LEO STRAUSS'S MACHIAVELLI:

THE ART OF WRITING

A Thesis

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Animated by all of the certainty characteristic of
youth, this thesis was first begun as an effort to explain
"with the proper care" the political teaching of the late
Leo Strauss. It was not a mistake to have thought from the
outset that any serious attempt to understand Mr. Strauss
"as he understood himself" would require that one apply
to Strauss's writing the same "careful reading" which
Strauss awarded the subjects of his own study. We did,
however, err in the formulation of our objective by using
words or phrases the complexity of which we did not
initially appreciate; in particular we did not understand
the wide range of difficulties which confront those who
seek to read "with the proper care" the work of a first
rate mind. A healthy, albiet tardy respect for these
difficulties compelled us to acknowledge that our prelimi-
nary objective was too grandiose to admit of present
success. At the same time we were unwilling to abandon
completely our goal solely because the immediate actualiza-
tion of the goal was improbable. As a consequence, it
is resolved that we pursue a task which is an integral
part of the initial objective: we shall focus on a textual

analysis of but one of Strauss's books, and thereby posit necessarily tentative considerations regarding the nature of his political teaching. We select for this purpose to study Strauss's Thoughts on Machiavelli.

It is evident that we predicate this work upon an assumption that Strauss does in fact have a definite political teaching. We judge this assumption eminently valid because Strauss teaches without equivocation that social scientists must not "attempt to be neutral toward subjects the understanding of which is incompatible with neutrality."[1] Rejecting neutrality necessitates choosing action or activity; those actions which are most significant to a thoughtful man take the form of teaching.[2] Since Strauss is obviously a thoughtful social scientist, and since he rejects neutrality, it therefore is reasonable to conclude that he does in fact have a political teaching. Yet is is also evident, even to the superficial reader, that our attempt to understand either Strauss's general political teaching or his specific teaching in Thoughts on Machiavelli is fraught with a wide range of critical difficulties.[3] By way of introduction we shall establish that two of the foremost of these difficulties are: (1) the literary character of Strauss's teaching; and (2) the breadth of Strauss's scholarship. With respect to the former, we see that Strauss' thought is rendered difficult to understand by the fact that his major works are not

explicit statements of his own thought, rather they are "interpretations" of "the great books which the greatest minds have left behind."[4] We simply note here that it is not uncommon for a wise man to communicate his wisdom concerning matters politic <u>via</u> interpretations of another's work.[5] The manner and extent to which Strauss himself actually participates in the "conversation among the great minds"[6] will appear enigmatic until such time as we establish an adequate explanation of the acroamatic, or exoteric/esoteric nature of Strauss's work. It shall be the purpose of our next Chapter to investigate the literary character of Strauss's teaching and thereby initiate just such an explanation.

With respect to the second difficulty, we realize that a casual examination of Strauss's work is sufficient to establish the fact that the breadth of Strauss's scholarship is, to say the least, comprehensive. We must grapple with the complexity posed by Strauss's breadth of scholarship both with respect to the sheer volume of Strauss's total work and the extraordinary rigour of each individual work. Strauss's scholarly corpus consists of fifteen books and over eighty articles, reviews and letters.[7] We are led to appreciate the complexity of each of these works by taking seriously Jacob Klein's observation that Strauss "knew better than anyone I could possibly name" the following authors: Thucydides, Plato, Xenophon,

Aristophanes, Aristotle, Maimonides, Aquinas, Machiavelli, Spinoza, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Kant, Hegel, Nietsche, and Heidegger.[8] David Schaefer indicates the nature of each individual work by stating that "the com-pression of thought that [Strauss's] works embody is such that each of his interpretation would itself require a lengthy interpretation in order for it to be fully under-stood."[9] If, as we believe, Strauss's works do demonstrate this extraordinary "compression of thought" it would be impossible to examine adequately all of Strauss's works within the confines of our small essay. Because our decision as to which of Strauss' texts should serve as the focal point of our study was not made arbitrarily, it is proper that we here indicate several of the factors which led us to select Thoughts on Machiavelli.

From Strauss we learn that the finest form of education is "a study in which the more experienced pupils assist the less experienced pupils, including the beginners."[10] At the outset of our study we considered the academicians as "more experienced pupils" and therefore as the appropriate source for guidance; having done so we soon came to appre-ciate the understated truth of Joseph Cropsey's remark that "Mr. Strauss has long been described as controversial."[11] On the one hand, he is described as a "fanatic" whose works are inspired by a "passionate state of mind."[12] Professor Varma feels that "even as an historian of political thought

Strauss's interpretations do not seem to obtain much credence."[13] Stanley Rothman speaks for many when he asserts that "Strauss has made a fetish of the esoteric content of the writings of political philosophers."[14] Thoughts on Machiavelli is viewed as an excellent example of Strauss's absurdity; one of the more polite evaluations concludes with the observation that Strauss's "interpretation of Machiavelli seems to be rather unconvincing. It is, to some extent, inflated."[15] Opinions such as these have prompted a very reputable historian to suggest that Thoughts on Machiavelli "could have been improved by pruning and rearrangement."[16]

On the other hand, we find men of the caliber of Willmoore Kendall quoted as characterizing Strauss as "the great teacher of political philosophy, not of our time alone, but of any time since Machiavelli."[17] Schaefer supports Kendall's notion with the contention that "Strauss taught men once again how to study political philosophy, by making them aware of the depth and care which went into the writing of the great philosophic works."[18] Specifically, Thoughts on Machiavelli is seen as "an interpretation which no student of the history of ideas can afford to neglect."[19] Allan Bloom teaches that "the book is really a way of life, a sort of philosophy kit."[20] Clearly the "more experienced pupils" have drawn us into the middle of quite a heated debate surrounding both Strauss

in general and Thoughts on Machiavelli in particular.
However strident the debate may be, all reasonable com-
mentators appear to find common agreement in Dante Germino's
assessment of the breadth of Strauss's scholarship:
"Thoughts on Machiavelli is unparalleled with respect to
the exhaustive and thorough manner in which it investigates
the totality of its subject's political thought."[21]

But it is more than mere scholarly controversy that
prompted us to select Thoughts on Machiavelli as the focal
point of our study, for Strauss himself ascribes a critical
if not singular importance to his work on Machiavelli.

CHAPTER II

THE LITERARY CHARACTER OF STRAUSS'S TEACHING

Strauss observed that "generally speaking, we can
know the thought of a man only through his speeches oral
or written."[1] By aid of speech, men cause others to know
the substance of their thought; because the very defini-
tional essence of the verb "to teach" is that of "causing
one to know," it is evident that all speeches serve a
pedogogic function, that each speech reveals a teaching.
It must also be evident that our endeavor to understand
Strauss's teaching as he understood it himself cannot be
aided, for all practical purposes, by Strauss's oral
speeches. In their stead it is our intention to consider
in detail one of Strauss's written speeches, Thoughts on
Machiavelli. But just as one cannot hope to understand
an oral teaching without an understanding of the spoken
language, so too will the teaching of a book, especially
one concerning a philosophic subject matter, be understood
only by those having a certain methodological proficiency.
In other (Strauss's) words: "to begin with one must even
pay greater attention to the "form" than to the 'substance,'
since the meaning of the 'substance' depends on the 'form.'
One must postpone one's concern with the most serious

questions (the philosophic questions) in order to become engrossed in the study of a merely literary question."[2] Our present Chapter represents an effort to become engrossed in an analysis of those factors which we believe critical to a proper study of the literary character of Thoughts on Machiavelli.

Our analysis shall begin, as must all efforts to separate the "Straussian teaching" from Strauss's interpretation of Machiavelli's teaching, with a consideration of Strauss's mode of teaching (viz "interpretation"). We are not reluctant here to assert, as we shall later on try to prove, that the literary character of Strauss's teaching, and therewith his mode of teaching, is best understood as representing "a certain middle course" of action."[3] Subsequent to our examination of Strauss's mode of teaching we shall allow the remainder of our Chapter to focus on matters the consideration of which Strauss himself suggests will most readily reveal the true substance of an author's teaching. Fully aware of the objections that might be raised to our reading Strauss in such a manner, we are nonetheless persuaded that "if we open our minds, if we take seriously the possibility that he was right, we can understand him."[4] Leaving for those more competent students the task of judgement, we shall then consider Strauss's "general statements" (distilled from a variety of Strauss's texts including Thoughts on Machiavelli)

about the following: (1) the subject matter of a book and its relation to method; (2) the methodological problems facing a philosophic text which result from the tension between society and philosophy; (3) the manner and extent to which an author's intention is revealed by his choice of subject matter; and (4) the various hints and devices which Strauss thinks reveal the complete teaching of certain philosophic texts. With regard to the first three matters, each of the "general statements" shall be followed by a "specific application" of the statement to the text of Thoughts on Machiavelli. In doing so we seek to discover whether and to what extent Strauss's general methodological statements about "the great books" lend instructive direction to our effort to explain the literary character of Thoughts of Machiavelli. In a strict sense, the specific application of the "hints and devices" derived from our study of Strauss's interpretation to the text of Strauss's Thoughts on Machiavelli must be regarded as nothing less than an effort to illuminate the substance of Strauss's teaching. Since it is the express purpose of our next Chapter to do just this, the present Chapter shall restrict discussion of the various hints and devices solely to a general explanation of the Straussian terminology accompanied by such examples from the text of Machiavelli as are necessary for purposes of illustration.

Strauss indicated that the authoritative statement

about "the essential defect of writings" is made by Socrates in Plato's Phaedrus.[5] Consulting this statement, we find that Socrates revealed to his interlocutor the basis of this defect in the following manner: "once a thing is put into writing, the composition, whatever it may be, drifts all over the place, getting into the hands not only of those who understand it, but equally of those who have no business with it; it doesn't know how to address the right people, and not address the wrong."[6] Aided by this insight Phaedrus did agree that the best mode of discourse was "no dead discourse, but the living speech, the original of which the written discourse may fairly be called a kind of image."[7] However, as Strauss points out, the "greatest disadvantage" of private and oral speech is that a wise man's speech can reach only a very limited number of acquaintances, or "reasonable friends."[8] Can the wise man find no middle course between acroamatic speech (i.e., that which is told orally to chosen disciples) and a writing which "doesn't know how to address the right people and not address the wrong?" Strauss believed that the type of writing employed by "certain earlier writers"[9] achieved just such a middle course. Let us consider briefly whether and to what extent Strauss's general mode of teaching via interpretation likewise achieves a deliberate middle course.

In order to understand better the nature of Strauss's

mode of teaching we must make clear the alternatives to that mode; to this end we consider Strauss's remark that an education designed to evoke knowledge rather than opinion is always "concerned with the souls of men and therefore has little or no use for machines."[10] The true educator, being concerned with the souls of men, is of necessity concerned with the individual souls of individual men; consequently he questions those modes of teaching which demonstrate a mechanistic insensitivity to the unique progress and potential of his individual students. From this we see that Strauss's remark communicates to us his fundamental agreement with Socrates' notion that the best mode of teaching is that of oral or acroamatic speech. Yet for reasons presently unclear, Strauss chose to circumvent the "greatest disadvantage" of oral speech by leaving behind his written works. He noted, however, that his works are to be considered well written only to the extent that they are able "truly to talk, to reveal the truth, to some while leading others to salutary opinions."[11] To exaggerate for purposes of clarification, it may be said that the worse books (viz., the worse mode of teaching) are written on a single-dimensional level that speaks equally to all readers and that does not challenge to thought any but the most squalid minds. It is obvious that Strauss's books are not of the worse kind. We suggest that Strauss is able (not unlike "certain earlier thinkers") "to write

between the lines"[12] so as to strike a middle course between the simply best mode of teaching and the very worse mode: in doing so he suffers neither the "greatest disadvantage" of oral speech nor the onus of writing words which speak equally to all readers.[13]

Our suggestions is, of course, partially the result of understanding that Strauss's interpretation provides a vehicle for Strauss's own thought, that they do more than examine "the great books" in order to "ascertain what the speaker said and how he actually understood what he said."[14] The difficulty posed to us by such a mode of writing consists in the fact that it is Strauss's admitted purpose to lead different people to understand different things at different times and stages. One would be foolish, however, to assume that Strauss's teaching is devoid of any order, or that the order of his teaching is so arcane as to be evident only to its author. Just as it is true of Machiavelli, so is it also true that Strauss "was too thoughtful not to know what he was doing and too generous not to admit it to his reasonable friends."[13] Strauss provides one critical admission in the form of his "axiom" that "people write as they read."[16] Let us allow Strauss to explain his axiom:

> As a rule, careful writers are careful readers
> and <u>vice versa</u>. A careful writer wants to be
> <u>read carefully</u>. He cannot know what it means
> to be read carefully but by having done care-
> ful reading himself. Reading proceeds writing.
> . . . A man learns to write well by reading
> well good books, by reading most carefully
> books which are most carefully written. We
> may therefore acquire some previous knowledge
> of an author's habits of writing by studying
> his habits of reading.[17]

Strauss's mode of teaching is ideally suited to presenting "those rules of reading which he regarded as authoritative."[18] Bearing in mind the nature of Strauss's interpretation, let us consider Strauss's statements, both direct and indirect, about the authoritative rules of reading.

It is not accidental that Strauss begins his <u>Persecution and the Art of Writing</u> with the words "the subject matter." He taught as a general rule that one must understand the nature of the subject matter of a book before one could master the literary character of that book.[19] The subject matter of a book constrains an author to adopt, or at least in some cases to reject, certain methodological approaches. Before we can examine the nature of the subject matter particular to <u>Thoughts on Machiavelli</u> we must identify Strauss's subject matter; since "Machiavelli" is the subject of Strauss's interpretation, we shall first consider the subject matter of Machiavelli's texts.

