (the vivere a sette of The Art of War) and the vivere politico (the vivere civile), and between tirannide and vivere libero, as well as between the particulare and the bene commune. The argument of the Histories is carried forward and acquires momentum by means of the tension produced by the interplay of these opposing dyadic polarities. Indeed, the Histories is to be seen as the delineation of a process by which the bene commune is transformed into the particulare, the vivere politico into the vivere privato--a process which describes the progressive disintegration of the popolo, its loss of liberta', and the consequent rise of tirannide. In effect, the Histories is Machiavelli's commentary on the state of Florence in the early years of the sixteenth century, a commentary which may be best understood as the mirror opposite of the argument presented in The Discourses--that is, the latter work describes the emergence and development of the people, and the proliferation of virtu' throughout the masses, such that we see in it Machiavelli's ideal and ardent desire--he is "ardisce," and "saro' animoso a dire"--the res publica as the res populi, and the people ruling through their virtu' ordinata. On the other hand, the Histories presents Machiavelli's realistic judgement regarding the verita' effettuale "delle cose di Firenze"--namely, the people as an active and directing force do not exist, indeed, the history of Florence shows the progressive corruption and degeneration of the people: thus, Florence is the anti-Rome, and Florentine history is a lesson in what should not be done, in the same way that Roman history is a lesson in what should be done. See Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1973), henceforth cited as SPN, pp. 172-175. See Felix Gilbert, Machiavelli and Guicciardini (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), chapter 6, "Between History and Politics," pp. 236-270; and see also, J.G.A. Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 114-122, 143-145, and 208-216, for a discussion of the particulare and the vivere civile e politico. In addition, see Francesco de Sanctis, Storia della letteratura italiana a cura di Benedetto Croce (Bari: Laterza, 1965), vol. II,

pp. 105-107; as well as Luigi Russo, Machiavelli (Bari: Laterza, 1975), pp. 189-203, section entitled "Il mito della liberta' e del vivere libero in Machiavelli." And Eugenio Garin, Italian Humanism: Philosophy and Civic life in the Renaissance, trans. Peter Munz (New York: Harper and Row, 1965); and Hans Baron, Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 97-104, and chapter 6, as well as Nicolai Rubinstein, "Machiavelli and the World of Florentine Politics," in Studies on Machiavelli ed. Myron P. Gilmore (Firenze: Sansoni, 1972), pp. 3-28. And J.H. Whitfield, Machiavelli (New York: Russell and Russell, 1965), pp. 159-160. See also, Luigi Russo's introduction to his critical edition of Il principe e pagine dei Discorsi e delle Istorie, a cura di Luigi Russo (Firenze: Sansoni); and Franco Gaeta, "Machiavelli storico," in Machiavelli nel V centenario della sua nascita, AA.VV. (Bologna: Boni, 1973), pp. 139-153. And see Gramsci, Il materialismo storico e la filosofia di Benedetto Croce (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), henceforth cited as MS, p. 219; and Il Risorgimento (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), henceforth cited as R, pp. 3-10, 22, 27; and Note sul Machiavelli, sulla politica e sullo Stato moderno (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), pp. 25-26, where Gramsci presents his notion of the "economic-corporative," which he defines as the narrow, particular interests of a given group, in opposition to more general, universal interests, which are developed and proliferated by means of hegemonic leadership and through moral and intellectual reform. The particolare of Machiavelli parallels the corporativo-economico of Gramsci. In both Gramsci and Machiavelli the problem is the movement from the particolare to the bene commune, and from the corporativo-economico to egemonia and hence to politica. See further Gramsci, NM, pp. 7, 12, 29-35, 131-132; and MS, pp. 185, 192-193, 197, 220-221, 244-245; and Gli intellettuali e l'organizzazione della cultura (Torino: Einaudi, 1966), henceforth cited as Int, p. 35; Passato e presente (Torino: Einaudi, 1974), p. 32; and R, p. 9.

<2>See Russo, Machiavelli, pp. 11-25, 38-45; Pocock, pp. 183-219. And Leo Strauss, Thoughts on Machiavelli (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), the chapter entitled "Machiavelli's Teaching;" Harry C. Mansfield, Jr. his introduction to his translation of Machiavelli's The Prince (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); Jerrold E. Seigel, Rhetoric and Philosophy in Renaissance Humanism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968). And also, Ernst Cassirer, The Myth of the State (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), chapter VII, "The Religious and Metaphysical Background of the Medieval Theory of the State," chapter IX, "Nature and Grace in Medieval Philosophy," and chapter X, "Machiavelli's New Science of Politics."

<3>The Discourses, Dedication; Book I. chapters 2, 10, 11; book II, Introduction, chapters 1, 5. And The Prince, dedication, chapters XV, XVIII, and XV.

<4>See Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment, pp. 49-80, "Vita Activa and Vivere Civile." See also Hannah Arendt, On Revolution (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1982).

<5>The Discourses, dedication; I, Introduction; II, Introduction; and The Art of War, Book I, pp. 10-15 (Neal Wood's edition).

<6>On the nature and character of the polis, see Sir Ernest Barker, The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle (New York: Dover Books); T.A. Sinclair, A History of Greek Political Thought (Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1968); M.I. Finley, Politics in the Ancient World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); and Arendt, op. cit. On the nature of the Roman res publica and its political institutions, see Frank Ezra Adcock, Roman Political Ideas and Practice (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1972), Frank Frost Abbott, A History and Description of Roman Political Institutions (Boston: The Atheneum Press, 1901); Max Cary, A History of Rome (London: Macmillan, 1962). In addition, see Sabine's introduction to Cicero's On the Commonwealth (Bobbs-Merrill); and Tacitus, "Dialogue on Oratory," in The Complete Works of Tacitus (New York: Modern Library).

<7>On the concepts "freedom" and "necessity" in their classical contexts, see Arendt, op. cit., and Barker's analysis of the Aristotelian concept of slavery, in The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle, as well as M.I. Finley, Economy and Society in Ancient Greece (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1981), especially see the essays "The freedom of the citizen in the Greek world," pp. 77-96, and "Between slavery and freedom," pp. 116-132. Finley presents an interesting analysis of the relation between citizenship and the possession of slaves as private property, arriving, by means of historical inquiry, at a somewhat Hegelian position, namely, that freedom emerged in the world of classical Greece in opposition to, and as a result of its tension with, its opposite, slavery. The Middle East failed to achieve a similar idea of freedom, according to Finley, because its system of domination did not possess slavery as private property, such that no tension or conflict could arise between the realm of the private (domination) and the realm of the public (freedom): in the east, everyone is subject to the domination of the king, such that these distinctions are meaningless.

