

HOBBS AND GNOSIS: A CRITIQUE OF ERIC  
VOEGELIN'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

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## INTRODUCTION

The great political philosophers are those who are able to create symbols through which a society can interpret its political experience and order its existence when the symbols it has used in the past can no longer provide orientation for its experience of reality. And the greatest political philosophers are those who are able, by comparing the experiences engendering the symbols by which a society interprets its existence at various stages in its history, to understand why certain complexes of symbols have lost their ability to represent reality intelligibly and have had to be replaced. In so doing, those philosophers will also, based on their own experience, judge the degree to which the various experiences have attained a knowledge of the fundamental truths of human existence necessary for right order in man and society. They may well conclude that the present has lost insights into the structure of reality contained in past experiences and their symbolizations and that these insights must be recovered, perhaps with greater clarity, and resymbolized to restore existential order.<sup>1</sup>

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as the

medieval world view and the medieval political world disintegrated into spiritual, intellectual, and social chaos, political thinkers groped for a new understanding of man's condition that could address the problems of the age. Probably the most important and successful of these attempts was that of Thomas Hobbes, who created the set of symbols that have served as the genesis and core of modern liberalism.<sup>2</sup> As the father of liberalism, Hobbes began the tradition of political thought that has been the most successful modern ideology and from which most other modern ideologies have been at least partly derived, if only, in some cases, as reactions against it. In other words, Hobbes established basic symbols which have enabled modern man to interpret his political existence after his experience became such that the symbols of medieval Christianity no longer conveyed a truth compatible with, and explicative of, that experience.

In the twentieth century, the material and psychological ravages of two world wars and the grisly threat of nuclear annihilation have caused many thinkers to question, and often reject, the very foundations of the modern mentality. Among these was the late Eric Voegelin, who has claimed that modernity can be understood as a loss of consciousness of the truth of existence embodied in Christianity and classical Greek philosophy and the growth of a Gnostic consciousness which conceives of man

as capable of self-salvation, but which instead has brought him to brink of self-destruction. The task of political philosophy in this century, according to Voegelin, is to recover the classical-Christian experience of man as existing in tension between the divine and the mundane and to resymbolize this experience so that it will replace the Gnostic program of bringing heaven down to earth as the ordering force in political reality.<sup>3</sup>

It will have become clear that, by the criteria elucidated at the beginning of this essay, Hobbes is one of the great political philosophers, and Voegelin may be one of the greatest. Indeed, it will have become clear that the conception of political philosophy given above is a description of the methodology underlying Voegelin's interpretation of both modernity and the classical-Christian experience just adumbrated. Voegelin himself attributes this definition of political philosophy, or political science, to Plato and states that Plato's philosophy itself consisted of resymbolizing truths, now seen more clearly by himself but nevertheless not "new," experienced by earlier Greek thinkers but now lost to Greek society through the "decay" of the original symbolizations of those experiences.<sup>4</sup> Voegelin, as noted earlier, sees himself as undertaking a similar task in light of the modern crisis. My purpose is to see if he has succeeded within the framework of his conception of

political science--or at least to see to what extent one aspect of his analysis, that is, the understanding of Hobbes implied by his interpretation of modernity, has been successful. In order to do this, I plan to apply Voegelin's method of analysis to Hobbes in a detailed manner, and, in so doing, I hope to develop an interpretation of Hobbes somewhat different from others in the literature. I will use this interpretation to criticize, clarify, and extend Voegelin's interpretation of modernity and ultimately some basic elements in his overall philosophy. I will begin by explaining the ideas underlying my approach to this problem and then outline the steps to be followed in the analysis.