Strauss demonstrates that Machiavelli's <u>Prince</u> and

Discourses exhibit the character of both a treatise and
a tract: "as a treatise, the book sets forth a timeless
teaching, i.e., a teaching which is meant to be true for
all times; as a tract for the times, it sets forth what
ought to be done at a particular time."[20] Strauss leads
us to understand that Machiavelli reveals the specific
subject matter of his text through his choice of form:

> Political thought which is not political
> philosophy finds its adequate expression
> in laws and codes, in poems and stories,
> in tracts and public speeches inter alia;
> the proper form of presenting political
> philosophy to the treatise.[21]

We can say at this point, reflecting the treatise/tract
duality, that the subject matter of Machiavelli's work is
both "political philosophy" and "political thought." Yet
having acknowledged that the nature of a specific subject
matter can necessitate specific methodological approaches,
we are somewhat perplexed as to whether it is political
philosophy or political thought that exercises the greater
force in determining Machiavelli's methodology. Strauss
provides the requisite guidance by means of a definitional
comparison:

> By political thought we understand the
> reflection on, or the exposition of,
> political ideas; and by a political idea
> we may understand any politically signifi-
> cant 'phantasm, notion, species, or
> whatever it is about which the mind can
> be employed in thinking' concerning the
> political fundamentals. Hence, all
> political philosophy is political thought
> but not all political thought is political
> philosophy.[22]

Given that political thought is subordinate to political philosophy, and so that we may not be accused of "debasing the name of philosophy," we must amend our previous statement to read that the most important, and as such, the subject matter of Machiavelli's work is political philosophy.

Partially on the basis of Strauss's "axiom" that "people write as they read"[23] we wish provisionally to suggest that the subject matter of Thoughts on Machiavelli also is political philosophy. It is quite reasonable to think that a man drawn, in whatever fashion, to the methodology of those texts "which he regarded as authoritative" would likewise be drawn to consider the subject matter of those authoritative texts. Proving definitely that political philosophy is indeed the subject matter of Strauss's text would be a matter "too large and too exalted" to pursue within the confines of the present study.[24] However, in order not to leave this matter exclusively at the level of assertion we shall compare what we judge to be Strauss's most explicit statement about the subject matter of Thoughts on Machiavelli with his definition of "the deeper meaning"[25] of political philosophy.

The first statement to which we refer serves as Strauss's final sentence in the "Introduction" to Thoughts on Machiavelli: "Our critical study of Machiavelli's teaching can ultimately have no other purpose than to contribute towards the recovery of the permanent problems."[26]

Being aware of permanent political problems leads one to
seek solutions to such problems or to consider "fundamental
alternatives."[27] If the consideration of alternatives
transcends the level of mere political thought (i.e., if
one is set free from a singular concern for "the particular
times"), then such a consideration becomes, in ordinary
terms, the attempt "to replace opinion about the nature of
political things by knowledge of the nature of political
things."[28] Strauss's statement, quoted above, reveals his
intention to introduce to philosophy "those who are by nature
fit for it."[29] It is with respect to just such an introduc-
tion that Strauss defined political philosophy. It is
proper that we should allow Strauss himself to speak:

> I say, "political philosophy" means primarily
> not the philosophic treatment of politics, but
> the political, or popular, treatment of philosophy,
> or the political introduction to philosophy--
> the attempt to lead the qualified citizens, or
> rather their qualified sons, from the political
> life to the philosophic life.[30]

We believe that Thoughts on Machiavelli "can ultimately
have no other purpose" than to serve as an introduction to
the philosophic life, and therefore that its subject matter
is that of political philosophy. As we have noted with
respect to Strauss's mode of teaching, we suggest that the
literary character of Strauss's work may best be understood
as steering "a certain middle course." Consequently, we
are not reticent to observe that by having "allowed"
Machiavelli to select the most grave of subject matters

for the subject matter of Stauss's own book, Strauss steers
a middle course between deciding to remain silent about
the most exalted topics, and presuming to broach in his
own name the exalted subject of political philosophy.

Having identified political philosophy as the subject
matter of Thoughts on Machiavelli it is necessary, according
to our plan, that we now consider briefly the nature of
political philosophy. Since political philosophy "culminates
in praise of the philosophic life,"[31] we are obliged to con-
sider the nature of such a life, or the tension between
society and philosophy. Once again we find a satisfactory
starting point by quoting Strauss directly and at some
length:

> Since political philosophy is a branch of
> philosophy, even the most provisional explanation
> of what political philosophy is cannot dispense
> with an explanation, however provisional, of
> what philosophy is. Philosophy, as quest for
> wisdom, is quest for universal knowledge,
> for knowledge of the whole. [Philosophy is]
> the attempt to replace opinions about the
> whole by knowledge of the whole.[32]

Yet even the most profound commitment to the philosophic
life cannot serve to alter the essentially mythical
character of "the Isles of the Blessed." To speak less
metaphorically, the contemplation of political fundamentals
cannot be wholly separated from (and consequently is in-
fluenced by) the fact that philosophers must also be
citizens or subject to the authority of various citizens
of regimes. Strauss explains that conflicting goals

produce "a fundamental disproportion between philosophy and the city."[38] The origin of such "disproportion" or tension is captured in Strauss's formula that "opinion is the element of society" and philosophy is "the attempt to dissolve the element in which society breathes, and thus it endangers society."[34] It is the duty of a citizen, as per his status as a citizen, to obey the laws of his nation, i.e., to accept as good and just the institutional definition of such. The citizen must be motivated by an unhesitating loyalty to his political system. But the philosopher, as per his status as a philosopher, is motivated by a much different force. He is committed to replacing his fellow citizens' opinions about the good and just with a knowledge of the good and just; as such the philosopher must question all opinions regardless of their fundamental or sacred status. Thus we may say that as a citizen, one is trained in the exercise of restraint while as a philosopher one is trained in the exercise of a very special form of boldness."[35] It is as true now, as it has always been, that this special boldness, and therewith the philosophic life in general, cannot long be exercised unchecked because the people and laws of all political systems dictate that a freedom to speak does not grant a license to say all things.[36] If the resolution of the tension between philosophy and the city is not to be left in the hands of the citizenry, then the philosopher must learn to reconcile his commitment to

boldness with the necessity to restrain that boldness.
While the philosopher can never live as a citizen proper,
he must acquire the means to live "side by side with the
city."[37]

Strauss teaches that philosophers exercise such means
by having the perspecacity to speak the truth only "to
benevolent and trustworthy acquaintances, or more precisely,
to reasonable friends."[38] This moderate exercise of boldness
must be employed in all philosophic speeches oral or
written. Our consideration of Strauss's subject matter
as well as the tension associated with the public discussion
of such subject matter hopefully should render more intelli-
gible our earlier suggestion that Strauss's written speeches
are not accessible to all readers alike. He describes in
general such writings as follows:

> [Philosophers] who hold this view about the
> relation of philosophy ... and society are
> driven to employ a peculiar manner of writing
> which would enable them to reveal what they
> regard as the truth to the few, without
> endangering the unqualified commitment of the
> many to the opinions on which society rests.
> They will distinguish between the true teaching
> as the esoteric teaching and the socially use-
> ful teaching as the exoteric teaching; whereas
> the exoteric teaching is meant to be easily
> accessible to every reader, the esoteric
> teaching discloses itself only to very careful
> and well trained readers after long and con-
> centrated study.[39]

Strauss welds this description of esoteric writing to an
explanation of the author's intention in writing esoterically,
namely, he says that the tension between philosophy and

society drives or compels the philosopher to communicate esoterically. In order to prepare fully an understanding of the hints and devices which allow us to separate the exoteric from the esoteric we shall first consider the manner and extent to which the very decision to write esoteric political philosophy indicates to the reader an author's intention.[40]

In general, we evalute a person's intention in order to explain the actions or activity of that person; in specific, our present consideration of intention is directed toward explaining a particular action, viz., the writing of esoteric texts by "certain earlier writers" as well as by Strauss himself. It is understandable for more than one reason that Strauss would support his contention that esoteric texts do exist with an explanation of why a man might choose to write such a text. Persecution and the Art of Writing, Strauss's methodological text par excellence, reveals such a justification in its very title. Simply stated, Strauss says that esoteric texts can be explained on the basis of an author's trying to avoid "persecution." He elaborates: "the term persecution covers a variety of phenomena, ranging from the most cruel type, as exemplifed by the Spanish Inquisition, to the mildest, which is social ostracism."[41] Strauss notes that "a glance at the biographies" of many of the great minds is "sufficient to show that they witnessed or suffered, during at least part

of their lifetimes, a kind of persecution which was more
tangible than social ostracism."[42] In other words, Strauss
teaches that in order to avoid being persecuted these
philosophers choose to leave their teaching in the form of
esoteric texts. It would be a mistake not to understand
that Strauss invests the common term "persecution" with a
most uncommon significance. For example, "social ostracism"
is a deceptively simple and effective type of persecution
despite the fact that it is not "the most cruel type."
Ostracism is generally understood to mean the exclusion of
a particular individual from the rights of citizenship; to
the extent that a man values his citizenship, the threat
of ostracism can effectively alter one's pattern of behavior.
Since the philosopher seeks to maintain citizenship in the
strictly political community as well as in "the community
of the greatest minds,"[43] he must satisfy the demands of
both groups. We have previously noted that even the most
liberal political communities demand at the minimum a
modicum of restraint, or in other words, exercise persecution.
Over and above this, it was the attitude of certain earlier
philosophers that

> the gulf separating 'the wise' and 'the
> vulgar' was a basic fact of human nature
> which could not be influenced by any progress
> of popular education: philosophy, or science,
> was essentially a privilege of 'the few.'
> They were convinced that philosophy as such was
> suspect to, and hated by, the majority of men.
> Even if they had nothing to fear from any
> particular political quarter, those who started

> from that assumption would have been driven
> to the conclusion that public communication
> of the philosophic or scientific truth was
> impossible, or undesirable, not only for the
> time being but for all times.[44]

This allows us to understand that some men might be compelled to exercise a much greater precision and complexity of style than is necessary to avoid rejection, ostracism, or persecution by the strictly political community within which they live.

We are now prepared to understand why Strauss's own Thoughts on Machiavelli might reflect certain of the "obtrusively enigmatic features"[45] which Strauss says are related to a type of persecution. In fact we do believe that the literary character of Thoughts on Machiavelli, as well as Strauss's complete teaching and intention, are best understood in light of Strauss's observations concerning the effects of persecution upon philosophic literature. The persecution to which Strauss himself was subject was not, or course, the physical or "cruel" type which we first imagine, for Strauss had successfully escaped Hitler's Germany to publish in a liberal democracy. The persecution which Strauss experienced was derived from the fact that he strived to conform to those more exacting standards befitting "the community of the greatest minds." He was obliged to adopt or adapt the essential features of certain earlier works because he had accepted the attitude or assumption which necessitated such features.[46] Strauss thought that he must write about "the most important subject

by means of 'brief indication'" in order to avoid the ill will of "the young" for whom his works are written. Despite this explanation of Strauss's intention we are not satisfied that esoteric writing is entirely grounded in the desire to avoid the negative sanctions which can accompany the attempt to communicate philosophic insight. We are not satisifed with Strauss's persecution thesis because it appears to be a manifestly incomplete treatment of the problem of intention. Let us explain by making as it were a new beginning.

Aristotle's Ethics begins with the observation that "every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and pursuit, is thought to aim at some good." The obvious converse and supplement to this statement asserts that every action or pursuit also seeks to avoid that which is not good.[47] Aristotle's explanation of the basis for human action indicates the essential framework within which to discuss the problem of intention. The avoidance/attraction distinction points to the fact that human actions can be explained, and actually must be explained, from two separate and distinct vantage points. For want of better terms we shall simply identify the two as: (1) the perspective of avoiding, rejecting, or moving away from a negative sanction; and (2) the perspective of embracing, seeking or moving toward a positive reward. It should be clear that Strauss's persecution thesis is manifestly incomplete because

it explains the writing of esoteric texts only from the perspective of the authors attempt to avoid the "negative" effects of persecution. We consider that Strauss's persecution thesis is incomplete yet not that it is incorrect precisely because we think Strauss himself understood his thesis to be provisional. In fact we think his persecution thesis is a classic example of a "first statement" from which the reader is meant to ascend toward the more complete and necessarily more complex understanding. Strauss's analysis of Machiavelli's statements concerning intention are instructive with regard to Strauss's own writing: the "most obvious and explicit, if initial and provisional statement concerning his intention guides us towards the adequate understanding of his intention, provided 'we put 2 and 2 together' or do some thinking on our own."[48] Only after concluding that Strauss's persecution thesis is designed to serve as an "initial statement" is one able to explain why the concept of persecution merits such cursory treatment in Chapters 3-5 of Persecution and the Art of Writing.[49]

An adequate understanding of Strauss's own intention must ultimately include an understanding of the positive goals which Strauss sought to achieve through his esoteric writing of political philosophy, or more particularly, through Thoughts on Machiavelli. Strauss's analyis of

Machiavelli's teaching culminates in his explaining
Machiavelli's intention on the basis of the Italian's
"desire for perpetual or immortal glory."[50] He teaches that
Machiavelli's goals are fundamentally different from those
of the classic (i.e., Aristotelian) political philosophers.
It would appear to be equally true that Machiavelli's goals
also are different from those which Strauss himself claims
to seek; as a consequence we must provisionally assume that
Strauss's own intention differs from that of Machiavelli.
It is not here necessary to our purpose, nor are we
presently capable of articulating the nature of those
positive goals which actuated Strauss's work; in other
words, we must do further "thinking on our own" before we
can understand adequately" Strauss's intention. Nonetheless,
our discussion should be sufficient to establish that
Strauss's "public explanation" of the intentions which
underlie esotericism constitute for Strauss a middle course
of action. His explanation of intention from the perspective
of avoidance or persecution begins by calling to mind the
commonplace or very "ordinary" exercise of physical cruelty.
Such is ordinary because all men have experienced pain and
therefore understand actions which seek to avoid physical
pain. Yet the more important effects of persecution as the
attempt to avoide "ostracism" (or potentially negative
evaluations of a specific type) perhaps are understood truly
only by those who have been liberated "from the desire for

petty things--comfort, riches and honors--as well as from
fear of death."[51] Thus even Strauss's explicit discussion
of his explicit explanation of intention constitutes a
middle course between silence on the one hand, and the
most sublime and consequently critical complexities on
the other hand. Beyond this it must be said that Strauss's
persecution thesis (properly understood) is only one half
of the complete explanation of intention and therefore that
his thesis constitutes a middle course between not teaching
about intentions at all and teaching all that he knew about
intentions.