<8>See Barker's introduction to his edition of Aristotle's Politics (Oxford: Oxford University Press). On despotism, see Melvin Richter's essay "Despotism," in the

Dictionary of the History of Ideas (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), vol. II, pp. 1-18, and see pp. 2-6, 15-16. It should be noted that speech and discourse, in the sense that Machiavelli used in his Letter to Vettori--"to ask reasons for their actions"--are necessarily excluded from the socio-political structure created by a despoteia and a dominium. Thus logos and theoria are antithetical to despoteia; and a form of rule, as well as a conception of the world that posits an antithesis between demos and logos upon which such rule is based, simultaneously assert the "freezing" and the crystallization of thought and culture into unchanging and "natural" forms of institutions that embody this antithesis. Despoteia and dominium are forms of rule which to Aristotle are pre-political and even anti-political, but which are by that very character necessary to the freedom of the citizen.

<9>See The Discourses, Book I, chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 18, 34, 55, 60; and Book II, chapters 1, 4, 6, 33.

<10>See Ronald Syme, Roman Revolution (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939); and L.R. Taylor, Party Politics in the Age of Caesar (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961).

<11>On the distinction between the imperium domi and the imperium militiae, see Abbott, Roman Political Institutions, pp. 160-161, and Adcock, Roman Political Ideas and Practice. For a similar concept in the classical Greek polis, see Arendt, On Revolution. See also, Victor Ehrenberg, From Solon to Socrates: Greek History and Civilization During the 6th and the 5th Centuries BC (London: Meuthen, 1973), chapter VI.

<12>In both instances, the relation that obtains between ruler and ruled (general and soldier, or master and servant, or father and child) is such that the latter terms of the dyad describe a condition in which the subject does not possess the means, nor the political-moral autonomy, to ask questions, or to respond to the actions of the ruler. See Barker, The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle, and Tacitus, "Dialogue on Oratory," op. cit.

<13>The Art of War, I, p. 19.

<14>Ibid., p. 14.

<15>Ibid., p. 15.

<16>The Discourses, I, 3, 4, 5.

<17>Tacitus, "Dialogue on Oratory," in The Complete Works of Tacitus (New York: Modern Library), pp. 764-769. This statement by Tacitus should be compared to the orations

delivered by Diodotus in Thucydides' The Peloponnesian War, the Mytilenean Debate, Book III, 33-52. Note the parallel between Tacitus' "supporting their opinion with ability and eloquence" to Machiavelli's "to ask reasons for their actions" and "difendere alcuna opinione con la ragione, senza usare forza o l'autorita'." Moreover, there is an echo of Tacitus' brilliant formulation--"to be mute and speechless"--in Machiavelli's self-description as a politicus, in his Letter to Francesco Vettori, No. 120, April 9, 1513: "I have to talk about the government, and I must either make a vow of silence or discuss that," (in The Letters of Machiavelli, ed. and trans. Allan H. Gilbert [New York: Capricorn Books, 1961], p. 104). Many have commented--beginning with the post-Machiavelli writers of the sixteenth century--on the relationship between Tacitus and Machiavelli: see, for example, Hans Baron, Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 70; and Giuseppe Toffanin, Machiavelli e il "Tacitismo": la "politica storica" al tempo della Controriforma (Padova: A. Droghi, 1921), p. 43 and passim; Leo Strauss, Thoughts on Machiavelli, pp. 160-165, where Strauss asserts that Book I, chapters 19-23 possess a "Tacitean substratum;" Peter Burke, "Tacitism," in Tacitus, ed. T.A. Dorey (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), pp. 149-171; and Kenneth C. Schellase, Tacitus in Renaissance Political Thought (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976), see especially pp. 66-84, and pp. 196-202. And see J.H. Whitfield, Machiavelli, pp. 117-118. It should be noted that Tacitus' critique of oratory as it had developed and existed under imperial rule anticipates Machiavelli's critique of the politics and culture of his own Florence: in the same way that Tacitus contrasts the oratory of the Roman republic, where public speech was not a mere literary and rhetorical exercise, but, rather, was necessary to the political and cultural practice of the republic, so too Machiavelli contrasts the Florence of a Bruni, where culture and politics were united in practice, to the Florence of his own day, where the latter has degenerated into the "ambizioso ozio" of the rulers, and where the former has become literary formulae and mere manners: "Credevano i nostri principi italiani, prima ch'egli assaggiassero i colpi delle oltramontane guerre, che a uno principe bastasse sapere negli scrittoi pensare una acuta risposta, scrivere una bella lettera, mostrare ne' detti e nelle parole arguzia e prontezza, sapere tessere una fraude, ornarsi di gemme e d'oro, dormire e mangiare con maggiore splendore che gli altri, tenere assai lascivie intorno, governarsi co' sudditi avaramente e superbamente, marcirsi nello ozio, dare i gradi della milizia per grazia, disprezzare se alcuno avesse loro dimostro alcuna lodevole via, volere che le parole fussero responsi di oracoli...." (The Art of War, Book VII). In both Machiavelli and Tacitus, therefore, we find a

relationship established between the integrity and relevance of speech and discourse, on the one hand, and the nature and character of rule, on the other: vivere libero e politico is a form of rule that is related to the giving of reasons, and to the defence of one's actions by the use of reason rather than force or authority; while dominium or tirannide is a form of rule in which "mostrare ne' detti e nelle parole una acuta risposta" and "scrivere una bella lettera"--in other words, the trivialization and the corruption of speech--are the prevailing forms of speech and cultural activity.