The analysis can begin with the question: What is the essence of liberalism? I will discuss three possible answers, and, in so doing, will establish the framework of problems which will guide my analysis of Voegelin and Hobbes. A first potential answer can be given by elaborating slightly on the description of Voegelin's interpretation of modernity given above. The nature of modernity is an attempt, or series of attempts, to immanentize, through progress of revolution, the Christian eschaton by means of some or other gnosis which will give man the knowledge necessary to save himself from his worldly condition without God's help. Voegelin generally has concentrated on analyzing the more radical or

revolutionary modern Gnosticisms, partly presumably because of his own formative experiences with Nazi persecution and partly because these represent the more obvious immediate threat to human existence generally. When he has discussed liberalism he has generally implied that it would be categorized as a relatively "conservative" progressive Gnostic movement.<sup>5</sup> The basic notion of the idea of progress as the core of, or at least one of the central elements of, liberalism, is fairly conventional and would be accepted by many political theorists today, including most liberals themselves. Not all interpreters of modern political thought, however, would agree in making the idea of progress central to liberalism. In his masterful study Politics and Vision, Sheldon Wolin writes:

In examining what the early liberals themselves had written I found myself compelled to abandon a whole set of preconceptions derived from recent commentaries. At the end I concluded that our present age has for a variety of reasons lost touch with the original temper and outlook of liberalism and hence is willing to accept at face value the vulgar caricature of liberalism offered by Marxists, romantic conservatives, "realists," and neo-orthodox theologians. Liberalism has been repeatedly characterized as "optimistic" to the point of naivete; arrogant in its conviction that human reason ought to stand as the sole authority for knowledge and action; bewitched by a vision of history as an escalator endlessly moving upwards towards greater progress; and blasphemous in endowing the human mind and will with a godlike power of refashioning man and society in entirety.

For the most part these criticisms have little or no support in the writings of the liberals. They seem plausible only because the critics have lumped together two distinct traditions of political thought: democratic radicalism and liberalism. Although the former drew inspiration from Locke, its outlook was largely moulded by eighteenth-century

rationalism and the experience of the French Revolution. Liberalism, on the other hand, had its roots in the period before the French Enlightenment. It, too, leaned heavily on the political principles of Locke, yet most important to its development are the later stages in which it was filtered through classical economics and exposed to the philosophies of David Hume and Adam Smith, two thinkers distinguished by a profound respect for the limits of reason and the pervasiveness of irrational factors in man and society. One of our tasks in the following pages is to disentangle this second tradition from the first and to show that liberalism was a philosophy of sobriety, born in fear, nourished by disenchantment, and prone to believe that the human condition was and was likely to remain one of pain and anxiety.<sup>6</sup>

Wolin goes on to describe early liberal political and economic theory using such terms as "the catechizing of repression," "voluntary self-mutilation," and so forth--metaphors hardly evocative of an optimistic, progress-oriented view of reality. He makes a strong argument that early liberalism had a relatively pessimistic view of life and especially of politics.<sup>7</sup> This is, of course, very much in contrast to the millenarian consciousness (for which the adjective "optimistic" would be an absurd understatement) that Voegelin understands as characterizing modernity. It may be that there are some fundamental differences between liberal modernity and millenarian modernity.

Voegelin would not deny that there could be important differences in temper between liberalism and the more radical ideologies--indeed, he takes care to point this out and use this fact as a basis for part of his analysis

of modernity.<sup>8</sup> But he would still argue that Hobbes and liberalism share with the overtly millenarian ideologies the same Gnostic desire to immanentize the eschaton, only that it has assumed a more moderate form in Hobbes and the liberals (which could also explain why Hobbes and the early liberals seemed relatively pessimistic).<sup>9</sup> I will argue that this analysis is partly correct, but that the situation is more complex--the Gnosticism of Hobbes and the early liberals is of a somewhat different type from that of the more radical ideologies, as well as being more moderate. In so doing, I will also clarify some of the different manifestations a Gnostic orientation can take. It might be added that, lest the impression has been given that liberalism and the rest of modernity are entirely different phenomena, the analysis will show liberalism and the other modern ideologies to have very substantial similarities which probably outweigh the differences--as would be expected if liberalism were able to fuse with other ideologies, incorporate many of their ideas into its own body of thought, and even to provide many of the basic symbols through which the other ideologies interpret political reality. But it will be seen also that there are certain fundamental differences.