The fact that Strauss's explanation of intention is
manifestly incomplete while at the same time being both
extraordinarily comprehensive and instructive offers an
example of Strauss's solution to what he must have under-
stood as "a moral dilemma."[52] Simply stated, we wonder
why Strauss took such great pains to explain a teaching the
substance of which Machiavelli had labored greatly to con-
ceal from the superficial reader and the public communication
of which Strauss himself considered destructive to the
morality of the people and the stability of the state.
Strauss explained the problem associated with revealing
the esoteric content of such texts in the context of his
analyzing Maimonides' Guide for the Perplexed: "an interpreter
who does not feel pangs of conscience when attempting to
explain the secret teaching ... lacks that essential closeness

to the subject which is indispensable for the true under-
standing of any book. Thus the question of adequate
interpretation of the Guide is primarily a moral question."[53]
Strauss justified his own interpretation of the Guide as
well as Maimonides' interpretation of the Bible partially
on the basis of the historical situation in which both
authors found themselves. Maimonides was convinced, con-
fronted by the "new Diaspora" brought about by the Romans,
that he was the last to retain a knowledge of the secrets
of the Torah. It is necessary to know that the communication
of these secrets had been strictly forbidden by the talmudic
sages. More exactly, Maimonides believed that the secrets
had previously been lost and that he was the last one to
have re-discovered the rules of reading which explained those
secrets; he also believed that the people of his age, not to
mention the future generations, desperately needed his in-
sight. "Fearing," as Strauss tells us, "that the precious
doctrine might again be lost for centuries, he decided to
commit it to writing, notwithstanding the talmudic prohibition.
But he did not act imprudently. He insisted on taking a
middle course between impossible obedience and flagrant
transgression."[54] We do not believe it to be misleading at
this point to state that we think Thoughts on Machiavelli
(and especially its literary character) is best understood
as being related to the Prince and the Discourses in a manner

quite similar to that in which the Guide for the Perplexed
is related to the Bible. It must be clear from Strauss's
remark that "today, political philosophy is in a state of
decay and perhaps of putrefaction" that Strauss considered
himself as witness to a type of "philosophic Diaspora."[55]
In other words, the historical conditions facing Strauss
were not unrelated to the type of conditions facing Maimonides.
We think these remarks are explicit enought to elaborate
adequately our point and therefore shall suspend further
consideration of the manner and extent to which the necessity
to save esoteric political philosophy might have induced
Strauss to reveal openly the literary character of the
great books.

In order to complete our discussion of the literary
character of Strauss's work it remains for us to explain
some of the specific hints and devices which Strauss claims
Machiavelli uses both to preserve and to indicate his
esoteric teaching. Since our effort is primarily aimed at
understanding Strauss's own teaching we shall not attempt
a comprehensive application of these hints and devices to
the text of the Prince and the Discourses. For our present
purposes it matters little whether we accept Strauss's
assumption that Machiavelli's works are esoteric. As far
as Strauss is concerned the texts are esoteric and if we
apply his axiom that "people write as they read," we must

allow ourselves to entertain the notion that Strauss himself
might have adopted or adapted such hints or devices as he
understood to be necessary or useful. Strauss believes that
such aids are needed to resolve the intentional contradic-
tions and obscurity of Machiavelli's texts, in fact we do
not hesitate to catagorize the _Prince_ and the _Discourses_ as
belonging to what Strauss terms the "genus of contradictory
speech."[56] Although Strauss's most explicit statements on
this subject are framed in reference to Maimonides, we find
them useful for understanding the general nature of con-
tradictory speech:

> Maimonides teaches the truth not plainly, but
> secretly; i.e., he reveals the truth to those
> learned men who are able to understand by
> themselves and at the same time he hides it
> from the vulgar. There probably is no
> better way of hiding the truth than to con-
> tradict it. Consequently, Maimonides makes
> contradictory statements about all important
> subjects; he reveals the truth by stating it,
> and hides it by contradicting it .... To
> discover the contradictions or to find out which
> contradictory statement is considered by
> Maimonides to be true, we sometimes need the
> help of hints. Recognizing the meaning of
> hints requires a higher degree of understanding
> by oneself than does the recognition of an
> obvious contradiction. Hints are supplied by
> the application of other Maimonidean devices.[57]

We shall enumerate and explain briefly thirteen such hints
or devices which Strauss thinks may be used to indicate an
esoteric teaching.

SILENCES

In the first chapter of Thoughts on Machiavelli
Strauss discloses many of the devices or hints which
Machiavelli employs. He begins his discussion with a con-
sideration not of that which Machiavelli says, but of that
which he does not say. "The rule," according to Strauss,
"which Machiavelli tacitly applies can be stated as follows:
if a wise man is silent about a fact that is commonly held
to be important for the subject he discusses, he gives us
to understand that the fact is unimportant. The silence
of a wise man is always meaningful. It cannot be explained
by forgetfulness."[58] The utility of such a practice is
indicated by the following observation: "one can express
one's disagreement with the common view by simply failing
to take notice of it; this is, in fact, the most effective
way of showing one's disapproval."[59] Strauss tells us, for
example, that in the Prince Machiavelli never speaks of the
distinction between kings and tyrants, and that he never
mentions the common good, or the conscience. Moreover, in
neither the Prince nor the Discourses does he mention "the
distinction between this world and the next, or between this
life and the next; while he frequently mentions God or the
gods, he never mentions the devil; while he frequently
mentions heaven and once paradise, he never mentions hell;
above all he never mentions the soul."[60] Machiavelli's

silence cannot of course be explained either on the basis of forgetfulness or of ignorance for these terms and concepts do appear in Machiavelli's other works. Strauss concludes that Machiavelli "suggests by this silence that these subjects are unimportant for politics ... or that the common opinion according to which these subjects are most important, is wrong."[61] Strauss contends that Machiavelli's teaching must be understood as breaking with the Biblical tradition as well as with the tradition of classical (i.e., Aristotelian) political philosophy.[62] As such Machiavelli seeks to become the "founder-captain" of an entirely new tradition.[63] It may be said that the former tradition is both religious and moral while the latter is essentially moral; it is Strauss's position that Machiavelli was both irreligious and immoral. By his deliberate silence Machiavelli indicates his true teaching and therefore we are not surprised that Strauss's fourth chapter ("Machiavelli's Teaching") derives a great deal of organizational unity from those concepts or terms about which Machiavelli is "silent."[64]

OBSCURITY OF PLAN

It is unnecessary to state that a simple and straight-forward plan or order is consonant with strictly exoteric teaching while the order of an esoteric text must be assumed to be, to say the least, more obscure. It would not be impossible for a treatise to take its plan from what is

not said as well as from that which is stated explicitly.
If an esoteric text is to be understood on the many levels
at which coherent thought is expressed, then one must con-
sider the order, development, and unity not only of the
work as a whole but also of each chapter, paragraph, and
even of the various elements comprising individual sentences.
In this regard and because of the indications given in the
first chapter of the Prince Chapters 8-11 of the Prince are
somewhat unexpected. A proper analysis of the plan of the
Prince would therefore include an explanation of why
Machiavelli neglected to mention ecclesiastical principalities
in his original enumeration of "states and dominions which
hold or have held sway over mankind." Strauss considers
it of primary importance that an interpreter fix firmly in
his mind the general plan of the text at hand. For this
reason, Paragraphs 3-6 of Strauss's own second chapter and
Paragraphs 13-16 of his third chapter detail respectively
the plan of the Prince and the plan of the Discourses.[65]
These paragraphs are quite helpful in detailing some of
the general problems associated with the obscurity of plan
characteristic of esotericism as well as the particular
problems associated with Machiavelli's texts.

EXCLUSIONS AND DIGRESSIONS

In the case of Machiavelli, exclusions and digressions
are most often related to his administration of examples.

Strauss takes great pain to illustrate the point that
Machiavelli's careful arrangement of examples both ancient
and modern serve to indicate the more sublime plan of the
Prince and Discourses. "Expressions of the type 'I wish to
leave it at ...' may be said to indicate 'exclusions,' since
they exclude from mention, or from further discussion, what
might well deserve to be, but what could not conveniently
or with propriety be, mentioned or discussed at greater
length."[66] Digressions, the opposite of exclusions, are
often indicated by remarks such as "but let us return to our
subject matter." In addition, Strauss regards as a digres-
sion "a passage which is presented as an answer to a possible
question or objection of the reader."[67] Strauss explains:

> In a digression an author discusses some-
> thing which he characterizes as not belonging
> to the subject-matter strictly understood.
> In books like the Prince and the Discourses,
> the digressions contain discussions which
> would not be required to further the primary,
> explicit, ostensible or partial intention
> but are required to further the full or true
> intention."[68]

APOSTROPHES TO THE READER

Strauss claims that one of the ways which Machiavelli
hides contradiction from superficial readers is to spread
the essential elements of his esoteric argument throughout
his text. It is possible to indicate such elements in the
form of apostrophes to the reader; if properly drawn these
apostrophes will first appear to have been made in passing,

as it were.[69] Apostrophes need not address directly the
reader; rather they are often found as parenthetical state-
ments or as qualifying clauses.

MANIFEST BLUNDERS

Manifest blunders (i.e., statements which appear to
be mistakes but are in fact intentional) are perhaps the
most ordinary and effective means of indicating an author's
intention. They are particularly effective because of the
fact that "lesser minds" are often times readily disposed
toward attributing the "blunders" of a great mind to the
same intellectual anemia with which the lesser minds have
had personal experience. In order not to misunderstand the
precision of thought and economy of expression to which some
men are capable Strauss suggests that one bear in mind the
following when reading an author such as Machiavelli: "It
is a rule of common prudence to 'believe' that all these
blunders are intentional and in each case to raise the
question as to what the blunder might be meant to signify."[70]
We hope that it will not be amiss at this point merely to
list some of the most common manifest blunders:

A. Misquotations

1. additions to the quotation.
2. omission from the quotation.

B. Misstatements

1. regarding names.
2. regarding events.

C. Authors' Self-Contradictions (i.e., repetitions and variations)

   1. direct contradiction of first statement(s).
   2. contradiction of first statement(s) by inter-
        mediary assertion.
   3. contraction of the implication(s) of first
        statement(s).
   4. repetition of first statement with an
        "apparently negligible" addition.
   5. repetition of first statement with an
        "apparently negligible" omission.

We do not have time to explain with the proper care all of

these "intentional perplexities." Strauss does, however,

note that the "simplest case of manifest blunder is the

author's self-contradiction and especially self-contradiction

on one and the same page."[71] He remarks further that "when

an author deliberately contradicts himself in a subtle

manner, he may be said to repeat an earlier statement of

his while varying it in a way which for some reason is not

easily noticed."[72] The important fact of a repetition is

thought to be "not the conventional view, constantly

repeated, which may or may not be true, but the slight

additions to, or omissions from the conventional view."[73]

Strauss points to many Machiavellian "blunders" which, if

analyzed properly, reveal such "unconventional" lessons as:

morality cannot control and ought not control political

life; the "primary distinction" between public-spirited

virtue and selfish ambition is irrelevant; the Bible has

"the cognative status of poetic fables"; and he who wishes

to institue a new political order must either crush the

people or deceive them.[74] The interpretation of manifest

blunders like those committed by Machiavelli may appear

"to confer excessive importance" on each of an author's

words and therefore seem absurd to men of little faith or

reason. Such an opinion will limit the reader to identifying

contradictions rather than to finding out "in each case

which of the two statements was considered by [the author]

to be true and which he merely used as a means of hiding

the truth."[75]

NUMBERS

Strauss did not "believe it to be accidental that the

number of chapters of the Discourses is the same as the

number of books of Livy."[76] This opinion concerning

Machiavelli's text led him to conclude "that numbers are an

important device used by him."[77] For example,

> if a given chapter presents difficulties which
> one cannot resolve by studying its context,
> one will sometimes derive help by simply
> turning to a chapter which carries the same
> number either in another book of the Discourses
> or in the Prince.[78]

Strauss makes use of this device in order to clarify the

enigmatic Prince, Chapter 26 as well as many other such

passages.[79] He demonstrates in great detail that

"Machiavelli's use of the number 26 or, more precisely,

of 13 and multiples of 13" was the key to Machiavellian

number devices. Although Thoughts on Machiavalli offers

many examples of Machiavellian number devices, nowhere

does it attempt to explain these devices. For Strauss's
remarks on this matter we must consult the second edition
of <u>History of Political Philosophy</u>.[80]   His several works
lead us to understand that Machiavelli was certainly not
the only author to employ number devices and that the
meaning which may be attributed to such devices is in-
significant compared to the utility which the number devices
have for indicating to the careful reader that his author
is capable of extraordinary precision of thought.[81]

TITLES OR BEGINNINGS

It is stated by Strauss as a general principle that
"an author may reveal his intention by the titles of his
books."[82]   The "titles" of a book must be understood as
meaning something more than the general title prefixed to
the complete work and as including chapter headings, section
titles, as well as the first word or words of chapters,
sections, etc.   Bearing this in mind Strauss devoted five
pages of his first English work to a discussion of the title
of Xenophon's <u>Hiero</u>.   Strauss introduces the subject of
Machiavelli's titles with the observation that "the titles
of Machiavelli's two books are most unrevealing .... The
same is almost equally true of the chapter headings, which
occupy an intermediate position between the titles of the
books and their substance."[83]   He then follows this
assertion with 96 lines of analysis which must be characterized

as being devoted to a discussion of Machiavellian titles.

AMBIGUOUS TERMS

The ambiguous word is most appropriately called to our attention by Strauss as a "word fitly spoken" (Proverbs 25:11). He elaborates by noting that

> this Biblical expression describes 'a speech spoken according to its two faces,' or 'a speech which has two faces, i.e., which has an exterior and an inner' face; an exterior useful, for instance, for the proper condition of human societies, and an inner useful for the knowledge of the truth.[84]

The utuility of such ambiguous words is captured in the notion that

> a secret is much less perfectly concealed by a sentence than by a word, since a word is much smaller in extent, and consequently ceteris paribus a much better hiding place than a whole sentence. This is especially true of common words, placed unobtrusively within an unobtrusive sentence.[85]

In the case of Machiavelli "the ambiguity of 'virtue' is best known." While is is not necessary for present purposes to detail the various levels of meaning which Machiavelli attributed to the word, it is sufficient to note that

> in many cases it is impossible to say what kind of virtue is meant. This obscurity is essential to Machiavelli's presentation of his teaching. It is required by the fact that the reader is meant to ascend from the common understanding of virtue to the diametrically opposite understanding.[86]

Machiavelli is also said to render equally ambiguous such
terms as "Prince," "People," "Human beings," "Heaven," and
"We."[87]

In order to bring to a close our consideration of
hints or devices we shall merely note that Strauss considers
IRONICAL REMARKS, PSEUDONYMS, INTENTIONAL SOPHISMS, and MOTTOS
to be further examples of esoteric tools.[88] We cannot
resist the temptation to indicate by way of illustration
that the middle chapters (Chapters 2-4) in Persecution and
the Art of Writing are prefixed by mottos and that the
middle instance is a quotation, in the Greek, from Aristotle.
This is bounded so to speak by quotations from W.E.H. Lecky
and Halevi. Particulars aside, in order to put into proper
perspective Strauss's suggestion that such hints or devices
point to Machiavelli's esoteric argument, we shall quote
directly from Strauss's summary remarks concerning his
suggestion:

> It would be foolish to apply this suggestion
> mechanically, for Machiavelli's devices would
> defeat his purpose if he had applied them
> mechanically. It would be almost equally
> foolish to try to establish the meaning of
> his teaching by relying exclusively or even
> chiefly on his devices. But it would also be
> imprudent to read his writings in the way in
> which they are usually read. Machiavelli's
> devices, judiciously used, lead the reader
> to the nerve of his argument. The order
> of finding is, however, not necessarily
> the order of proving.[89]

Such as this shall serve as our introduction to hints
or devices.