<18>The Discourses, I, 55. My italics. Compare this passage to that in the Discorso sopra il riformare lo stato di Firenze ad istanza di Papa Leone X: "...in tutte le citta' dove e' grande equalita' di cittadini, non vi si puo' ordinare principato se non con massima difficulta', e in quelle citta' dove e' grande inequalita' di cittadini non si puo' ordinare repubblica; perche', a voler creare una repubblica in Milano, dove e' grande inequalita' di cittadini, bisognerebbe spegnere tutta quella nobilta', e ridurla ad una equalita' con gli altri; perche' tra di loro sono tanto straordinarii, che le leggi non bastano a reprimerli, ma vi bisogna una voce viva, et una potesta' regia che gli reprima. E per il contrario, a volere un principato in Firenze, dove e' una grandissima equalita', sarebbe necessario ordinarvi prima inequalita', e farvi assai nobili di castella e ville, i quali, insieme con el principe, tenessino con l'armi e con l'aderenzie loro soffocata la citta' e tutta la provincia. Perche' un principe solo, spogliato di nobilta', non puo' sostenere il pondo del principato; pero' e' necessario che infra lui e l'universale sia un mezzo che l'auiti sostenerlo. Vedesi questo in tutti gli stati di principe, e massime nel regno di Francia, come e' gentiluomini signoreggiano i popoli, i principi i gentiluomini, e il re i principi."

<19>Ibid. See Gramsci, Int., pp. 116-117, and note on p. 116.

<20>Gramsci, R, pp. 13, 24; and SPN, pp. 140-141. And his Lettere dal carcere (Torino: Einaudi, 1955), pp. 145-146 (in Lawner's translation, pp. 109-110).

<21>The Discourses, I, Introduction, and chapters 16, 17, 18; II, Introduction, 2; and The Art of War, proemio, and VII, the concluding remarks of Fabrizio. See Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment, pp. 207-211.

<22>The Discourses, I, 55. And Pocock, pp. 209-211.

<23>The Art of War, "ne' sangue ne' autorita."

<24>The Prince, VI, IX, and XVIII. On Gramsci's dittatura and egemonia, see Walter L. Adamson, Hegemony and Revolution: A Study of Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Theory (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); Carl Boggs, Gramsci's Marxism (London: Pluto Press, 1978); and the essays in Chantal Mouffe, ed. Gramsci and Marxist Theory (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979).

<25>There is, therefore, a consistency in Machiavelli's praise of Cesare Borgia and in his condemnation of Agathocles and Caesar: the former represents a form of action necessary to the creation of a vivere civile in a country previously lacking it; and the second represents a form of action that destroys an already existing vivere civile and the disintegration of a political space defined by the action of "cittadini virtuosi." See The Prince, VII, and The Discourses, I, 10. On the problem regarding the relation between The Prince (the moment of force) and The Discourses (the moment of liberty or consent), see Felix Gilbert, "Machiavelli in modern historical scholarship," in Machiavelli nel V centenario della sua nascita, pp. 157-171, especially pp. 165-166, and Gennaro Sasso, Il pensiero politico di Niccolo' Machiavelli (Torino: ERI, 1964), pp. 36-41.

<26>The Discourses, I, 1, 11, 17; and the Florentine Histories, IV, i.

<27>See The Discourses, II, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 19. And Pocock, pp. 181-182, and 208-218. Also, Sheldon S. Wolin, Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960), pp. 220-224. In this section Wolin presents the now famous formulation "the economy of violence." If the notion of the economy of violence is conjoined with the problem of political space (pp. 217-230), then political action depends upon the generation of an economy of violence within this space, such that the concentration and mobilization of force and violence are better attained and more efficiently deployed outside the political space. Note that the very notion of an economy of violence presupposes the classical distinction between imperium domi and imperium militiae. Wolin, in linking his notion of the economy of violence to the notion of the "unescapably autonomous nature of politics" (p. 228), is following and echoing Croce's reading of Machiavelli--for now "politics" is seen as an "economy" of pure force, that is, a technique. On the other hand, Croce would find Wolin's discussion entitled "ethics: political and private" (p. 224) overly moralistic. Nevertheless, the "economy of violence" is a brilliant formulation, which, however, requires careful qualification. It should be noted that its use in Wolin is quite ambivalent. The Centaur, after all, represents both the beast and the man, force and reason, and the problem is to

construct a political space in which the former is subordinated to the latter.

<28>Gramsci, NM, pp. 9-10; and MS, pp. 80-81. And, Pocock, pp. p. 210; Wolin, pp. 230-231; and Quentin Skinner, Foundations of Modern Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), vol I, pp. 182-183.

<29>Sir Ernest Barker, The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle (New York: Dover Publications, 1959), pp. 359-372, especially pp. 361-365. See also Barker's edition of Aristotle's Politics.

<30>On the notions of dittatura and dominio, see Gramsci NM, pp. 87-84, 127-128, 161; Passato e presente, pp. 71-72; Lettere dal carcere, p. 333. See also Adamson, op. cit., and Mouffe, op. cit., and Giuseppe Tamburrano, Antonio Gramsci: la vita, il pensiero, l'azione (Manduria, 1963); and Giorgio Bonomi, Partito e rivoluzione in Gramsci (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1976), pp. 38-39, 43-50.

<31>Such a conversation, in which each demands a reason from the other, is employed by Machiavelli as a means by which he may "re-translate" and re-interpret the ancient writers and the modern humanists, such that his conversation with the past and the present becomes an attempt to reform the present and to establish a new socio-cultural reality. See Skinner, Foundations, vol I, pp. 128-138, 158-162; and Allan Gilbert, Machiavelli's Prince and Its Forerunners: 'The Prince' as a Typical Book de regimine principum (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1938). But see John Plamentaz, Man and Society (London), vol. II, p. 7; and Sir Isaiah Berlin, "The Originality of Machiavelli," in his Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas, ed. and with a bibliography by Henry Hardy, introduction by Roger Hausheer (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1982).

<32>Notwithstanding Strauss' position, the "ragionare senza usare forza o autorità" is certainly a construction that has its parallels in Aristotelian political thought. Machiavelli's enterprise attempts to point the way toward a political space where the vivere civile e libero is not a mere transient and contingent phenomenon, such that its virtu' is able to resist and to defend against the violence and force of fortuna. See Giuliano Procacci, Studi sulla fortuna del Machiavelli (Roma: Istituto storico italiano, 1965), pp. 45-46, and note 3 on p. 45.