Another possible answer to the problem of the essence of liberalism that seems fairly obvious, and also points out the link between Hobbes and the early liberals

(which is unfortunately often obscured by the association of liberalism with progress), is its individualism. Generally speaking, Voegelin would tend to regard this as a somewhat secondary characteristic and would say that the notion of the autonomous individual can be found in most other modern Gnostic movements, although sometimes in a very subtle form.<sup>10</sup> I intend to argue that a form of individualism is a very important part of Hobbes's philosophy, but that it has a more complicated origin than is generally recognized, and it is of a different nature than the individualism found in other modern movements. A hint at the problem can be found by looking again at the first sentence of this essay. It says "The great political philosophers . . . create symbols." I have intentionally used somewhat imprecise language. Does man create symbols, or are they given to him by reality? Or do man and reality somehow interact, with both having a part to play in the process of symbol creation? Obviously, any systematic answer to this question is well beyond the scope of this work, but I will demonstrate that this problem plays a crucial role in the development of Hobbes's own set of symbols and in the development of liberal individualism generally. Further, I will relate this aspect of Hobbes's thought back to Voegelin's discussion of symbol generation, and in so doing attempt to clarify certain other aspects of Voegelin's thought.

A third tentative answer that one might give if asked to define liberalism would revolve around the notion of sceptical reason.<sup>11</sup> Scepticism has been so often perceived as the core of liberalism that it has become quite common to attribute to the early liberals (as well as, obviously, the more recent liberals) a considerable degree of religious scepticism and even atheism. This is particularly so in the case of Hobbes.<sup>12</sup> Voegelin has made a very penetrating analysis of the origins and general characteristics of sceptical reason, but has not applied it to Hobbes. I will apply this analysis to Hobbes and show that the image of him as a sceptic, relativist, deist, or even atheist, while it contains a degree of truth, is a gross oversimplification. At the same time I will relate the results of this discussion to the earlier described problem of the Gnostic nature of modernity.

The general outline of this work should be now be clear. I will critique, clarify, and extend certain key points in Voegelin's philosophy by analyzing his discussion of modernity with regard to the differences between liberal and millenarian modernity. This will be done by focusing specifically on Thomas Hobbes as the creator of the key liberal symbolisms. The discussion of Hobbes will center on the problems of Gnostic consciousness, individualism, and sceptical reason and the symbols and experiences underlying them.

I will begin with a description of the major points in Voegelin's philosophy. After discussing his conception of political philosophy and his interpretation of the genesis of the traditional Western symbolizations of order, I will focus on his analysis of modernity and the nature of the decay of the classical-Christian symbols and their replacement with modern Gnostic symbolisms. After this I will explain his interpretation of Hobbes and its place in Voegelin's overall understanding of modernity.

The second chapter will look at several points in Voegelin's theory that I think could be clarified by a closer examination of Hobbes. Specifically, I will discuss some ambiguity and incompleteness in Voegelin's discussion of different types of Gnostic consciousness; equivalence of symbolizations and experience and the nature of symbol decay, transformation, and generation; and the relationship among man, symbols, and reality. This discussion will form the framework for my interpretation of Hobbes.

Chapter Three will analyze the basic symbols in Hobbes's political theory. After discussing the experiences--a sort of incipient scepticism, what might be called Gnostic "time dilation," and the feeling of mastery provided by the new science--underlying Hobbes's symbols, the relationships among those symbols will be elucidated. It will be seen that Hobbes's fundamental symbol--man as

the creator or symbols--underlies and draws together the secondary symbols of Science, the State of Nature, and the Leviathan State and the Kingdom of Darkness. It will also be seen that these symbols and others common to various other political movements of the time are drawn together in Hobbes's eschatology and civil theology.

I will conclude by using the analysis of Chapter Three to draw some conclusions as to the similarities shared by, and the differences between, liberal and millenarian modernity. The implications of these conclusions for Voegelin's interpretation of modernity and his political philosophy generally will then be explicated. I hope to show that the phenomenon of modern individualism is more complicated than Voegelin's analysis would indicate, and that not all of modernity is decisively structured by the intense eschatological expectations that characterized early Christianity and which resurfaced toward the end of the Middle Ages, as he appears to have concluded. In so doing I hope to clarify and extend Voegelin's brilliant and invaluable retheoretization of the history of order.