CHAPTER III

LITERARY DEVICES IN STRAUSS'S TEACHING

Let us return to the beginning. In the extremely brief Preface to Thoughts on Machiavelli we are told that "Chapter II of this study has been published previously in the American Political Science Review (March 1957)." Consulting this article we notice that Chapter II does indeed appear to be a reprint, for both versions are titled "Machiavelli's Intention: The Prince." A thorough comparison of the two versions reveals that, with the exception of very minor changes (many of which we attribute to the fact that the A.P.S.R. version was designed to stand alone in the journal of mainstream political science), the two versions are in substance the same article.[1] It does not, however, take a thorough comparison to notice that Chapter II departs from the A.P.S.R. version with respect to two very obvious "cosmetic" features: (1) while the substance of the Chapter II text is not essentially different from the A.P.S.R. version, the paragraphing of the text has been dramatically altered; and (2) while the A.P.S.R. version is divided into Parts each of which is preceeded by a subtitle, the Chapter II version is printed as one continuous text. These departures cause us to look at Strauss's work much closer; in doing so we discover that the A.P.S.R version is divided into 66 paragraphs and that, strangely, the Chapter II version consists in 40 paragraphs fewer, or in a total of 26 paragraphs.[2] Obviously we do not believe

it to be accidental that the number of paragraphs in the chapter which
is devoted to the _Prince_ is identical to the number of chapters in
the _Prince_. We shall soon consider in more detail that the subject
matter of the 26 paragraphs which comprise Chapter II may divided into
two distinct Parts. For our present purpose it is sufficient to note
that a content analysis of Chapter II demonstrates that this division
occurs exactly in the paragraphic middle of the chapter and that the
end of the first Part is marked by the final words of the 13th para-
graph, viz., with the expression "at the proper time and in the proper
place." The A.P.S.R. version is explicitly divided into eight separate
Parts, each of which is preceeded by a subtitle. In order to find the
substantive middle of the A.P.S.R. version we have recourse both to
the subtitles (the fifth subtitle should mark the beginning of the
second half) as well as the content analysis performed on the text of
Chapter II (the substance of the two versions being, as we have said,
essentially the same). Appreciating the ironic import of the number
26 or, more precisely of the number 13 and multiples of 13, we are
not surprised to note that the substantive middle of the A.P.S.R. ver-
sion is marked by the final words of the 26th paragraph.[3] We be-
lieve that these paragraphic manipulations, based as they are on
Machiavellian number devices, indicate from the outset something of
Strauss's own intention. By employing a seemingly casual remark, in
a Preface which is, no doubt, commonly ignored, Strauss is able to
leave for his readers a judicious "hint." The specific lesson which
Strauss thereby teaches suggests that a proper understanding of

Thoughts on Machiavelli, and consequently of Strauss's complete teach-
ing, will involve numbers and counting.

Given this particular display of Strauss's precise thought and
economy of expression we think it prudent to consider provisionally
the possibility that Strauss himself may have employed in his own
work the whole range of hints and devices which characterize Machiavelli's
work. Our task is made even more complex if we likewise consider the
possibility that Strauss's enumeration of Machiavellian devices may be
deliberately incomplete, or similarly, that a man capable of "re-discover-
ing" this special art of writing might also be capable of developing
further the more arcane aspects of that art. Obviously it is not pos-
sible within the confines of this thesis to explore all aspects of the
Straussian artistry peculiar to Thoughts on Machiavelli; instead, we
shall attempt by way of a starting point to discover the plan (i.e.,
to resolve the obscurity) of Strauss's work. Yet it should be equally
obvious that we have not the time to consider properly the plan of the
whole work; instead, we shall analyze the Straussian order, develop-
ment, and unity of Chapter II. We do not elect to do so arbitrarily.
Chapter II is unique in that it was designed to stand alone as the
public introduction to Strauss's Machiavelli. It is therefore not
inappropriate that we first seek admission to the cirlce of Strauss's
"reasonable friends" by way of the public gate. Our analysis of the
plan of Chapter II must proceed at two levels: (1) we must identify
the purely structural or procedural characteristics of Strauss's chap-
ter; and (2) we must identify the essential substantive elements of

the argument, namely, we must explain Machiavelli's intention as Strauss
understood it. In doing this we hope to demonstrate that the structure
of Strauss's Chapter II reflects some of the structural characteristics
of the Prince and thereby indicates Strauss's willingness to employ cer-
tain of Machiavelli's modes and orders. This observation will raise
the necessary further question: does Strauss also adopt Machiavelli's
"substantive" modes and orders? or in other words, in what manner and
to what extent does Strauss's teaching constitute an articulation and
differentiation of Machiavelli's teaching? After discussing the plan
of Chapter II we shall begin to consider this question by first attempt-
ing to explain the fundamental thrust of Machiavelli's teaching. Such
will be done within the context of discussing Machiavelli's notion of
"virtue" and must of necessity include a treatment of the classical
or Aristotelian perspective. These considerations will lay the founda-
tion for such substantive observations about the nature of Strauss's
own teaching as we shall forward by way of conclusion.

Our analysis of the plan of "Machiavelli's Intention: the Prince"
shall begin with Strauss's first words and proceed sequentially to his
last words. Strictly speaking, the first words of Chapter II are
those of the chapter title. Strauss's chapter title should call to
mind our previous discussion of "silences" in which we noted Strauss's
contention that it was Machiavelli's intention to reject the accepted
opinions of his age, namely, to break with the Biblical tradition as
well as with the classical tradition of political philosophy. As
such Machiavelli seeks to become a "founder captain" of an entirely

new tradition.[4] Similarly, Strauss's explanation of Machiavelli's
intention is certainly contrary to the accepted opinion of our own age.
Strauss acknowledges his criticism of the literature of his col-
leagues by referring in Chapter II only once to a contemporary author--
he follows his citation with the remark that a man of intelligence
would consider the author in question a simpleton.[5] In fact it would
be more precise to say that Strauss is "silent" with regard to the
opinions of our age; thus we understand the following remark, also
quoted above, as applying to Strauss as well as to Machiavelli: "one
can express one's disagreement with the common view by simply failing
to take notice of it; this is in fact the most effective way of show-
ing one's disapproval."[6]

Our understanding of Strauss's Chapter II title led us to recall
our previous assertion concerning Machiavelli's intention and thereby
led us to discover a Straussian "silence" indicating a reflection of
Machiavelli's desire to introduce new modes and orders. But we have
also said[7] that "titles," in the strict sense, include chapter headings
or section headings, as well as the first word or words of a chapter or
section. Strauss's Chapter II begins with the words "careful writers."
We learn from Strauss (in the paragraph that begins with the words
"Right at the beginning") that the phrase "careful writers" was an
"ambiguous term" which Machiavelli used to indicate subtly his "break
with the tradition" of his age.[8] By making use of yet another
Machiavellian device (i.e., an "ambiguous term") Strauss is able to
reveal again his own intention. By using the ambiguous term Strauss

adumbrates his rejection of the accepted opinion of our age. Unlike our example of Strauss's "silence," the use of "many writers" demonstrates both a procedural and a substantive parallel to Machiavelli's own text.

At a deeper level, we understand that Machiavelli rejected the Biblical and classical modes and orders. In order to grasp fully the Machiavelli-Strauss parallel we must try to identify the propounders and the believers of the "accepted" opinions which Strauss rejects. The opinions of our age concerning Machiavelli's intention are said by Strauss in his "Introduction" to be of two varieties: (1) "the old-fashioned and simple" ; and (2) the "more sophisticated views which are set forth by the learned of our age."[9] Our exploration of Strauss's Chapter II "silence" concerning his professional colleagues provides for now a sufficient commentary concerning the latter. With respect to the former Strauss does not remain silent. We shall allow him to speak: "not the contempt for the simple opinion, nor the disregard for it, but the considerate ascent from it leads to the core of Machiavelli's thought."[10] Strauss is not contemptuous of the simple opinions and he certainly does not disregard the simple opinions concerning Machiavelli's work. We shall later return to evaluate the possibility that Strauss's Chapter II constitutes an "ascent" from the common opinion. It is here enough to observe that both of Strauss's chapters regarding Machiavelli's intention begin with Strauss considering a commonplace opinion: in the chapter devoted to the Prince (Chapter II) Strauss refers to the notion that the Prince is "scientific"

while in the chapter devoted to the _Discourses_ Strauss refers in the first sentence to the notion that the Discourses are "devoted to republics or to peoples as distinguished from princes." Our investigating the phrase "many writers" leads us to understand that Strauss's "title" is an apt indication of the subtly with which Strauss promulgates his break with the traditional understanding of Machiavelli's intention.

Having considered the title let us begin again to study the plan of Chapter II. To this end we think it is useful to outline at this point the overall plan of Chapter II as it appears to us. In the following scheme the numbers given in parentheses indicate the paragraph numbers in Strauss's text:

"Machiavelli's Intention: the _Prince_."

I. THE LITERARY CHARACTER OF THE _PRINCE_ (P's 1-13).

    A. The Twofold Character of the _Prince_ As Both
    a Treatise and a Tract (P's 1-2).
       1. treatise--conveys a general teaching
       2. tract--conveys a particular counsel

    B. The Movement of the _Prince_: Ascents and Descents (P's 3-7).
       1. _Prince_, Chs. 1-11--the various kinds of principalities
         (P's 3-4).
       2. _Prince_, Chs. 12-14--the prince and his enemies
         (P 5).
       3. _Prince_, Chs. 15-23--the prince and his subjects
         or friends (P 6).
       4. _Prince_, Chs. 24-26--prudence and chance (P 7).

    C. The Twofold Character of the _Prince_ as Both Traditional
    and Revolutionary (P's 8-13).
       1. _Prince_ as a traditional tract [the explicit particular
         counsel].
       2. _Prince_ as a traditional treatise [the explicit general teaching].
       3. _Prince_ as a revolutionary tract [the complete particular counsel].
       4. _Prince_ as a revolutionary treatise [the complete general teaching].

II. "FOUNDERS AS THE SUBJECT OF THE _PRINCE_: UNDERSTANDING
    MACHIAVELLI"S INTENTION (P's 14-26).

D. The Two Types of Founders, or New Princes (P's 14-26).
  1. imitator--the actual prince or conspirator; the man of action toward whom particular counsel is addressed.
  2. originator--"the young"; the intellectual elite for whom the general teaching is written.
E. The Founder and the Particular Counsel (P's 16-19).
  1. Machiavelli's design for Lorenzo (P's 16-17).
  2. Machiavelli's design for himself (P's 18-19).
F. The Founder and the General Teaching (P's 20-26).
  1. Machiavelli as a teacher of actual princes (P's 20-21).
  2. Machiavelli as a teacher of new princes, or "the young" (P's 22-24).
  3. Machiavelli as a founder/prophet (P's 25-26).

With respect to the purely structural and procedural aspects of Strauss's chapter we first see that Chapeter II is divided into two Parts, each of which is 13 paragraphs in length.[11] Both of the two Parts may also be divided into three distinct sections and many of these sections may be further divided into very distinct sub-sections. The paragraphic length of each of the three sections in Part I parallels almost exactly the three corresponding sections in Part II. The first section of both Parts are two paragraphs in length and serve to introduce a twofold distinction from which the subsequent sections draw organizational unity. The two distinctions are indicative of the overall thematic or substantive context of the Parts: section "A" concerns the distinction between treatise/tract and serves to introduce the subject matter of Part I, viz., the question of the literary character of the Prince; section "D" concerns the imitator/originator distinction and thereby introduces Part II and the discussion of "founders." Machiavelli employed a particular method of writing in order to conceal from the superficial reader the substance of his thought or intentions.

It is consequently reasonable that Strauss's first Part serves as the necessary prolegomenon to the "substantive" revelations in Part II. Applying sequentially the framework of analysis provided by Strauss's Part I let us consider briefly Strauss's explanation of the literary character of Machiavelli's Prince, focusing upon the order, development, and unity of the various sections.

In paragraphs 1 and 2 of section "A" Strauss explains that it is characteristic of the Prince to partake of two apparently contradictory forms: it is a treatise and a tract for the times. Strauss explains the Prince in these terms: "to the extent to which the Prince is a treatise, Machiavelli is an investigator or a teacher; to the extent to which it is a tract for the times, he assumes the role of advisor, if not a preacher."[12] One must understand Machiavelli's particular advice as part of a general teaching while his general teaching must be understood in light of the specific political situation in which Machiavelli lived. Although it is quite necessary to view Machiavelli as both a teacher and as an advisor, Machiavelli himself had no doubt that the former role was the more important. It is for this reason that Machiavelli in the Discourses characterizes the Prince as a treatise.

In general we may say that a consideration of the "movement" of an esoteric text serves the purpose of indicating the structure of the text, or of indicating the organizational plan which both hides and reveals an author's complete teaching. The movement from the common or exoteric teaching toward the philosophic or esoteric teaching is

said by Strauss to be an "ascent"; therefore, the movement of all esoteric texts may be analyzed in terms of "ascents" and "descents." Strauss devotes the second section of Part I (₽'s 3-7) to an evaluation of the movement of the Prince. His first paragraph serves as a brief introduction to the concept of "movement" and is also used to introduce Strauss's thesis that "the movement of the Prince as a whole is an ascent followed by a descent."[13] The next four paragraphs are each devoted in turn to an analysis of "ascents" and "descents" in the four parts of the Prince.