<33>Pocock, pp. 194-211; Wolin, pp. 228-235 ("the discovery of the mass"); Skinner, Foundations, I, pp. 158-152, and A.R. Buzzi, La teoria politica di Gramsci (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1973), pp. 152-165, all note the importance of the masses in Machiavelli. However, they establish a relation between the new prince and the masses,

or between the "legislator-founder" and the republic, in such a way that the former is seen as the all-powerful and all-knowing artist-shaper of the materia of the masses. See Luigi Russo, Machiavelli (Bari: Laterza, 1975), p. 24, on the "artista-eroe della teorica politica." But what is more important, these writers establish a relation between the new knowledge of politics and the mass which is static, sterile, and artificial. Both the "artist-hero" and the technique which he knows and employs appear in the political arena as if he were a deus ex machina descending on a stage. Such a view, of course, is but another version of the "autonomy of politics" and the cultura/politica antinomy presented by Croce.

<34>T.A. Sinclair, A History of Greek Political Thought, pp. 115-142, especially pp. 130-139.

<35>Barker's edition of Aristotle's Politics, I 1252a-1253a, II 1261a, III 1278b, 1280.

<36>Wolin, passim; Finley, Politics in the Ancient World, passim. And see Gramsci, MS, p. 3.

<37>L.R. Taylor, Party Politics in the Age of Caesar (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961); Max Cary, A History of Rome (London: Macmillan, 1962); and Edward A. Freeman, A History of Federal Government in Greece and Italy, ed. J. B. Bury (London: Macmillan and Co., 1893). Italy; and Finley, Politics in the Ancient World, op. cit.

<38>Gramsci, NM, pp. 7-10. And see Wolin, pp. 229-234.

<39>The Discourses, II, 55, 58.

<40>Benedetto Croce, Etica e politica (Bari: Laterza, 1931), the section "Elementi di politica."

<41>The Discourses, I, 58.

<42>Ibid.

<43>The Prince, IX. Compare The Discourses, I, 58, and The Prince, IX to The Discourses, III, 7: "Dubiterà forse alcuno donde nasca che molte mutazioni, che si fanno dalla vita libera alla tirannica, e per contrario, alcuna se ne faccia con sangue, alcuna sanza; perche', come per le istorie si comprende, in simili variazioni alcuna volta sono stati morti infiniti uomini, alcuno volta non e' stato ingiuriato alcuno....Il che dipende da questo: perche' quello stato che si muta, nacque con violenza, o no: e perche', quando e nasce con violenza, conviene nasca con ingiuria di molti, e' necessario poi, nella rovina sua, che gli'ingiuriati si vogliano vendicare; e da questo desiderio

di vendetta nasce il sangue e la morte degli uomini. Ma quando quello stato e' causato da uno comune consenso d'una universalita' che lo ha fatto grande, non ha cagione poi, quando rovina detta universalita', di offendere altri che il capo."

<44>Gramsci, NM, p. 12. And The Discourses, I, Introduction; II, Introduction, 1, 2, 55, 58; III, 1, 7.

<45>Gramsci, NM, pp. 89-94, 122-123; R, pp. 5-10, 74. And see Pocock, pp. 198-204.

<46>The Art of War, I, p. 12.

<47>Gramsci, NM, p. 141.

<48>The Discourses, I, 21; and The Prince, XII.

<49>The Art of War, proemio. And Pocock, pp. 200-201.

<50>Gramsci, NM, pp. 14-15; R, p. 74.

<51>The Discourses, I, 21; and The Prince, XII, XIII, XIV, XXV, XXIV. See the Parole da dirle sopra la provvisione del danaio, in which Machiavelli addresses the republican leadership of Florence, and says that "voi vi trovate disarmati [compare this to the Prince, VI and XII]...[and] senza forze, le citta' non si mantengono....Perche' io vi dico che la fortuna non muta sentenza, dove non si muta l'ordine. [But it] essere nelle mani vostre la vostra liberta'. Alla quale credo che voi arete quelli rispetti che ha auto sempre chi e' nato libero e desidera viver libero." To want to live as a free people is to want to become armed, but to become armed, one must "mutar l'ordine"--that is, transform one's institutions. What this means is that the republic--or the new principality--"chiama i suoi cittadini"--that is, it must rely on its citizens to defend itself. But this, in turn, requires that the citizenship be extended, and that the governo be based on the popolo minuto. Note that Machiavelli attacks the Florentine republic for its reliance on the arms of others--"Ne' fu mai ne' signoria ne' repubblica savia che volessi tenere lo stato suo a discrezione d'altri, o che, tenendolo, gline paressi aver sicuro." But to become a repubblica armata (The Prince, XII) means to transform the political space of the republic through the arming of the people. See Gramsci, NM, pp. 14-15, and R, p. 74. See also Discorso dell'ordinare lo Stato di Firenze alle armi: "...solo ordinarsi all'armi per deliberazione pubblica, e con buono ordine e mantenerlo."

<52>See Berlin, "The Originality of Machiavelli," op. cit., pp. 25-79; and Flanagan's, pp. 127-156, Wood's, pp. 33-58, and Plamenatz's, pp. 157-178, essays in The

Political Calculus: Essays on Machiavelli's Philosophy (Toronto: Toronto University press, 1972).

<53>Neal Wood, "Machiavelli's Concept of Virtù Re-considered," Political Studies 15 (1967), pp. 159-172, see p. 171; and Wood's introduction to The Art of War (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1978), pp. xli, xlvii-xlix, and liv-lxiv.

<54>Felix Gilbert, Machiavelli and Guicciardini, p. 154.

<55>Skinner, pp. 129, 131.

<56>Federico Chabod, Machiavelli and the Renaissance (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965), p. 16. "The general character of The Prince--not only its formal scheme, but the actual spirit that powers it--is clearly revealed in the chapters on the creation of a militia." This is partly correct. The problem arises in the difference in interpretation regarding the use and organization of the militia. To Machiavelli, as to Gramsci, the militia is not a mere military and technical instrument; it is a social organization directed towards a political end. It is an instrument, therefore, that acquires meaning and utility only through a political and moral structure. In addition, see Chabod's Scritti su Machiavelli (Torino: Einaudi, 1964), pp. 322-339.

<57>Chabod, pp. 74, 84.

<58>Ibid., pp. 16-17, 20, 99-100. And this is the point at issue: a citizen militia presupposes a particular socio-political and socio-cultural environment, as well as a moral and intellectual transformation of contemporary Italian politics and society. Thus, to call for a citizen army is to call for such a transformation.