## CHAPTER I

### ERIC VOEGELIN: THE HISTORY OF ORDER AND THE ORDER OF HISTORY

This chapter, as explained earlier, will describe Eric Voegelin's political philosophy and thus serve as the framework for the rest of the thesis. The explanation will of necessity be brief and will be limited to a broad outline of Voegelin's philosophy, especially when discussing its foundations. Somewhat more detailed consideration will be given to his critique of modernity and his interpretation of Hobbes, as these relate more directly to the problems to be investigated in this work. It should certainly be mentioned that no summary of this nature can do justice to the rich, subtle, and comprehensive structure and content of Voegelin's thought.

#### An Overview of Voegelin's Philosophy

The best starting point for an outline of Voegelin's political philosophy is where Voegelin himself begins in his classic The New Science of Politics, which simultaneously sets forth his basic conception of political science and the major points in his critique of

modernity.<sup>13</sup> Every society, according to Voegelin, is ordered through various symbols with which its members can interpret their individual and collective existences. That is, certain fundamental symbols can provide the members of a society with a framework for understanding the meaning of the experiences they have as part of the society and thus for acting in a manner that will enable the society to continue to exist and to move toward the goals it has set for itself. This last sentence has hinted at the two related dimensions of the phenomenon that Voegelin has elucidated. The first he has termed "existential representation." The existential representative of a society is one whose acts, at least when he is in the role of representative (which for some societies will be all the time), will be understood as those of the whole society. Thus, for example, "the pronouncement [by the representative] of a general rule regulating an area of human life . . . will be experienced by the members of a society as the declaration of a rule with obligatory force for themselves."<sup>14</sup> Note that effective existential representation does not necessarily--indeed, historically has not usually--meant "representative" institutions of the type found in contemporary Western democracies. Indeed, the constitutional, or "elemental," in Voegelin's terminology, representative may actually fail to represent the society existentially--although not for long. In any

case, the question that should immediately present itself to any student of politics is, how is the existential representative able to gain and maintain its position-- what gives it legitimacy? Or to use Voegelin's term, under what circumstances can a society "articulate itself by producing a representative that will act for it"?<sup>15</sup>

This leads to the second dimension--transcendent representation. Every society will interpret itself, and create or appropriate symbols to express that interpretation, as a representative of transcendent truth. That is, it will experience itself as based upon some comprehensive insight into the nature of reality, or to put it differently, into the truth of existence. A person, group of persons, institution, or complex of institutions can function effectively as a society's existential representative if it is perceived as also representing that transcendent truth.<sup>16</sup>

These two concepts can be used as a starting point for an analysis of political order and disorder. It will be evident that two basic things can, and often do, go wrong with a political system. First, there can be a disagreement among the members of a society as to just what transcendent truth is, which will result in struggle and instability. Second, the conception of truth underlying the society and its political representatives can be defective, ultimately resulting, in the extreme, in

its failure to maintain itself in existence--as when, for example, a society understands itself as an analog of the cosmos and perhaps believes it can continue to exist by patterning its institutions after the rhythms of celestial and vegetative phenomena, only to find that this is no protection against foreign conquest or natural disaster.

Given that no person or society can have possession of the truth concerning existence (a point which, at present, is frequently misunderstood and which will be considered at length later), it will be evident that the first problem adumbrated above is a result of the second. Indeed, many political societies meet their end when new, or more correctly, different experiences bring into question the fundamental symbolisms upon which order in the society is based, and the society expends so much energy disputing truth and its representation that it is unable to attend to the exigencies of existence. The fundamental political problem, then, and one that in a sense will never be completely solved, is attaining an adequate insight into transcendent truth and symbolizing that truth so that it may become socially effective and serve as a source of existential order.<sup>17</sup>

Voegelin's conception of political science follows directly from the above: the task of the philosopher is to gain an experiential grasp of the truth of existence, and by comparing it to the society's understanding, or

understandings, of truth, diagnose the present ills of the political system by explicating what is wrong, missing, or poorly articulated in the current foundational symbolisms. "Theory is not just any opining about human existence in society; it rather is an attempt at formulating the meaning of existence by explicating the content of a definite class of experiences," says Voegelin. "The true order of the soul . . . furnishes the standard for measuring and classifying the empirical variety of human types as well as of the social order in which they find their expression."<sup>18</sup>