Let us consider the specific nature of Machiavellian ascents and see if such provides a useful tool for understanding the Prince. We think it accurate to say that Machiavellian ascents are marked by actions which demonstrate "not virtue but the prudent use of virtue and vice."[14] In order to understand better the movement of the Prince we have distilled from paragraphs 4 through 7 the following seven indicators of Machiavellian ascents:

(1) the movement from an exercise of passion to an exercise of reason is an ascent;

(2) the movement from a quotation which employs the vulgar (Italian) language to one which employs the refined (Latin) language is an ascent;

(3) the movement from "modern" Italian examples to "ancient" Roman examples is an ascent;

(4) the movement from the ordinary or natural to the extraordinary or new is an ascent;

(5) the movement from consideration of previously established modes and orders to a consideration of new modes and orders or of founders is an ascent;

(6) the movement from religious prudence to military prudence

is an ascent;

and (7) the movement from the acceptance of established "author-
ities" toward accepting Machiavelli himself as an authority
is an ascent.

TABLE I represents our effort to synthesize graphically the re-
lationship between and among the various parts of Machiavelli's Prince.
It is evident from TABLE I that the movement of Prince, part III paral-
lels that of Prince, part I and that the movement of Prince, part IV
parallels that of Prince, part II.[15]

By way of illustration we shall apply some of the Machiavellian
indicators of movement to the text of Prince, part I (Chapters 1-11) in
order to determine the relative "elevation" or movement of the discourse.
With respect to "a movement from modern examples to ancient examples"
(See above, #3) we find that the first two chapters of the Prince con-
tain "only contemporary or almost contemporary Italian examples" while
in CHS 4-6 ancient examples begin to preponderate. Chapter 6, the
literal middle chapter of the part, culminates in Machiavelli's list
of the four great princes of ancient times and as such marks the high
point of the first eleven chapters. The final two chapters of this part
(i.e., Prince, CHS 10-11) "contain, as did the first two chapters, only
modern examples." With respect to "a movement from established regimes
or modes to new modes or founders" (See above, #5) it suffices to note
that both the second and the last chapters of this part deal with estab-
lished regimes[16] while Chapter 6 deals with "New Dominions Which Have
Been Acquired By One's Own Arms and Ability." Briefly, with respect to
"a movement from Italian quotations to Latin quotations" (See above, #2)

TABLE I.

A GRAPHIC PRESENTATION OF

STRAUSS'S

THE MOVEMENT OF MACHIAVELLI'S PRINCE:

"ASCENTS" AND "DESCENTS"

The Various Kinds of Principalities	The Prince & His Enemies	The Prince and His Subjects of Friends	Prudence & Chance

01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11   12 13 14   15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23   24 25 26
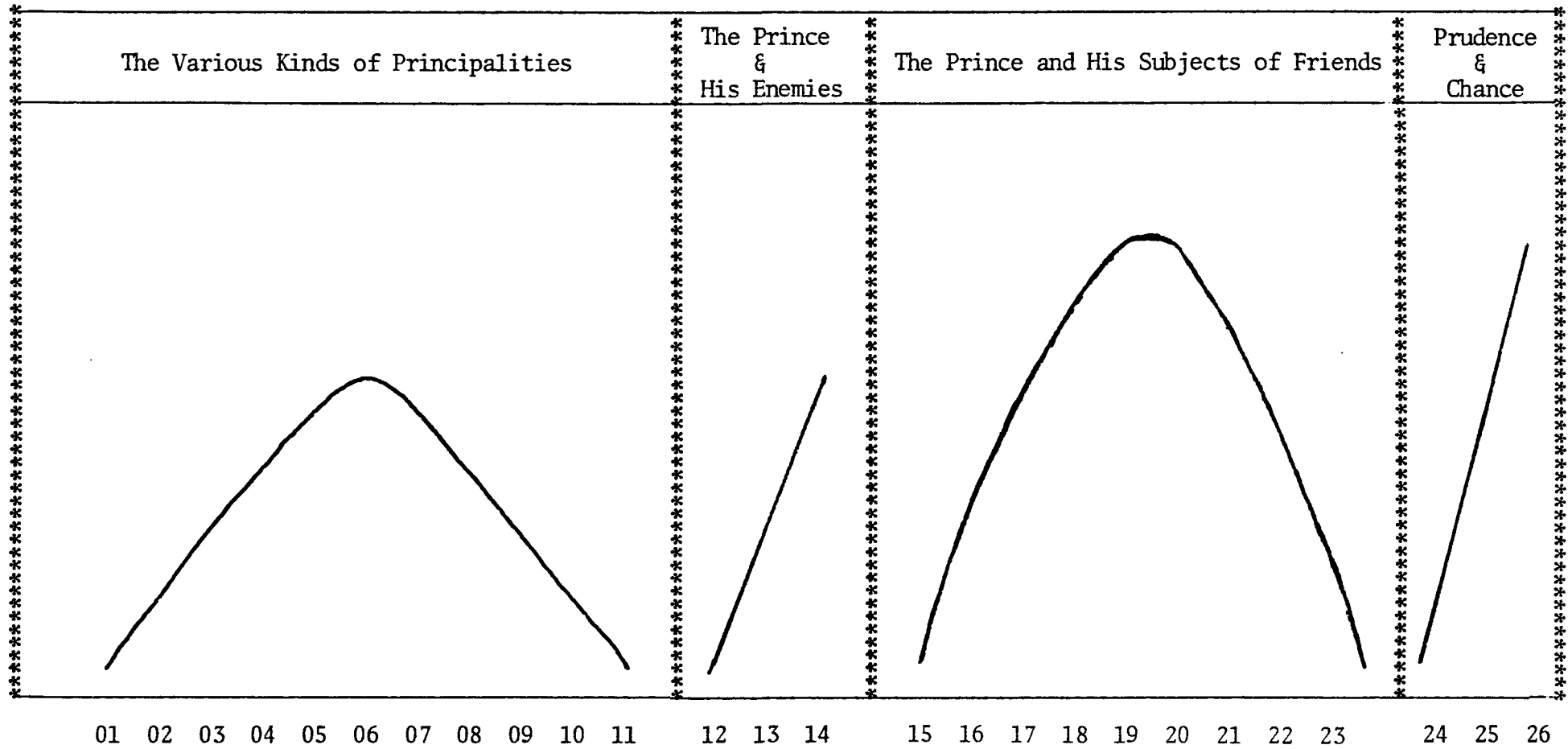
Chapter Numbers in the Prince.

Strauss notes that in Chapter 6 "there occurs the first Latin quotation."
Finally, with respect to "a movement toward accepting Machiavelli him-
self as an authority" (See above, #7) we are led to discover for our-
selves that the very first sentence of the "highest point" (i.e., of
Chapter 6) contains Machiavelli's assertion that "I bring forth very
exalted instances . . . ." Machiavelli himself therein judges or pro-
nounces that "I regard as greatest, Moses, Cyrus, Romulus, Theseus, and
their like."[18] No other chapter of Prince, part I rivals Chapter 6
for boldness, and reflecting this fact we observe the only other chapter
among the first eleven whose initial sentence contains the first person
singular pronoun is in the form of an uncharacteristically humble exclusion
stating "I will not here speak . . . .[19] We should note that Strauss
himself does not apply all of his movement indicators to each of the
four parts of the Prince; in order to witness full documentation the
reader must take Strauss's explanation of the movement in each of
Machiavelli's parts and apply it to the text of the other parts. In
other words, one "must put 2 and 2 together, or do some thinking on
one's own."

In the third section of Chapter II (P's 8-13) Strauss brings to
completion his discussion of the character of the Prince. He begins
by introducing yet another dichotomy: the Prince "has both a traditional
exterior and a revolutionary interior."[20] This distinction is for all
practical purposes the same distinction which Strauss elsewhere draws
between the exoteric and the esoteric. By combining the elements of
this distinction as well as that of our previous distinction (viz., "as

a treatise, the Prince conveys a general teaching; as a tract for the
times it conveys a particular counsel") Strauss is able to suggest that
Machiavelli wrote his text on four separate levels. One must interpret
the text in light of all four levels, that is, one must read the Prince:
(1) as a traditional tract, i.e., as providing explicit particular
counsel; (2) as a traditional treatise, i.e., as providing an explicit
general teaching; (3) as a revolutionary tract, i.e., as providing
esoteric or "complete" particular counsel; and (4) as a revolutionary
treatise, i.e., as providing an esoteric or "complete" general teaching.
Such combinations and the resulting obscurity of Machiavelli's text
are a necessary concomitant of Machiavelli's effort to construct, in
Strauss's words, a speech which is able "truly to talk, or to reveal
the truth, to some while leading others to salutary opinions."

Strauss's section "C" discussion of Machiavelli's construction
is structured such as to comprise six paragraphs. The six paragraphs
are further divided into three very definite sub-sections, each of which
is two paragraphs in length. The first sub-section (P's 8-9) serves
to reconcile in the manner just enumerated the two pairs of "opposites"
and thereby indicates the four levels of discourse which one must under-
stand prior to grasping Machiavelli's intention. The final two sub-
sections (i.e., the final four paragraphs) represent Strauss's effort
to demonstrate that the Prince can fruitfully be read at these four
levels; he does so by explaining Machiavelli's enigmatic call for the
liberation of Italy first as an example of Machiavelli's particular
counsel (P's 10-11) and secondly as an example of Machiavelli's general

teaching (¶'s 12-13). In both sub-sections Strauss's argument ascribes
to the first paragraph a discussion of the "traditional" and to the
second paragraph a discussion of the "revolutionary."

Looking closely at Strauss's text we see that paragraph 10 begins
the discussion of the explicit particular counsel by asking the very ex-
plicit question: "What precisely is the difficulty created by the counsel
given in the last chapter of the Prince?" Strauss's examination of Chap-
ter 26 points to the fact that Machiavelli's explicit discussion of the
liberation of Italy is silent as to the difficulties associated with
such an endeavor. Although he begins paragraph 11 with a reference to
Machiavelli's Chapter 26, Strauss immediately shifts his discussion to
the more revolutionary or "hidden" treatment of conquest in Prince
Chapters 3-5. Here Machiavelli is able to identify indirectly the
"base and dark" methods which Strauss associates with the complete
particular counsel: in order to liberate Italy, the prince "must not
shrink from the extermination of Italian princely families and the de-
struction of Italian republican cities whenever actions of this kind
are conducive to his end."[22] Although paragraphs 12 and 13 might appear
to continue Strauss's discussion of Machiavelli's particular counsel,
there is a shift in emphasis toward the more complex problem of Machiavelli's
general teaching.[23] The first sentence of paragraph 12 signals this shift:

> The information regarding the political prerequisites
> of the liberation of Italy is withheld in the chapter
> which is explicitly devoted to the liberation of Italy
> because Machiavelli desired to keep the noble and
> shining end untarnished by the base and dark means
> that are indispensable for its achievement.

Strauss's opening reference to "the liberation of Italy" alerts the reader to the fact that paragraph 12 is a continuation of the discussion associated with Machiavelli's enigmatic proposition. Strauss's immediate repetition of the same phrase preceeded as it is by the words "explicitly devoted" signals that Strauss here takes up the "traditional" level as opposed to the "revolutionary" with which the previous paragraph was concerned. The reference to end/means which concludes the sentence introduces what Strauss explicitly describes in the next sentence as a "teaching." Strauss's reference to teaching serves to signal the shift from particular counsel to general teaching. It is, of course, obvious that the distinction between Machiavelli's explicit and revolutionary teachings is extremely allusive in the final two paragraphs of this section. Nonetheless we have little trouble identifying the subject matter of paragraph 13 as less traditional or as more revolutionary than that of the preceeding paragraph. From Strauss's very brief discussion of Machiavelli's call for liberation we are much inclined to agree with his conclusion that "the two pairs of opposites which are characteristic of the _Prince_, namely, its being both a treatise and a tract for the time and its having both a traditional exterior and a revolutionary interior, are nicely interwoven. The _Prince_ is altogether, as Machiavelli indicates at the beginning of the second chapter, a fine web."[24]

As Part I of Strauss's Chapter II is comprised of three sections, so too is Part II comprised of three sections. The first section (P's 14-15) of Part II establishes a twofold distinction of "imitator"/"originator"

from which the remainder of Part II derives procedural unity. In support of this distinction the first section also modifies the "substantive" focus of the preceeding section (i.e., the discussion of Machiavelli's call for the liberation of Italy) by considering "new princes," or "founders," viz., those men who must in fact direct the liberation. Strauss explains the imitator/originator distinction:

> The new prince in a new state in his turn may be an imitator, i.e., adopt modes and orders invented by another new prince, or in other ways follow the beaten track. But he may also be the originator of new modes and orders, or a radical innovator, the founder of a new type of society.[25]

We have said previously that Part I establishes the fact the Machiavelli is able to speak in the Prince at four distinct levels; it may be now further said that the imitator/originator distinction identifies those types of readers whom Machiavelli seeks to address. In addressing his readers Machiavelli wishes both to teach and to advise. Machiavelli knew that some of his readers might have that rare talent to originate new modes and orders while others are able only to imitate them. In order to indicate the spectrum of Machiavelli's intention with respect to the Prince Strauss allows himself to use in the first section which begins with the explicit discussion of Machiavelli's intention only one time each of the words "imitator," "originator," "teaching," and "advise."