<59>See Pocock, pp. 199-200; and Gilbert, Machiavelli and Guicciardini, chapters 1, 2; and Wood, his introduction to The Art of War, pp. xlvii, liii-lxiv.

<60>Pocock, pp. 199-200.

<61>Gramsci, R, pp. 5-10, 74.

<62>The Art of War, proemio, pp. 3-4.

<63>The Art of War, I, p. 12.

<64>Ibid., I, pp. 14-15.

<65>Florentine Histories, II, 33-37; III, 1; VII, 1. And see The Discourses, I, Introduction, 55, 58; II, Introduction, 2.

<66>Compare The Art of War, I, pp. 14-15, and the Florentine Histories, III, 1; VIII, 1.

<67>The loss of Florentine liberty (internally as vivere civile), and the loss of Florence's freedom of movement as an actor in the balance of power (externally), are precisely the results against which Machiavelli was preparing and planning in the Danaio and in the Discorso dell'ordinare lo Stato di Firenze alle armi. See the proemio to The Art of War, pp. 3-5, and VII, pp. 208-211; and The Prince, XXIV, XXVI.

<68>The Prince, XXVI. And The Discourses, II, 28. And The Art of War, VII, pp. 206-211.

<69>The Prince, XX. And The Discourses, II, 24. And the Discorso sopra il riformare lo stato di Firenze ad istanza di Papa Leone X. In addition, see Machiavelli's Letters to Francesco Guicciardini, No. 206, 4 April 1526, in Gilbert's The Letters of Machiavelli, pp. 229-231, and Letter No. 207, 17 May 1526, pp. 231-233, and Letter No. 209, 2 June 1526, pp. 233-234, and second letter of same date, No. 210, pp. 234-235. And see Machiavelli's statement that "la piu' nociva impresa, che faccia una repubblica, e' farsi in corpo una cosa forte, o che subito si possa fare forte," (second letter of 2 June 1526).

<70>The Discourses, II, 24.

<71>The Prince, XX.

<72>Ibid.

<73>The Discourses, II, 24.

<74>The Discourses, I, 16, 17, 18; II, 2, 24.

<75>The Prince, IX, XX. And The Discourses, I, 55, 58, as well as the Discorso sopra il riformare lo Stato di Firenze ad istanza di Papa Leone X.

Chapter VIII

It has been the purpose of this thesis to offer a comparative and textual analysis of Gramsci's interpretation of the thought of Machiavelli. I have attempted to show that such an interpretation was formulated and developed as both a reaction and a critique of the prevailing liberal philosophy of Benedetto Croce. To Gramsci the figure of Machiavelli, and the interpretation of his political theory, assumed political and theoretical significance because they presented questions and problems that underlined and focussed within themselves what Gramsci, as a Marxist and a Hegelian, understood to be the major issue that a theory of political action must address. This is the problem of the political and historical subject: who, or what entity, is the agent which, through its practice and active engagement in the world ("nel temporale," as Machiavelli would put it), resolves the contradiction between thought and action, ethics and politics, "culture" and people?

Such an antinomy, as Marx pointed out, was expressed in thought by the elaboration of philosophical and metaphysical systems characterized by an inherent dualism that posited a total disjunction between the word (or the idea) and the deed; and it was embodied within history and society by the development of socio-political and socio-cultural formations founded upon the antagonism between the ruling groups or classes who possess knowledge and the instruments of

culture, and the subordinate groups whose "knowledge" and culture are both reflections, and causes, of their subordination. In a very fundamental sense the liberal thought and culture expressed by Crocean philosophy reproduces in modern and pseudo-Hegelian terms the Platonic and Augustinian dualism between thinking and acting that has permeated Western political thought since the fall of classical society and the advent of Christian (and later medieval) society.

The Platonic opposition between the Idea (which is "truth" or reality) and the world (which is opinion and appearance) is taken by Christianity and re-translated into the religious and theological duality that Augustine posits between the civitas dei and the civitas terrena. In both instances the idea--the logos which expresses and embodies the truth and essence of reality--is a pre-existing entity which is given by either a philosophical or a spiritual form of activity divorced from the world of material and practical life. In both cases, moreover, the notion of the political understood as a generative and creative activity that transforms reality is eliminated, and it is replaced with a conception of politics that locates the political within the world of appearance and error. The Christian Platonism of Augustine strips the political of all moral, intellectual, and cultural (and thus educational) elements and reduces it to a negative instrument whose utility is made necessary by the unredeemable and unchangeable nature

of the earthly city. The nature of man in the earthly city is corrupt; his will and his reason are ruled by passions and appetites that result in war, struggle, misery, and domination. The political, therefore, is both a product of the appetitive nature of man, and a remedy that will insure peace and security in a world governed by the competition of opposing interests and unlimited desires. To Augustine the essential constitutive element of the political is pure force and coercion, such that the "state" is reduced to an instrument of domination and repression.

The opposition between the civitas dei and the civitas terrena destroys the classical and basically Aristotelian problematic that envisions the polis and the nature of the political as the concrete embodiment of the logos within a social space which is itself created by the social and rational activity of man. The Augustinian and Christian conception of the relation between thought and action destroys the ethical and educational dimension of the political, such that the "ought to be" is relegated to a sphere of being totally separated from the material world of the "is." What this does is that the connection between action and rational purpose--the relation between the positing of ends and their realization in society--is severed, and the do verum essere is no longer seen to emerge from within the structure of the essere, but is rather posited as a given whose realization and attainment are independent of man's activity in the world.

The Machiavellian project, both theoretically and politically, attempts to discover--or to re-discover--the elements and means by which the disjunction between the ought and the is, and the severing of man's ends from man's activity, may be uncovered and over-come. The thought of Machiavelli stands in radical opposition to that of his predecessors and contemporaries: it is conscious of itself as the knowledge that attempts to negate the prevailing conception of the world. Such a conception does not merely see man as a passive creature subject to forces over which he has no control. More importantly, the activity and practice of man are themselves seen, not as "remedies," but as the very source and spring of the socio-political and socio-cultural problems that confront him. In such a conception political action does not lead to the over-coming of the given and the creation of a superior reality; the political, embedded within this given, and severed as it is from reason and from the ethical, can only reproduce and reflect the given reality.