Two fundamental and related problems will arise from this methodology. The first, and the easier of the two to deal with, has to do with the symbols through which a society interprets itself. How does one understand them? Voegelin argues that, since the symbols have become a part of political reality long before the philosopher sets out to investigate them, they must be understood historically: "For man does not wait for science to have his life explained to him, and when the theorist approaches social reality he finds the field pre-empted by what may be called the self-interpretation of society."<sup>19</sup> The genesis, adoption, modification, and possible (probable, in times of political crisis) deformation of the relevant symbols must be examined. In particular, one must take note of the state of experience and knowledge in

the society at the time the symbols were created, since changes in this respect will lie at the root of the present inadequacies of the symbols. Understanding political science as a study of the history of symbolizations of order leads to the solution to the second methodological problem which will immediately present itself, namely, how does the philosopher attain, and know that he has attained, an adequate insight into transcendent truth?

Voegelin's answer would be similar, in a sense, to his answer to the first question. An understanding of the fundamental nature of reality must be gained by what amounts to a historical examination--both of one's own experiences of consciousness and those of people in the past. Voegelin begins his study of consciousness and the reality it is aware of from the concrete position of one's life experiences. It might be pointed out that this is not "existentialism," but rather simple common sense. Reflection on one's experiences should quickly lead one to the conclusion that one cannot isolate oneself from the rest of reality and that one's understanding of reality depends on virtually the entire history of the cosmos, including the various attempts to understand man's condition and the symbols generated by those attempts. There is no absolute starting point for a philosophy of consciousness, and consciousness cannot be grasped from without, but only experienced from within.<sup>20</sup>

"There is an experience of participation . . .: Man, in his existence, participates in being. . . .[but] . . . there is no such thing as a 'man' who participates in 'being' as if it were an enterprise he could as well leave alone; there is, rather, a 'something,' a part of being, capable of experiencing itself as such, and furthermore capable of using language and calling this experiencing consciousness by the name of 'man.' The calling by a name certainly is a fundamental act of evocation. . . . Nevertheless . . . it is not itself an act of cognition."<sup>21</sup>

Consciousness is best described as a process within reality that gradually "becomes luminous to itself" and is the means by which man participates in reality. "Man's conscious existence is an event within reality and man's consciousness is quite conscious of being constituted by the reality of which it is conscious."<sup>22</sup> The starting point for a philosophical understanding of the nature of man's participation in reality is to study past attempts to understand this, because man's experience and his symbolizations of those experiences, although in a sense always changing, are in another sense always constant.<sup>23</sup>

When one studies the history of these symbolizations and penetrates to the experiences, including the mystical, engendering those symbols, one finds that certain fundamental experiences recur throughout man's historical existence. In particular, it is ultimately the experience of "existence in tension" between the divine and the mundane that lies beneath all attempts to symbolize order and, therefore, leads to the constant, or

absolute, in history and consciousness, that man is able to perceive. This constant is the presence of the process of the Ground of Being that man senses in the experience of tension. This is the insight into transcendent truth that man can achieve and must symbolize adequately to establish a basis for political order. It is man's condition that he desires, indeed feels compelled, to reach out to a perfection beyond his earthly condition, but at the same time realizes that he must, and will, remain where he is. One can react to this situation with acceptance, with openness to the Beyond, which, although it can be sensed, can never be grasped, or with alienation, with attempts actually to gain control of the divine part of the tension. In any case, this experience will engender a series of symbols throughout history that are recognizably equivalent--whether Plato's metaxy, his description of man as existing in the In-Between, or St. Augustine's dualism of the amor Dei and the amor sui, or the various attempts to abolish reality and its tension, as in the Gnostic attempts to leave this world, created by an evil god, and reunite, through one's own efforts, with the good God, or as in the modern ideologies which claim to be able to abolish the evils of existence and create a terrestrial paradise through immanent action. In all cases, the experience of tension can be discerned. Voegelin concludes, then, that the test of the validity of one's perceived

insight into truth about reality and man's place in it will actually be its lack of originality.<sup>24</sup>