Machiavelli's intention is most aptly characterized, according to Strauss, as a desire to acquire and maintain that "genuine immortal glory [which] is reserved for most excellent artists or writers."[26] On the basis of his study Strauss concluded that the pleasure deriving

from honor and glory is genuine and perhaps the highest pleasure."[27]
Because he was _attracted_ to such glory Machiavelli was obliged to _avoid_
all that was destructive of his effort including the various forms of
"persecution." But the object of Machiavelli's intention necessitated
Machiavelli's dependence upon other people. Therefore, Machiavelli had
to make plans for other people as well as for himself. To the extent
that the _Prince_ is able to communicate the specifics of Machiavelli's
intention it will communicate plans for the author and for others.
Machiavelli understood his claim to glory to be grounded in his having
discovered and introduced (i.e., originated) the new modes and orders
which could liberate Italy. His effort was dependent upon chance to
the extent that both his counsel and his teaching had to be imitated by
others. In order to understand properly Machiavelli's intention one
must realize that the _Prince_ is designed to reveal the particular counsel
which is appropriate both to the imitator and the originator as well
as the general teaching which is appropriate to the imitators and the
originators. The most obvious example of Machiavelli's particular counsel
addressed to an imitator is the very explicit advice that Lorenzo imitate
Moses so that he might liberate Italy. Strauss notes, however, that "the
imitation of Moses is bad for Lorenzo; for Moses did not conquer the
promised land: he died at its borders. In this dark way, Machiavelli, the
new sibyl, prophesies that Lorenzo will not conquer and liberate Italy."[28]
Strauss suggests that the reader should understand the particular counsel
in the following light: "imitation is expected less of Lorenzo by himself
than of the illustrious house to which he belongs."[29] But the particular
counsel also reveals the intention of the one who originated the counsel,

Strauss explains:

> [Machiavelli] does not wish to hand over his share of
> political wisdom to Lorenzo as a pure gift. He desires
> to receive something in return. He desires to better
> his fortune. . . . we may say that he desires to bet-
> ter his fortune by showing Lorenzo how to better his
> fortune through becoming prince of Italy. . . . He
> dedicates the Prince to Lorenzo because he seeks
> honorable employment. He desires to become the ser-
> vant of Lorenzo. Perhaps he desires to become an
> occasional or temporary advisor to Lorenzo. [30]

Machiavelli's explicit particular counsel revealed plans for Lorenzo which

were moderate.[31] The plans for Lorenzo were moderate partially because

they did not embrace the "extremes" of vice which only an originator of

Machiavelli's character could muster. Our effort to explain Machiavelli's

intention vis-à-vis the particular counsel should illuminate somewhat the

method which also needs to be applied to Machiavelli's general teaching.

One must seek to identify the addressees of the teaching in light of the

fact that Machiavelli's work is designed to attract readers many years

past the time for which the particular counsel is relevent.

The structural aspects of the final two sections in Part II of Strauss's

chapter reflect the substantive components of Machiavelli's intention.

Section "E" (P's 16-19) is devoted to a consideration of the two types

of men to whom the particular counsel is addressed. The section may be

divided into two paragraphically equal sub-sections which correspond to

the counsel appropriate to Lorenzo the imitator (P's 16-17) and the counsel

appropriate to Machiavelli the originator (P's 18-20). Strauss emphasizes

the internal movement of section "E" from that of imitating to originating

by using in the final paragraph of the sub-section devoted to Lorenzo

(P 17) seven times the word "imitator" while remaining silent concerning the "originator."[32] In a similar fashion Strauss is completely silent concerning "imitators" in the final paragraph of the sub-section concerning Machiavelli and the particular counsel (P 19).
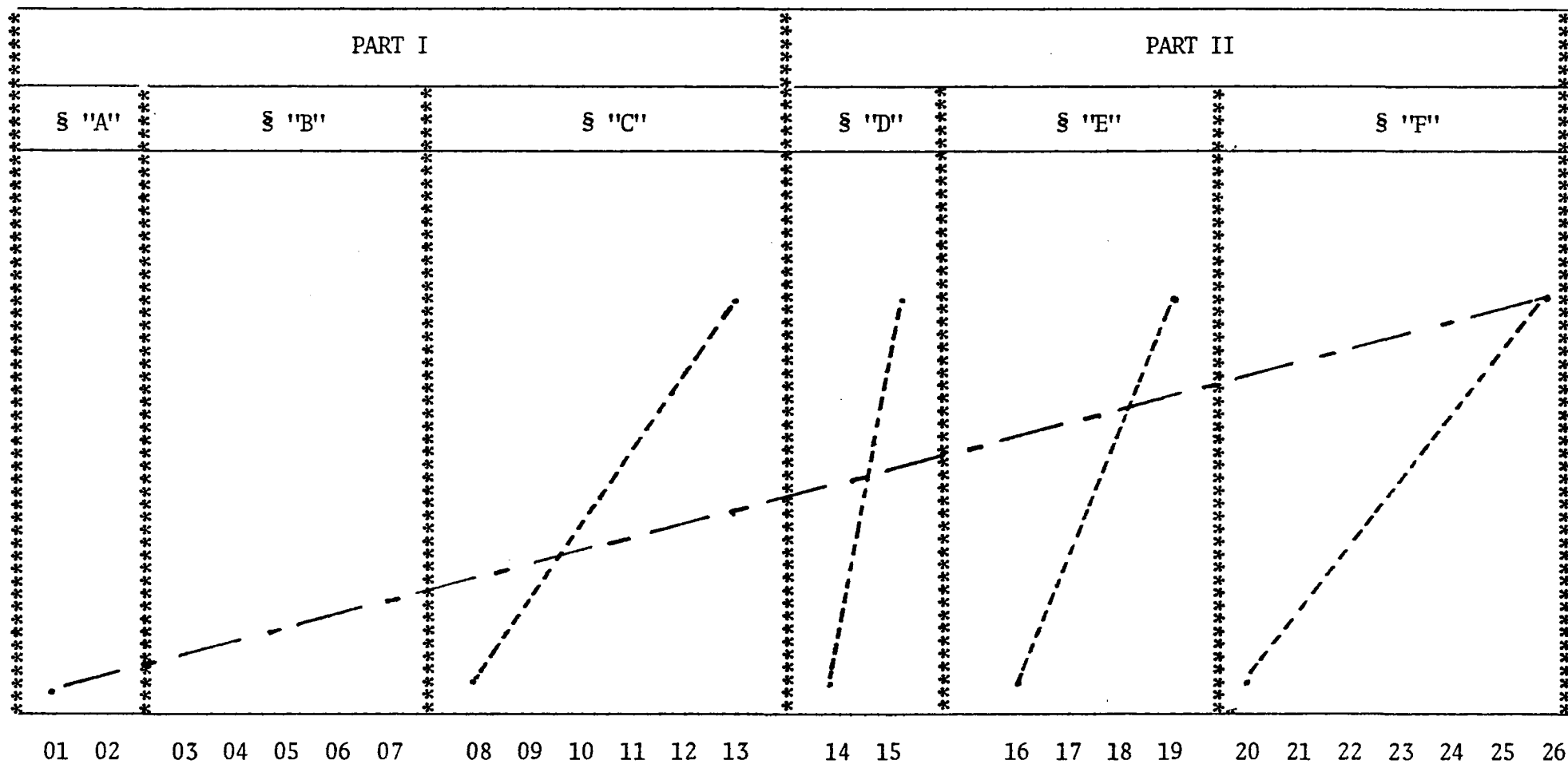
Having dedicated section "E" to the particular counsel, Strauss devotes the final section of Chpater II to a consideration of the types of men to whom the general teaching is addressed. The movement from "counsel" to "teaching" is accentuated by the fact that Strauss uses in section "E" the words "counsel" or "advice" ten times while maintaining absolute silence with respect to the word "teach." In the brief paragraph which begins section "F" Strauss ends his temporary silence by using the word "teach" five times.[33] Further examination leads to the observation that while section "E" was divided into two sub-sections corresponding to the addressees of Machiavelli's particular counsel, section "F" is similarly divided into three sub-sections corresponding to the teaching needed by: (1) princes (P's 20-21); (2) "the young" (P's '22-24); and (3) Machiavelli himself. Even with further elaboration one is able to note that the internal movement of the final section parallels that of the previous section; namely, section "F" begins with a concern for imitation and moves toward a concern for origination. We are not, therefore, surprised to note that Strauss uses in the final paragraph of the sub-section devoted to the princley teaching (P 21) thirteen times the word "imitator" while remaining silent concerning the word "originator." Likewise Strauss maintains strict silence concerning "imitators" in the final paragraph of the sub-section devoted to the general teaching as it pertains to Machiavelli.[34]

These observations have led us to believe that the movement of
Strauss's Chapter II may indeed reflect the same type of precise thought
and economy of expression which Strauss claims to be indicative of Machiavelli's
Prince. Indeed, to the extent that Strauss's own text is esoteric it
may be necessary to understand Chapter II in terms of "ascents" and "de-
scents." While a complete discussion of Straussian "ascents" and "descents"
would necessarily presuppose a precise knowledge of Straussian indicators,
and therewith of the substance of Strauss's teaching, perhaps it is not in-
appropriate to posit on the basis of our preliminary observations a ten-
tative explanation of the movement of Chapter II. Our discussion of
Strauss's Chapter II "titles" led us to mention Strauss's remark that
"the considerate ascent from [the common opinion] leads us to the core
of Machiavelli's thought."[35] In this regard we noted that Strauss's Chapter
II began with Strauss's discussion of the commonplace opinion that the
Prince is "scientific" while now we see that Strauss's Chapter II ends
with a discussion of Machiavelli as an ambitious prophet--i.e., quite
the opposite of the detached "scientist." We judge tentatively this
movement as a Straussian "ascent" because the final statement appears
to be much more consonant with the core of Machiavelli's thought than
does the first statement. Thus, the movement of Chapter II as a whole is
an ascent; we understand that Strauss's ascent is followed by a descent
if we call to mind the fact that Chapter II begins with Strauss's discus-
sion of a common opinion concerning the Discourses. In addition to the
overall ascent of Chapter II we suggest that the movement of the various
sections (as well as some of the sub-sections) which follow Strauss's

section "B" introduction to the very concept of esoteric textual move-
ment may also be characterized as an ascent followed by a descent. We
have tried to represent graphically this notion in TABLE II.

In support of our suggestion we have already noted that the first
sub-section of section "C" introduces the traditional/revolutionary di-
chotomy; that the second sub-section applies it to Machiavelli's particular
counsel; and that the third and final sub-section of "C" applies the di-
chotomy to Machiavelli's teaching. On the basis of statements in Thoughts
on Machiavelli and elsewhere we believe that the movement from political
thought (i.e., "counsel") toward political philosophy (i.e., "teaching")
constitutes for Strauss an ascent. Likewise the movement from traditional
(i.e., exoteric) toward revolutionary (i.e., esoteric) is, of course, an
ascent. Thus the movement of section "C" may be said to be an ascent.[36]
Strauss then begins section "D" by descending from the revolutionary
Machiavellian teaching to a discussion of princes who by their nature must
imitate others. It should be unnecessary to suggest that we consider as
a Straussian descent the movement form originators to imitators. The
movement of section "D" as a whole is an ascent from discussion of other
"new princes" toward discussion of Machiavelli as a prophet.[37] We sug-
gest that Strauss considers the movement toward Machiavelli in section "D"
an "ascent" in deference to that which "is truly admirable in Machiavelli:
the intrepidity of his thought, the grandeur of his vision, and the grace-
ful subtly of his speech."[38] Since both sections "E" and "F" begin with
princely imitators and move toward the Machiavellian originator we consider
the movement of these final two sections also to be an ascent followed by

TABLE II.

A TENTATIVE GRAPHIC PRESENTATION OF THE

MOVEMENT OF STRAUSS'S CHAPTER II:

"ASCENTS" AND "DESCENTS"

PART I			PART II		
§ "A"	§ "B"	§ "C"	§ "D"	§ "E"	§ "F"

```
01  02    03  04  05  06  07    08  09  10  11  12  13    14  15    16  17  18  19    20  21  22  23  24  25  26
```

Paragraph Numbers of Chapter II, <u>Thoughts on Machiavelli</u>.

a descent.

By way of concluding our preliminary discussion of the plan of Strauss's Chapter II we must remark that many of the "structural" or literary characteristics of Strauss's work parallel those of Machiavelli's Prince. Thus, Chapter II indicates Strauss's willingness to adopt some of Machiavelli's modes and orders. This conclusion raises the necessary further question: in what manner and to what extent does Strauss's teaching constitute an articulation and differentiation of Machiavelli's substantive modes and orders, namely, his teaching? If it is not already obvious, let us state in no unhesitating terms that we will not provide in the remainder of our text an answer to this question. Instead we shall hope to posit several observations which we think are a necessary part of any systematic attempt to answer this question. One cannot judge Strauss's articualtion and differentiation of Machiavelli' teaching without having some notion of the substance of Machiavelli's teaching. If Strauss is to be believed, Machiavelli's teaching is best understood in the context of his break with the Biblical and classical traditions, viz., in contradistinction to these traditions. It is for this reason that Strauss's Chapter II effort to explain "Machiavelli's Teaching" may be said to focus on the assertion "that Machiavelli's teaching is immoral and irreligious."[39] This dual charge corresponds, respectively, to Machiavelli's rejection of classical and Biblical principles and manifests itself in the fact that Chapter IV may be said to be divided into two major Parts, each of which is 43 paragraphs in length and each of which is devoted to Machiavelli's teaching concerning the fundamental tenets of one of the two traditions. Strauss

deals in the first half of Chapter IV with Machiavelli's broadside
against the Chrisitian religion and in the second half with his rejection
of classical, or more specifically, Aristotelian political philosophy.[40]
For many reasons we choose for our purposes to focus here on Machiavelli's
break with classical political philosophy, or in other words, on what
Strauss has termed the ancients vs. moderns controversy.[41] If there is
any issue concerning which the difference between ancients and moderns
is fundamental, it is with respect to the concept of virtue.

Strauss adumbrates the substance of Machiavelli's teaching con-
cerning virtue in the first paragraph of his "Introduction." The first
paragraph of the "Introduction" is comprised of three sentences. The
most striking aspect of the paragraph appears to be the unusual length
of the middle sentence--it contains 233 of the 293 total words in the first
paragraph.[42] In fact, the sentence is little more than a list of nine
"lessons" which Strauss attributes to Machiavelli. The lesson which is
fifth on Strauss's list, or the "middle" lesson, is as follows: "not
virtue but the prudent use of virtue and vice leads to happiness."
Having accustomed ourselves to counting we are gratified to note that
the assertion is exactly thirteen words long. We cannot appreciate the
bearing of Machiavelli's lesson without comparing it to the Aristotelian
teaching to which it is opposed.

We learn from Aristotle's Ethics that "happiness is an activity of
soul according to virtue."[43] According to Aristotle, moral virtue is a
mean between two extremes, an excess and a deficiency. Happiness con-
sists in choosing that mean, or in acting in accordance with virtue.