The Crocean interpretation of Machiavelli as the thinker who first discovered the "autonomy of politics," and who first developed a theory of the political that posited a complete and thorough-going antinomy between ethics and politics, presupposes a philosophical system that understands itself as the product of "pure" thought and "pure" reason. To Gramsci liberal thought, and the philosophy of Croce in particular, have reproduced in

metaphysical and speculative language the dualistic opposition between thought and action first posited by the Platonist and Christian conceptions of the world. In the philosophy of Croce the Augustinian distinction between the civitas dei--the realm where "true" justice and universal right are located--and the civitas terrena--the realm where natural necessity and brute force reign--is transformed and translated into the secular and elitist opposition between the "aristocracy of the intellect" (the alta cultura of the intellectuals and the ruling groups) and the popular culture of the masses (the "volgo").

What this means is that to posit a theory that asserts the primacy of "pure" thought such that the preservation of its integrity and "dignity" requires the separation of "thinking" from "feeling," of philosophy from practice, is to posit simultaneously the political and social proposition that asserts the primacy of intellectuals over the rest of society, such that society is divided into spheres--into two civitates--one an aristocracy of those who possess knowledge, the other a subject and incoherent group composed of the majority of the population whose culture, issuing from the uncontrolled "passions" and "desires" of the semplici (the common people), cannot attain to the level of the first. In effect liberal thought is based on the fundamental divorce between the thought of intellectuals and the popular culture of the people. Such a socio-cultural and socio-political contradiction expresses itself in a

philosophy that can only envision itself as the product of thought itself--that is, thought emerges from the rational and philosophical activity of a stratum of intellectuals who identify and define themselves as a group separate and autonomous from society and from the masses.

Given such a perspective on the relation between philosophy and the people, what does it mean to say that the political is autonomous from the ethical, and that the political world is a realm separate and distinct from the world of thought and of culture? If thought, as Croce says, becomes "corrupt" as it addresses itself to an interest or to a subject which is embedded within the world of action and practice (or to "all other human interests," as he puts it) and thereby is no longer able to think--"il pensiero non pensa"--then the locus of universal reason is to be found not within the life and practice of a sensuously active historical subject, but rather within the eternal categories of thought itself. And if this is so, then moral and ethical action, whose validity and universality can only be attained through philosophy and culture, is relegated into an extra-social and extra-political realm--that is, the problem of freedom (moral action) and the question of right (justice) are now transferred within the personal and private realm of the individual. The separation of the ethical and the political leads to the separation of the dover essere from the essere, such that the realization of the former is no longer a question, as in the thought of

Plato and Aristotle, of the transformation of the latter: indeed, the essere is a given which cannot be changed, and the realization of the dover essere is located within thought--that is, within the mind of individuals (who are capable of rational and ethical thinking)--and not within the practical and everyday life of social and collective men.

In effect, the philosophy of Croce--bourgeois and liberal thought in general--remains fixed within a problematic originally formulated by Kant, a frame of reference unable to transcend the contradiction between the world of nature (the realm of necessity) and the world of thought and culture (the realm of freedom). To assume such an antinomy as a given which cannot be over-come--or which can be transcended only within the "conscience" and thought of the individual--is to assume that action in the world--the practical relation of means to ends--will always remain subject to the "iron laws" of necessity. It is, furthermore, to assume that freedom--morally and intellectually autonomous action--is attained not through engagement with the world of nature and necessity in order to over-come and change it, but rather through the erection of an artificial sphere of thought and culture whose very existence presupposes the preservation of the contradiction between culture and nature (or between "thinking" and "feeling"). Thus the culture of the intellectuals--wherein intellectual and moral autonomy is possible--presupposes the

existence of a realm of necessity in which the "common people" are subject to the brute and "objective" laws of nature, and from which they, as a people and as a collectivity, cannot escape. In Hegel's words, the freedom of the few presupposes the necessity of the many.

Given such a way of posing the problem, then the figure and thought of Machiavelli, when inserted within the context of Crocean liberal philosophy, are seen as the genesis of a knowledge which posits the political as an activity separate and distinct from ethics and culture. The autonomy of the political implies that the contradiction between freedom and necessity, and between the do ver essere and the essere can never be resolved. For now the political is itself seen as an activity immersed within, and subject to, the necessary laws of nature. Thus the Crocean formulation that politics is pure technique, an instrumentality characterized by pure power and pure force, and political knowledge is a "science" that teaches the technique of the "lion and the fox." What this means is that domination, coercion, manipulation, and the generation of popular belief systems--what Croce would call "technical instruments of rule," and what in Marx would translate as "ideology" in the sense of "false consciousness"--exhaust the meaning of politics and political knowledge.

The liberal and bourgeois notion of politics reduces it to a mere appendage of the economic--to a mere utility--such that politics can never be directed to the creation of a universal realm where the freedom and moral-cultural autonomy of one does not necessitate the domination and subjection of the other. Where Machiavelli, Marx, and Gramsci begin--the problem of moving from the objective and given particularity of economic utility to the establishment of a conscious subject capable of transforming this particularity into a universal space where the natural objectivity of the particular is transcended into a self-determining and moral universal--the liberal-bourgeois thinkers end. Where the particular is viewed by the former as a problem that needs to be addressed, and which is thus made as their point of departure, the latter see the particular as the "natural" and "necessary" foundation of society and politics, and this then becomes the latter's point of arrival.

If the political, therefore, is utility and instrumentality, and if political action is necessarily directed towards the particular, then this implies that domination is not only the defining characteristic of political activity, but also that political action can never transcend domination. Here rule is conceived as equivalent to the dominium that the dominus exercises over his familia, where the relation between ruler and ruled exists within the private and particular realm of necessity. In a very real

sense ruling to Croce and to the liberal and bourgeois thought which he represents is always a question of domination. And it is so precisely because the political cannot be conceived as other than an instrumentality directed towards a particular interest and a particular end. But if this is so, then political knowledge is itself an instrument of domination, whose function is not just to elaborate the technical instruments of power, but, equally as important, such knowledge is directed towards the masking and mystification of the arcana regni.