It has been noted already, however, that experiences of this nature will also be symbolized differently (though equivalently), and here is where the element of change in history is found. Voegelin points out that reality has many components to it and part of what occurs in the process of consciousness will be the differentiation of the various components from each other. This is why symbolizations of experience must change through time--when a new differentiating insight is achieved, the older, "compact" symbols will become inadequate and must be replaced by differentiated symbols. But differentiation is not a simple matter, and the break with compact forms of symbolization can cause considerable problems of resymbolization, resulting in confusion and deformation of symbols, leading to inadequate understandings of reality. Thus, it is only by studying the history of these differentiations that the philosopher can gain an understanding of how truth must be resymbolized to correct the misunderstandings of the present. This is the reasoning underlying Voegelin's programmatic assertion that "the order of history emerges from the history of order."<sup>25</sup>

### The Gnostic Nature of Modernity

The next problem to be investigated is what

results this analysis of first principles will yield when applied to the contemporary political situation, which for Voegelin would mean modernity in general. It has already been pointed out that the earliest societies symbolized order compactly, and it was not until later that the various fundamental constituents of reality were differentiated. Specifically, the earliest societies of the ancient Near East (as well as India and China) understood themselves as cosmic analogs. Man experienced himself as existing consubstantially with the intracosmic gods; society was a microcosmos, and man symbolized this through the cosmological myth. "Why this should be hardly requires elaborate explanations," observes Voegelin, "for earth and heaven are so impressively the embracing order into which human existence must fit itself, if it wants to survive, that the overwhelmingly powerful and visible partner in the community of being inevitably suggests its order as the model of all order, including that of man and society."<sup>26</sup> There was a notion of a hierarchy of existents, derived from the observation of differing degrees of durability:

One man lasts while others pass away, and he passes away while others last on. All human beings are outlasted by the society of which they are members, and societies pass while the world lasts. And the world not only is outlasted by the gods, but is perhaps even created by them.<sup>27</sup>

But the elements of the cosmos, including man, are

all experienced as being of the same basic nature.<sup>28</sup>

It may be wondered how the experience of existence in tension, which, it will be remembered, is a manifestation of the constant in man's history, is symbolized, or indeed whether it is actually even experienced in this situation. Voegelin would argue that the hierarchy of existents mentioned above would be an example of how this primordial experience is symbolized, albeit inadequately, as the experience remains inarticulate. "The universe and the gods assume the function of the non-existent ground; they are more cosmic than man and society," he says. "The tension of reality has been absorbed into the wholeness of the intermediate reality that we call cosmic. The In-Between of cosmic reality encloses in its compactness the tension of existence toward the ground of existence."<sup>29</sup>

When the order of existence under the cosmological myth breaks down (as it did in the West during the period of the ecumenic empires in the last few centuries B.C.), individuals may turn from the external world of the cosmos to the internal world of the psyche to find the true source of order in man and the world. As a result, when the experience of tension becomes more articulate through mystical experience and the awareness of the transcendent Ground of Being, the symbolism of the cosmological myth will become inadequate and must be replaced by symbols that differentiate man, the cosmos, and the Ground. In

only two small areas of the world did this break with the cosmological myth become complete and man's existence in tension receive full symbolization: Israel, where the new symbol of Revelation was developed; and Hellas, where Philosophy became the new symbolic form.