Thus we have the general paradigm:

moral vice ---------- moral virtue --------- moral vice
(deficiency)   (excess)

According to Strauss, Machiavelli changes the substance of Aristotle's

doctrine while preserving to some extent the form. Machiavelli "tacitly

rejects the view that virtue is a mean between two vices."[44] In order

not to bring about one's "ruin rather than his preservation" Machiavellian

virtue is said to involve the prudent use of virtue as well as vice."[45]

Consequently the Machiavellian paradigm is as follows:

$$\text{moral virtue} \text{---------} \begin{bmatrix} \text{Machiavellian} \\ \text{virtue} \end{bmatrix} \text{--------- moral vice}$$

Strauss utilizes this paradigmatic comparison in order to explain in

paragraphs 49 and 50 of Chapter IV Machiavelli's advice that one ought to

choose justice over injustice. Let us summarize briefly that argument.

Machiavelli opens his most comprehensive list of virtues and vices by

drawing a distinction between the use and the acquisition of property.

The opposing virtues and vices are then as follows:

> Re: the use of property
>   liberal --------------------- stingy
>
> Re: the acquisition of property
>   giving --------------------- rapacious

Machiavelli is then said to equate the virtue of justice with the virtue

of giving; because each virtue is the opposite of one vice, to be rapacious

is to be unjust. Thus,

```
            Re:  the acquisition of property
                 giving, or                    rapacious, or
                 JUST       ----------------    UNJUST
```

Machiavelli further complicates the matter by retracting in <u>Prince</u>, Chapter
XVI, his previous distinction between the acquisition and the use of proper-
ty--the distinction is ephemeral because one cannot long exercise virtue
without exercising the means to acquire further property. The final
Machiavellian formulation is as follows:

```
            Re:  Property
                 liberal, or                   stingy, or
                 giving, or  ---------------- rapacious, or
                 JUST                           UNJUST
```

On the basis of Machiavelli's advice that a wise prince sacrifice the
"virtue" of liberality to the "vice" of stinginess he is able to suggest
by indirection that the prince disregard the classical injunction to
the political virtue. Strauss explains: "Justice as the stable mean
between giving away what one has on the one hand and injustice on the
other is impossible."[46]

Strauss summarizes Machiavelli's teaching concerning virtue in this
manner:

> We must empahsize the fact, which Machiavelli has de-
> liberately obscured by his usage, that his doctrine of
> "virtue" preserves the relevance, the truth, the reality
> of the generally recognized opposition between (moral)
> virtue and (moral) vice. This fact affords perhaps the
> strongest proof of both the diabolical character and the
> sobriety of his thought.[47]

On first examination it would appear that Strauss's own thought is to

reject the substance of this Machiavellian teaching in an effort to exhume
Aristotelian political philosophy. Yet by paying very close attention to
all of Strauss's words we are made to doubt the certainty of our initial
evaluation. In the statement quoted above, for example, Strauss merely
says that the "opposition between (moral) virtue and (moral) vice" is
"generally recognized." Is this another way of identifying the common
opinion? Such suspicions cause previously strong statements to become
weak. Thus, Strauss's initial statement that Machiavelli "was a teacher
of evil" is actually said to be but an "opinion," and an "old-fashioned
and simple opinion" at that. Within the context of Strauss's discussion
of the "founder-captain" Strauss's affinity for classical thought becomes
even more obscure, even to a point where it is no longer evident at any
but the most public levels.[48] These observations having been made it
is now clear that we are indeed at the beginning, for the nature of
Strauss's complete teaching lies hidden from all but the careful reader.

NOTES

CHAPTER I

[1]Leo Strauss, Thoughts on Machiavelli, p. 20. Future references to this text shall adhere to the following format: The chapter number will be followed by the page numbers of the 1969 edition of Washington University Press; numbers in parentheses which appear before a colon or a semi-colon refer to paragraph numbers in the particular chapter under consideration (Paragraphs are numbered consecutively and begin anew with paragraph 1 at the start of each chapter); parenthetical numbers immediately following the colon indicate line numbers as counted from the top of each page; and lastly, parenthetical numbers which are preceeded by a semi-colon refer to Strauss's footnotes.

[2]Leo Strauss, Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 36 and his Note #20. Cf. Thoughts on Machiavelli, Intro. 11 (6:31-38).

[3]This statement is best framed by Leo Strauss, Liberalism Ancient and Modern, p. 3-4.

[4]Ibid., p. 3.

[5]The wary reader might call to mind the character of, among others, Book II of Aristotle's Politics, of Machiavelli's Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius, of Maimonides' Guide of the Perplexed, or of John Locke's First Treatise of Government.

[6]Liberalism Ancient and Modern, p. 7. Cf. Machiavelli's famous letter to Vettori of December 10, 1513: "On the comming of evening . . . 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 reasons for their actions; and they in their kindness answer me." in Machiavelli: The Chief Works and Others, trans. Allan Gilbert.

[7]See bibliography for complete list of Strauss's works. For a detailed publication history, including translations, see Joseph Cropsey, "Leo Strauss: A Bibliography and Memorial, 1899-1973," Interpretation. Vol. 5, No. 2 (1975).

[8]Jacob Klein, "Leo Strauss," St. John's Review, (St. John's College, Annapolis), Vol. 25, No. 4 (1974), p. 2. This thought is mirrored somewhat more allegorically by Harvey C. Mansfield: "When studying Machiavelli, every time that I have been thrown upon an uninhabitated island I thought might be unexplored, I have come across a small sign saying, 'please deposit coin.' After I comply, a large sign flashes in neon lights that would have been visible from afar, with this message: Leo Strauss was here.", "An Exchange on Strauss's Machiavelli," Political Theory, Vol. 3, No. 4 (1975), p. 372.

[9]David L. Schaefer, Jr., "The Legacy of Leo Strauss: A Bibliographic Introduction," The Intercollegiate Review, Summer (1974), p. 140.

[10]Liberalism Ancient and Modern, p. 3.

[11]Cropsey, "A Bibliography and Memorial, 1899-1973," p. 134.

[12]John H. Schaar and Sheldon S. Wolin, "Essays on the Scientific Study of Politics: A Critique," The American Political Science Review, Vol. 57, No. 1 (1963), p. 127. Or, for example, Neal Wood's opinion that Strauss's "approach to political philosophy masks a conservative political stance characterized by inegalitarian, elitist, authoritarian, and anti-democrtic sentiments, and by a nostalgic longing for a golden age that never existed." "Review of History of Political Philosophy," Political Theory, Vol. 1, No. 3 (1973), p. 343.

[13]V.P. Varma, "The Political Philosophy of Leo Strauss," The Indian Journal of Political Science, Vol. 35, No. 4 (1974), p. 309.

[14]Stanley Rothman, "The Revival of Classical Political Philosophy: A Critique," The American Political Science Review, Vol. 56, No. 2 (1962), p. 351.

[15]V.P. Varma, "The Political Philosophy of Leo Strauss," p. 299.

[16]Herbert Butterfield, "Review of Thoughts on Machiavelli," Journal of Politics, Vol. 22, No. 4 (1960), p. 730.

[17]John P. East, "Leo Strauss and American Conservatism," Modern Age, Winter (1977), p. 2. Such a view is not uncommon among Straussians, cf. Milton Himmelfarb's assertion that Strauss "was a great political philosopher in his own right. Among themselves his followers rank him if not quite as high as Plato and Aristotle, then at least as high as Locke or Burke.", "On Leo Strauss," Commentary, August (1974), p. 60.

[18]Schaefer, "The Legacy of Leo Strauss," p. 140.

[19]John H. Hallowell, "Review of Thoughts on Machiavelli," Journal of Politics, Vol. 3, No. 3 (1959) p. 302.

[20]Allan Bloom, "Leo Strauss: September 20, 1899--October 18, 1973.", Political Theory, Vol. 2, No. 4 (1974), p. 390.

[21]Dante Germino, "Second Thoughts on Strauss's Machiavelli," Journal of Politics, Vol. 28, November (1966), p. 795.

CHAPTER II

^{1}Leo Strauss, The City and Man, p. 50.

^{2}Ibid., p. 52. Cf. Leo Strauss, Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 78.

^{3}Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 48. Cf. Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, 1106b 1-34; and Thoughts on Machiavelli, IV 237(47), IV 239-244(50-51). Also, see above, Note No. 1 in Chapter I for explanation of citation format.

^{4}Persecution and the Art of Writing, pp. 154-152. Cf. Thoughts on Machiavelli, Intro 13(9:17-21).

^{5}The City and Man, p. 52. Cf. Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 47.

^{6}Plato, Phaedrus, 275e.

^{7}Ibid., p. 276a.

^{8}Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 25. See also Ibid., p. 23, Note No. 4 and The City and Man, p. 54, Note No.5.

^{9}Leo Strauss, What is Political Philosophy?, p. 221.

^{10}Leo Strauss, Liberalism Ancient and Modern, p. 25. See also p. 24 regarding the natural limits to such an education.

^{11}The City and Man, p. 54.

^{12}Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 24.

[13]It is not necessary to note at this point that one's decision to teach by means of interpretation constitutes a mean between: (1) not communicating the substance of one's thought whatsoever, and (2) communicating that thought in a direct or explicit fashion. We believe that such is not unrelated to the Socratic profession of ignorance in the face of the most important subject matters. Cf. Plato, Apology of Socrates, 23a-c.

[14]Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 143. Note the provisional nature that Strauss ascribes to this definition.

[15]Thoughts on Machiavelli, Intro 11. Cf. Ibid., I 36 (25:21-23) "... to discover from his writings what he regarded as the truth is hard: it is not impossible."

[16]Persecution and the Art of Writing, pp. 144. 25, and 61. See also What is Political Philosophy?, p. 230.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Thoughts on Machiavelli, I, 29-30(17).

[19]Persecution, p. 7. See also Strauss's discussion of "the first questions to be addressed to a book" at p. 147. Strauss adopts from his own book such method as is indicated: he begins the "introduction" with an investigation of the subject matter of his own book; Part I of Chapter 3 ("The Literary Character of the Guide for the Perplexed") is titled "The Subject Matter"; and Part I ("The Literary Character of the Kuzari") begins with discussion of the subject matter of the Kuzari.

[20]Thoughts on Machiavelli, II 62 (8). Cf. Ibid., II 54-62(1-9).

[21]What is Political Philosophy?, p. 12. Note that the specific form used to discourse concerning the [one] philosophic truth is listed in the singular while the forms used to describe political thought all appear in the plural. See also Strauss's remark that "a political thinker who is not a philosopher is primarily interested in, or attached to, a specific order or policy; the political philosopher is primarily interested in, or attached to, the truth." Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] See above, Note No. 16.

[24] Cf. Machiavelli, Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius, III 35.

[25] Cf. What is Political Philosophy?: "the deeper meaning @ pp. 93-94 with "the ordinary meaning" @ pp. 10-12.

[26] Thoughts on Machiavelli, Intro 14 (12:33-35). The irony of Strauss having placed his "final" statement about this matter at the end of his "Introduction" should be evident from the discussion below.

[27] Ibid.

[28] What is Political Philosophy?, pp. 11-12.

[29] The City and Man, p. 54.

[30] What is Political Philosophy?, pp. 93-94. See also note about "those to whom such books are truly addressed" at Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 36.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid., pp. 10-11.

[33] Liberalism Ancient and Modern, p. 14.

[34] What is Political Philosophy?, p. 221

[35] Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 37.

[36] Just as private discourse must always be directed by a sense of propriety and decency, so too must public discourse be marked by prudence or wisdom. The death of Socrates and Thucydides' Melian Dialogue provide two ancient examples in support of our observation. Cf. Thoughts on Machiavelli, I 33(22:29-36).

[37] Liberalism Ancient and Modern, p. 14. Cf. Persecution and the Art of Writing, pp. 126 and 139.

[38] Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 23. Cf. Thoughts on Machiavelli, Intro. II(6).

[39] What is Political Philosophy?, p. 222. See Strauss's famous remark that "If a master of the art of writing commits such blunders as would shame an intelligent high school boy, it is reasonable to assume that they are intentional, especially if the author discusses, however incidentally, the possibility of intentional blunders in writing." Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 30.

[40] Strauss notes in many places that a certain preparatory knowledge of intention must preceed the study of an author's teaching. The two chapters of Thoughts on Machiavelli devoted to "Machiavelli's Intention" (viz., the two middle chapters) preceed immediately the chapter entitled "Machiavelli's Teaching." Cf. Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 147; On Tyranny, Ch. I, p. 28; Xenophon's Socratic Discourse, p. 83; and The City and Man, p. 1.

[41] Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 32.

[42] Ibid., p. 43.

[43] Liberalism Ancient and Modern, p. 4.

[44] Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 34. Consider also the remainder of this paragraph: "They must conceal their opinions from all but philosophers, either by limiting themselves to oral instruction of a carefully selected group of pupils, or by writing about the most important subject by means of 'brief indication.'"

[45] Ibid., p. 36.

[46] Cf. Strauss's remark: "If I am not mistaken ... [w]e must not expect that liberal education can ever become universal education. It will always remain the obligation and the privilege of a minority." Liberalism Ancient and Modern, p. 24. Cf. Ibid., p. 4-5.

[47] Cf. Nicomachean Ethics, 1104b-1105b.

[48]Thoughts on Machiavelli, I 36(25).

[49]One should consult p. 165 of Persecution and the Art of Writing in order to meet the objection that the text of Persecution and the Art of Writing is not marked by a deliberate plan because of the fact that the various chapters were published separately over a period of eight years.

[50]Thoughts on Machiavelli, IV 286(80). Cf. IV 285-290 (80).

[51]Ibid.

[52]Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 55.

[53]Ibid.

[54]Ibid., p. 52. Cf. Strauss's explanation that "only the necessity of having to save the law can have caused him to break the law," p. 49.

[55]What is Political Philosophy?, p. 17. Compare Strauss's "Introduction" to the second edition of his Spinoza's Critique of Religion.

[56]Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 68. It must be considered whether identification of the "species" of Thoughts on Machiavelli as well as of the Prince and Discourses will bear witness to the parallel indicated in the preceeding paragraph.

[57]Ibid., p. 73-74.

[58]Thoughts on Machiavelli, I 30(18).

[59]Ibid. It would appear that this is a most prudent way of communicating an esoteric doctrine, or as we have quoted above, for men such as Machiavelli "to reveal what they regard as the true to the few, without endangering the unqualified commitment of the many to the opinions on which society rests." What is Political Philosophy, p. 222.

[60]Ibid., I 31(19). Cf. I 29(16), and I 28(15:22-25).

[61]Ibid. This statement must be understood in light of Machiavelli's statement that his work contains all that is important to politics. Cf. the epistles dedicatory to the Prince and the Discourses with Thoughts on Machiavelli, I 17-20(6-7).