Thus, to assert, as Croce does, that Marx is the Machiavelli of the proletariat, and to equate Marx to Machiavelli, is to attack the Marxian formulation that the realization of philosophy presupposes the development of the proletariat as a conscious and purposive subject. The equation Marx = Machiavelli, within the context of the Crocean interpretation of Machiavelli, reduces the Marxian critique of bourgeois society and bourgeois power relations to an ideology--to an instrument of rule--no different from other belief systems whose function is to mask the antithesis between those who rule and those who are ruled. What Croce is saying is that Marxism, as the ideology of the proletariat in its struggle against the bourgeoisie, is a technical knowledge that was originally discovered by Machiavelli. As such, as pure technique, this knowledge is socially and materially neutral, such that there is no necessary relation between the knowledge and the subject who

knows it and acts upon it.

The Marxian formulation that revolutionary socialism is the active and practical consciousness of the proletariat, and that the activity and practice of the proletariat creates a revolutionary consciousness, is based on a conception of knowledge, and a posture towards action in the world, that see knowledge as the product of a subject who is actively engaged in the world, such that knowledge and the subject that knows it mutually presuppose each other. Marxism, which wants to teach "boldly and openly" a revolutionary theory to the proletariat and to the popular masses in general, is seen by Croce and the liberal-bourgeois as an ideology that merely reproduces, with a different terminology, the notion of politics as domination and utility. Thus the revolutionary nature of the Marxian project is negated, and Marxism is reduced to another instrument of domination and of rule. In Croce, the equation Marx = Machiavelli asserts the futility of political and revolutionary action: the praxis of the proletariat cannot destroy the bourgeois forms of domination, and it cannot lead to the over-coming of the contradiction between freedom (the realm of moral-intellectual and cultural autonomy) and necessity (the realm of nature and domination). The proletariat to Croce is merely a formless "volgo" that cannot constitute itself as an independent and self-directing entity capable of positing itself as a conscious subject and legislating for

itself its own values and ends. The nature of the proletariat renders it incapable of creative and critical thought--it cannot "think"--so that its political and social existence is reduced to that of a mere instrument subject to the direction and control of a force or entity external to it. As such, its activity and its moral being are dependent upon the existence of an "aristocracy of the intellect" embodied within an "aristo-democracy" of the ruling groups.

Gramsci's reading of Machiavelli presents an interpretation which is intended not only to negate the Crocean notion of Machiavelli's thought, but also to develop a theory of politics and of political action that will resolve the liberal antinomy between those who know and those who merely "feel," and between the alta cultura of the ruling groups and the cultura popolare of the masses. Gramsci opposes Machiavelli to Croce, and Machiavellian knowledge to Croce's philosophy, where the former is the democratic philosopher whose thought is the knowledge of the people to which it is addressed, and the latter is the traditional intellectual whose thought represents the negation of the people. While the knowledge of Machiavelli is generated by the reciprocal movement described by the process "io a voi"/"voi a me" which embodies the unity of Machiavelli's new knowledge and the subject to which it is addressed, the philosophy of Croce sees itself as the thought of intellectuals in opposition to the life of the people, a knowledge whose very existence requires that the

people as subject be denied.

The Gramscian Machiavelli discovers a knowledge of politics whose realization in the world depends upon the formation of the people as a coherent and purposive subject, while the Crocean Machiavelli discovers a knowledge whose very nature as "knowledge" presupposes the existence of the masses as "volgo," of the "moltitudine" which is "disgiunta," "sciolta," and disaggregated into a mass of competing particular interests. To Croce the people is the "volgo" that does not seek the "truth," because this truth can only be given by the aristocracy of the intellect; to Machiavelli the people is the subject and carrier of the new knowledge, because the truth--the verita' effettuale--is the product of the interactive relation between this knowledge and the people it addresses, a relation based upon the mutual discourse delineated by the "io...da voi...come voi da me" construction Machiavelli establishes in The Art of War. The knowledge of Machiavelli, as the consciousness of the popolo "nel temporale," leads to the citizen democracy which is, in turn, the realization of this knowledge in action and in practice; the knowledge of Croce, as the consciousness of intellectuals, leads to the aristo-democracy whose attainment and continued existence require that the "volgo" be and remain a passive and subordinate object. Indeed, in Croce the distinction between alta cultura and cultura popolare, culture and politics, which leads to the conception of the autonomy of

politics, necessitates the reduction of the popular masses to the category and status of "volgo," where the latter is defined by the opaque objectivity of inert matter.

This opaque quality of the culture and consciousness of the people implies that political knowledge, when related to the life and practice of the masses, is a knowledge whose function is to mask and cover--velare--the technique and science of politics. Since the "volgo" does not seek the truth, and since its consciousness "non aggiunge" to the moral-intellectual discipline that self-reflection gives to the intellectual and scientific aristocracy, knowledge, when it "descends" to the level of the popular and the mass, transforms itself into ideology, into an instrument whereby the "volgo" will remain "volgo" and thus remain subordinate to those who know. Since knowledge cannot emerge from the life of the people, and since any contact with the people transforms it into a technical instrument of rule, knowledge, rather than educating and transforming the "volgo" into a collective entity that possesses a coherent consciousness of itself and its relation to the world, attempts to maintain them in their condition of socio-political domination and in their state of cultural and moral-intellectual incoherence. What this means is that there can be no discourse with the people, that speech and argumentation based on reciprocity and mutuality is possible only within the narrow and limited space defined by the structures of the aristo-democracy. There can be no

discourse precisely because, in the words of Tacitus, the "volgo" is mute and speechless. The relation between those who know and those who do not know, therefore, is based on domination and manipulation.

Gramsci sees the Machiavellian enterprise as the attempt to render articulate and conscious those who are mute and speechless. But to transform the mute and speechless "volgo" into a subject which is morally and intellectually articulate is to initiate a process of reform and renovation that will lead to the constitution of the "moltitudine" into a people that is disciplined and coherent--that is, a people whose self-definition and self-consciousness are equivalent to the introduction and proliferation of Machiavelli's new knowledge. The distinctive and original character of this new knowledge is its intention to address the people as an autonomous and independent entity. It must, therefore, present itself as an open and public knowledge which sparks the "moltitudine" to engage in the process of mutual and rational discourse. Such a process, which is carried forward by the relation between the teacher who "speaks" ("parlare") and the student who responds and questions ("domandare"), is given by Machiavelli's intention to present his knowledge without the use of force or of authority. To "disputare le cose senza rispetto" (to argue and converse "freely"), and to "ragionare senza usare forza o autorita'," would only be meaningful if the subject which is addressed is not, or no

longer is, mute and speechless.

The constructions "io a voi"/"voi a me" and "io...da voi...come voi da me" are equivalent to the "disputare le cose senza rispetto" and to the "ragionare senza forza o autorità'." Together they express and summarize the nature of the new knowledge that Machiavelli intends to introduce. It is these two sets of constructions, I have argued, that form the essential and original constituting elements of the Gramscian notion of egemonia. Hegemony is the formulation and elaboration of a moral-intellectual and cultural conception of the world, whose elaboration throughout society transforms it into a way of life and a form of practice characteristic of an entire people. Hegemony, in fact, is precisely the synthesis of the Crocean antitheses that posit a total divorce between thought and action, ethics and politics, culture and people. The development of hegemony, and its proliferation in society, represents the concretization of thought in action, and the realization of the ethical moment within the political moment.

The relation that Machiavelli establishes between the knowledge that he intends to introduce, and the subject to which this knowledge is addressed, parallels the relation that Gramsci establishes between the democratic philosopher and the popular masses within whom he emerges. The notion of hegemony, therefore, represents the unity of culture and people, philosophy and politics, such that the realization

of philosophy in the world of action and of practice is equivalent to the proliferation of hegemony throughout society. Hegemony is the concretization of philosophy and knowledge within a socio-political and historical subject, where this concretization is itself the constitution and the becoming of this subject in action within the verita' effettuale of the essere. The development of hegemony can be nothing other than the development of the "volgo" and the "moltitudine" into a determinate popolo, and the constitution of this "volgo" into a people is nothing other than the development and elaboration of hegemony.

Hegemony establishes a direct and intimate connection between knowledge and the subject to which it is addressed. The nature of the knowledge is determined by both the act of addressing and the subject which is addressed. The knowledge against which Machiavelli was reacting, and the liberal and bourgeois thought that Gramsci intended to supersede, presuppose not simply the existence, but also the necessary continuation, of the popular masses as a mere collection of disaggregated individuals: both assume the necessary and inevitable subordination of the people to a culturally superior group which alone is capable of moral-intellectual--and hence political--autonomy. The thought of Croce and Guicciardini, as well as the theological and metaphysical systems of the Christian and medieval conception of the world, require that the "moltitudine" remain "disgiunta" and "dissipata"--that is

their internal integrity and "dignity" demand that thought be distinct from action, and that culture maintain its distance from the popular masses. To posit thought and culture as the products of an "aristocracy of the intellect" is to posit the popular masses as morally and intellectually incompetent. Such thought, therefore, thinks of itself as emerging from itself, and thus addresses only itself--that is, it addresses alta cultura and the aristo-democracy of those who possess knowledge and who thereby rule. The integrity of thought, and the moral and intellectual freedom of those who know, necessitate that the masses be and remain mute and speechless. Since the masses are incompetent, since they are mute and speechless, the "ragionare senza usare forza o autorita'" is an activity from which they are necessarily and "naturally" excluded, an activity which properly belongs to the aristo-democracy that describes the realm of freedom wherein are located those who know and those who rule. But to exclude the masses from this realm is to relegate them to the realm of necessity, where it is precisely their subjection and subordination to "forza" and to "autorita'" that characterizes their life and practice. Thus the necessity to posit the political as force, technique, and domination.

On the other hand, the subject to which Machiavelli addresses the product of his "lunga pratica" and "continua lezione"--that is, action and thought--establishes a form of knowledge and a form of cultural life whose very existence

presupposes the transformation of the people as moral-intellectual incompetents into a coherent and purposive entity which is capable of positing for itself ends and values that are independent from those given by the established and prevailing conception of the world. The subject which is addressed by this knowledge--the popular masses--determines the nature and role of such knowledge, in the same way that the knowledge initiates the moral and intellectual reform of the "volgo" that will transform it into a self-determining subject. This form of knowledge does not see itself and think of itself as independent from practice and action, for its very emergence is contingent upon the development of the people it addresses into a subject capable of transforming the essere into a new socio-political and socio-cultural reality whose attainment is also the fulfillment of the new knowledge in the world. The knowledge acquires its particular and original character in the very act of addressing itself to the popular masses, and the popular masses acquire their moral and intellectual character as they become the active embodiment of this knowledge. To address the people is simultaneously to transform them from a "volgo" which is mute and speechless into a conscious subject which determines itself through its own autonomous activity. To address the people is to initiate the process whereby they move from the realm of necessity, within which they are subject to the "forza" and "autorita'" of the rulers who possess knowledge, towards the

realm of freedom where social and political life is grounded upon the reciprocity and mutuality of equal speech and discourse.

If, however, the addressing of the people is equivalent to the introduction of the new knowledge, and if, in addition, this knowledge is the expression and the consciousness of the people as they act within the "effective reality" of the essere, then the relation between the knowledge and the people is at once an educational and a political relation. Since both knowledge and people presuppose each other, and since the mutual interaction between the two is what establishes the movement towards the "ragionare senza usare forza o autorita'" and towards the "disputare le cose senza rispetto" (free and equal discourse), then to address the people as an intellectual and moral subject is also to establish a political and social topos where such discourse is possible. It is to establish a space where universal speech prevails and from which force and domination are excluded. The transformation of the "volgo" into an entity that posits for itself its particular moral-intellectual ends and values is at the same time the transformation of a subordinate group into a political subject whose conscious activity renders it into an entity that can and will rule.

To posit ends and values for oneself--a consequence of moral-intellectual autonomy--is also to rule oneself in the sense of self-determination and self-becoming. Thus the development of the people as a political and determinate subject is the development of a political space where discourse "sanza rispetto" is possible and where force and authority are no longer the ground of social and political life. And to exclude domination from such a space implies the proliferation of the "io a voi"/"voi a me" relation throughout the body of the people, such that the particular and narrow boundaries of the alta cultura and of the aristo-democracy are transformed into a universality whose character is not given merely in thought, but in the life and practice of the people. Domination and force are necessary precisely because the space of speech and discourse is limited and circumscribed to the narrow circle of those who possess knowledge and who rule (as defined and posited by the prevailing and established conception of the world). To rule oneself through the positing of ends for oneself is to negate domination and force, and such a negation is at the same time the destruction and over-coming of the present reality where those who rule live within one space, and those who are ruled exist within another which is subject to the authority and force of the former.

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