[62]If Strauss's statement at Thoughts on Machiavelli, Intro 12 (7:11-23) is correct, it is understandable that many modern readers underestimate the import of religion and morality in discussions concerning politics. The relation was much more clear to a man, say, like Aristotle whose Politics was preceeded or introduced by the Nicomachean Ethics.

[63]See, for example, Machiavelli's Introduction to Book I of the Discourses: "Although the envious nature of men, so prompt to blame and slow to praise, makes the discovery and introduction of any new principles and systems as dangerous almost as the exploration of unknown seas and continents, yet animated by that desire which impels me to do what may prove for the common benefit of all, I have resolved to open a new route, which has not yet been followed by anyone, and may prove difficult and troublesome, but may also bring me some reward in the approbation of those who will kindly appreciate my efforts." Cf. Thoughts on Machiavelli I 47(32); II 60(6); II 82-84(25-26); III 133(32); III 137(34); III 166-170 (54-56); III 172-173(59); IV 232-234(45); IV 253(60); IV 273-274(72-73); and IV 294-295(85).

[64]See Thoughts on Machiavelli Intro 11-12(7). A two paragraph summary of the details of this position begins with the middle paragraph of Chapter Four, i.e., IV 231-232 (44-45). See in this regard discussion of: the conscience @ 193-197(15-17); providence @ IV 197-199(17-18); the common good @ IV 258-262(65-66) and @ IV 282-285(78-79); and of various additional elements concerning religion @ IV 199-231 (19-43).

[65]See our Appendix I for distillation of Strauss's remarks concerning the plan of the Prince and the Discouses. Cf. Leo Strauss, On Tyranny, p. 28 and Liberalism Ancient and Modern, p. 140.

[66]Thoughts on Machiavelli, I 45 (32).

[67]Ibid., I 46(32). See, for example, the Prince CH III, p. 14 (Max Lerner edition) or CH VIII, p. 34.

[68]Ibid., I 45(32).

[69]Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 70. The phrase is Strauss's.

[70]Thoughts on Machiavelli, I 36(26). Cf. I 35(24:19-20). See Strauss's observation that "In reading Machiavelli's books one is constantly kept wondering whether he is careful or careless in the use of terms both technical and other. We have observed so many examples of his exceeding care that we venture to make this suggestion: it is safer to believe that he has given careful thought to every word he uses than to make allowances for human weakness. Considering the difference of rank between Machiavelli and people like ourselves, the rule of reading which derives from that belief may be impracticable, since we cannot possibly comply with it in all cases. It is neverthelesss a good rule, for remembering it keeps us awake and modest or helps us to develop the habit of being in the proper mixture of both bold and cautious." I 47(33:3-14).

[71]Ibid., I 36(26). Cf. esp. Persecution and the Art of Writing, pp. 69-73.

[72]Ibid., I 42(31). Cf. I 40(30) "In a deliberate self-contradiction an author says incompatible things or, more generally stated, different things about the same subject to different people, and in some cases to the same people in different stages of their understanding. But to speak differently to different people may be said to be irony in the primary sense of the word."

[73]Persecution and the Art of Writing, p. 64.

[74]Thoughts on Machiavelli, I 43(31); I 41(31); I 41(30); and I 35-37(24 & 26).

[75]Persecution and the Art of Writing, pp. 69-70.

[76]Thoughts on Machiavelli, I 52(36). We cannot resist remarking that all modern readers were not likewise impressed. We have in mind of course R. J. McShea who noted: "There are indeed 142 chapters in The Discourses and 142 books in Livy's history; the coincidence is curious. Strauss's explanation, however, does not explain. There was in the early sixteenth century, no rule against treating of Roman history up to the time of Augustus. For Machiavelli to have done so, while pretending not to have done so, when it can so easily be seen that it has been done, is to have done nothing at all and at great inconvenience." Robert J. McShea, "Leo Strauss on Machiavelli," The Western Political Quarterly, Vol. 16, No. 4 (December 1963), p. 780.

[77]Ibid.

[78]Ibid., I 52-53(36).

[79]Ibid., I 48-53(34-36). Other examples follow throughout.

[80]"We have seen that the number of chapters of the Discourses is meaningful and has been deliberately chosen. We may thus be induced to wonder whether the number of chapters of the Prince is not also meaningful. The Prince consists of 26 chapters. Twenty-six is the numberical value of the letters of the sacred name of God in Hebrew, of the Tetragrammaton. But did Machiavelli know this? I do not know. Twenty-six equals 2 times 13. Thirteen is now and for quite some time has been considered an unlucky number, but in former times it was also and even primarily considered a lucky number. So 'twice 13' might mean both good luck and bad luck, and hence altogether: luck, fortuna. A case can be made for the view that Machiavelli's theology can be expressed by the formula Deus sive fortuna (as distinguished from Spinoza's Deus sive natura)--that is, that God is fortuna as supposed to be subject to human influence (imprecation)." Leo Strauss, "Machiavelli," History of Political Philosophy, p. 286. This is not the only instance in which Strauss's short chapter (22 pages) in the second edition provides useful additional to Thoughts on Machiavelli. After the 1958 publication of Thoughts on Machiavelli Strauss did not publish anything devoted to Machiavelli except this chapter in History of Political Philosophy and an article entitled "Machiavelli and Classical Literature" (Review of Literatures, I, No. 1, Spring 1970, pp. 7-25).

[81]Cf. _Persecution and the Art of Writing_, p. 55(1.3-6)
with _Liberalism Ancient and Modern_, p. 142.

[82]_Thoughts on Machiavelli_, I 37(27). Cf. _Persecution and The Art of Writing_, p. 77.

[83]Ibid.

[84]_Persecution and the Art of Writing_, p. 72.

[85]Ibid.

[86]_Thoughts on Machiavelli_, I 47(33).

[87]For example, the final word, "we," is said to have at
least twelve distinct meanings. See _Thoughts on Machiavelli_,
I 48(33).

[88]See _Persecution and the Art of Writing_, pp. 74-78.

[89]_Thoughts on Machiavelli_, I 53(36). In this light is
is useful to compare Strauss's parable at _Persecution and
the Art of Writing_, p. 78.

CHAPTER III

[1]Obviously we do not mean to suggest that these "minor" varia-
tions are insignificant. However, we do not think it is necessary
within the confines of this effort to speculate, for example, as to
why references to Machiavelli's texts in the A.P.S.R. version appear
as The Prince and The Discourses while in Chapter II they appear as
the Prince and the Discourses.

[2]The parallel becomes even more striking once one begins to con-
sider the fact that many of Strauss's paragraphs are extraordinarily
lengthy. In fact, the length of many of Strauss's paragraphs exceeds
that of many of the chapters in both the Prince and the Discourses.
Cf. Thoughts on Machiavelli, II 74-77 (19)--approximately 1,115 words
long with Prince, CH II--approximately 136 words or Prince, CH V--
approximately 504 words.

[3]Those words are, of course, "at the proper time and in the
proper place." Thus we see the following divisions:

	A.P.S.R. version	CH II version
"Part I"	26 paragraphs	13 paragraphs
"Part II"	40 paragraphs	13 paragraphs
Total	66 paragraphs	26 paragraphs

[4]See above, p. 31 and Note #62.

[5]Thoughts on Machiavelli, II 84 (26).

[6]Thoughts on Machiavelli, I 30 (18). See above, p. 30.

[7]See above, discussion of TITLES OR BEGINNINGS.

[8]Thoughts on Machiavelli, II 306 (; #12). It is ironic that
Strauss reveals this in a Note to the sentence which begins as fol-
lows: "While the claim to radical innovation is suggested, it is
made in a subdued manner. . ." Ibid., II 59 (6). It also ironic
that the "tradition" mentioned in Strauss's Note #12 is mentioned
for the first time in the text of the chapter (despite references in
earlier chapters) at paragraph 12. It may not be accidental that
Note #12 adumbrates the substance of paragraph 12. Cf. Ibid., II 79
(22:34) as well as our Note # 72, above.

[9]Ibid., Intro. 10(3).

[10]Ibid., Intro. 13(9). We have not the time to consider here the relationship between the Biblical/classical modes and the simple/sophisticated modes.

[11]In addition, the length of the two Parts are similar according to other measurements: Part I is 504 lines long while Part II is 480 lines long; and the "subtext" or footnotes of Part I are 35 in number while the subtext of the second Part contains 5 fewer notes.

[12]Thoughts on Machiavelli, II 56(2).

[13]Ibid., II 61(7). The formula quoted in the text is described in the last sentence of paragraph 7 (i.e., in the last sentence of section "B") as Strauss's "conclusion."

[14]Ibid., Intro. 9(1).

[15]In order to understand why our table represents the final two parts as being "higher" than the first two, Cf. Thoughts on Machiavelli, II 59-61 (6-7).

[16]Prince, CH II is titled "Of Hereditary Monarchies" and Prince, CH XI is titled "Of Ecclesiastical Principalities."

[17]Thoughts on Machiavelli, II 58(4).

[18]It is in the middle of this chapter that we also find Machiavelli's most explicit statement concerning the difficulties associated with "founders": "It must be considered that there is nothing more difficult to carry out, no more doubtful of success, no more dangerous to handle, than to initiate a new order of things."

[19]Although we do not here provide examples, it is not difficult to apply indicators #1, #4, and #6 to the text of the Prince CHS 1-11 in order to elaborate further the movement of Machiavelli's first part.

[20]Thoughts on Machiavelli, II 62 (8).

[21]The City and Man, p. 54. See above, discussion surrounding our CH II, #11.

[22]Thoughts on Machiavelli, II 67.

[23]To the extent that "all political philosophy is political thought" it is not incorrect to say that the third sub-section continues the discussion of "counsel" which began in paragraphs 10-11.

[24]Thoughts on Machiavelli, II 69 (13).

[25]Ibid., II 70-71 (15).

[26]Ibid., IV 288 (80).

[27]Ibid., IV 291 (83).

[28]Ibid., II 72 (17).

[29]Ibid., II 71 (16).

[30]Ibid., II 75 (19).

[31]Cf. Ibid., II 77 (19: 5-10).

[32]References in our text to the frequency with which Strauss uses these words (as well as the words teach, advise, and counsel) refer not only to the words themselves but to their various derivations. For example, "teach" is also equated for these express purposes with "teahcer" or "teaching."

[33]Bearing in mind Strauss's notion that "all political philosophy is political thought" it is understandable that section "E" is limited exclusively to "counsel" and that section "F" is to some extent concerned with "counsel" in addition to "teaching." In this regard Strauss uses in the third section both the words "teaching" as well as "counsel." However, given the subject matter of the final section the former word occurs almost twice as many times as the latter.

[34]In fact, in paragraph 26 Strauss employs 11 times the Machiavellian synonym for "originator." Cf. Thoughts on Machiavelli, II 71 (15).

[35]See above, our Chapter III Note #10 and the associated text.

[36]Examination of the text will demonstrate that the internal movement of the three sub-sections also constitutes an ascent followed by a descent. Compare [P 10 (the traditional counsel)——➤ P 11 (the revolutionary counsel)]——➤ [P 12 (the traditional teaching) ——➤ P 13 (the revolutionary teaching)].

[37]Cf. Thoughts on Machiavelli, III 173 (59) and Machiavelli's seventh indicator of movement.

[38]Ibid., Intro. 13 (9). Cf. at the "middle" of Strauss's discussion of intention, Ibid., III 107 (17: 3-10).

[39]Ibid., Intro. 12 (7). Cf. Ibid., IV (51).

[40]Cf. Strauss's remark in History of Political Philosophy that Machiavelli's Prince constitutes, as it were, a re-writing of Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics.

[41]Not the least of these reasons is summarized by Strauss in the following quotation: "In his teaching concerning morality and politics Machiavelli challenges not only the religious teaching but the whole philosophic teaching as well." Thoughts on Machiavelli, IV 232 (45). Cf. Ibid., IV 207-208 (26).

[42]Sentence #1 is 40 words long and sentence #3 is 30 words long.

[43]Nichomachean Ethics, 1102a.

[44]Thoughts on Machiavelli, IX 238 (48).

[45]Cf. Prince, CH XV.

[46]Thoughts on Machiavelli, IV 240 (50).

[47]Ibid., IV 242 (50).

[48]Ibid., IV 44 (31). "Foundation is, as it were, continuous foundation; not only at the beginning but 'every day,' a commonwealth needs 'new orders.' Once one realizes this, one sees the founders of a republic are its leading men throughout the ages, or its ruling class."

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APPENDIX I

LEO STRAUSS

on

THE PLAN OF MACHIAVELLI'S PRINCE AND DISCOURSES

THE PRINCE

Chapters	Subject
1-11	The various kinds of principalities
12-14	The prince and his enemies
15-23	The prince and his subjects or friends
24-26	Prudence and chance

THE DISCOURSES

Chapters	Subject
Book I*	
I, 1	Origin of cities (the most ancient antiquity)
I, 2- 8	The polity
I, 9-10	Founders
I, 11-15	Religion
I, 16-18	Founders
I, 19-24	Religion
I, 25-27	Founders
I, 28-32	Religion (gratitude)
I, 33-45	Founders (the ruling class)
I, 46-59	Religion (the multitude, plebs)
I, 60	Earliest youth
Book II**	
II, 1- 5	The Roman conquests and their consequences (viz., the reduction of the West to Eastern servility).
II, 6-10	Roman warfare in contradistinction to the kinds of warfare waged by the conquerors of the Roman Empire, by the Jews and by the Moderns.

II, 11-15	The origins
II, 16-18	The fundamental triad: infantry, artillery, cavalry
II, 19-22	The false opinions
II, 23-25	The reasons
II, 26-32	The passions
II, 33	The Ciminian Forest

Book III

III, 1-15	The Founder-Captain
III, 16-34	The moral qualities required for ruling the multitude
III, 35-49	Machiavelli' enterprise: his strategy and tactics

* The Discourses consist of 142 chapters (the Prefaces to Books I and II are not considered chapters--see Thoughts on Machiavelli, I 48). All the multiples of the number 13 are found to be centers of the various parts: 13 the middle of I, 11-15; 26 the middle of I, 25-27; 39 the middle of I, 33-45; and 52 the middle of I, 46-59.

** In reading this Book one must keep in mind Strauss's promise that "the provisional headings given to these sections will be replaced by the final formulations as soon as the necessary preparations have been completed." Thoughts on Machiavelli, Notes 315 (;#36).