In Israel, Moses and the Prophets symbolized the tension of existence in the form of Revelation from Yahweh, and then gradually unfolded the implications of Yahwism to the conception of one universal transcendent God, until finally with Deutero-Isaiah the groundwork was laid for the Christian experience of a God who redeems man from his condition by participating in his suffering and under whom all men are equal. In the Greek experience, Plato and Aristotle culminated a line of development that concentrated on the human act of reaching out toward the divine and that, although it was unable to break through to the soteriological truth of Christianity, was able to explicate the process of the divine-human encounter in the metaxy, an achievement Voegelin describes as "noetic exegesis" and which he understands as the basis of political science: this is specifically how the philosopher must analyze the great theophanic events in history to elucidate their core of truth. Thus, for Voegelin, all of Western man's political existence hinges decisively on the ramifications of these two "leaps in being" which differentiated the divine from the mundane and made explicit

the nature of man's existence in tension toward the Ground.<sup>30</sup>

As has been mentioned previously, the leap in being is not an unmitigated blessing; numerous complications arise when man leaves the cosmological myth behind. Specifically, although he does not systematically collect them in one unified exposition, Voegelin discusses throughout his works six basic problems that arise in the wake of the leap in being. First, the break with the understanding of society as a microcosmos creates the problem of how to reconcile the new understanding of reality with the necessities of political existence: "The leap upward in being is not a leap out of existence."<sup>31</sup> Although man is now more fully aware of the divine perfection toward which he wants to strive, "man and society, if they want to retain their foothold in being that makes the leap into emphatic partnership [with God] possible, must remain adjusted to the order of mundane existence."<sup>32</sup> The struggle to clarify the nature of this compromise constitutes the major theme of the history of Israel, and Voegelin points to the Church of the Sacraments as the solution to the problem following the disappointment of the early Christian expectation of the Second Coming,<sup>33</sup> as well as the "second-best" polis of Plato's Laws as "a compromise concerning the degree of intensity and purity with which the idea [of the best polis] can be embodied in

an obstreperous material."<sup>34</sup> Failure to recognize the need for such a compromise--a fundamental aspect of existence in tension--has created societal disruption through the various millenarian movements that have surfaced throughout the Christian era and which, according to Voegelin, have become, in secularized form, the essence of modernity.

A second problem, and one which tends to exacerbate the effects of the first, is a tendency to regard earlier symbolizations of order as completely wrong, or in other words, to fail to see that these older symbols contain truth just as the new symbols engendered by the leap in being. The leaps in being have produced a series of "before and after" symbols which denigrate the compact symbols as forms of untruth. Voegelin observes that "new insights into the truth of order may be achieved in some respects, while the very enthusiasm and passion of the advance will cast a shroud of oblivion over discoveries of the past. Amnesia with regard to past achievement is one of the most important social phenomena."<sup>35</sup> It can easily be seen that modernity, after the development of science, has suffered from this problem no less, and probably more, than the prophets and saints of Israelite-Christian revelation and the philosophers of Hellas.

Another problem that Voegelin sees, and one the explication of which has rendered his interpretation of

Christianity in some respects controversial, is mistaking the context of a theophanic differentiating event for its content. That is, the prophets and saints of Judeo-Christianity, and to a lesser extent the Greek philosophers, have shown a tendency to interpret as included in divine revelation information which in retrospect was a product of their particular spatiotemporal situation, as for example the Israelite understanding of the fulfillment of the Covenant with Yahweh meaning successful establishment of Israel in mundane existence in Canaan. The word of God commanding spiritual exodus from cosmological civilization to freedom under God was confused with the physical exodus from Egypt to Canaan. "The human carriers of the spiritual outbursts do not always realize the narrow limits of the area directly affected by the differentiating process," comments Voegelin, "For the differentiation of consciousness indirectly affects the image of reality as a whole; and the enthusiastic discoverers of the truth are sometimes inclined to treat such secondary effects as they believe themselves to perceive, and not always correctly, as direct insights."<sup>36</sup>

This has been particularly a problem with revelation, and again the clarification of the matter has been a fundamental aspect of Israelite history, leaving, according to Voegelin, Judaism and Christianity with the "mortgages" of various world-immanent events.<sup>37</sup> This is

one reason why Voegelin is attracted to the Greek philosophers, because the less intense noetic theophany was less liable to distortion through confusion of this type.<sup>38</sup> A full discussion of this matter is beyond the scope of this work, but it does decisively affect Voegelin's interpretation of modernity and will be referred to at various places in the succeeding sections.

The fourth problem associated with a differentiated understanding of reality is that it greatly increases the uncertainty of man's existence. "The feeling of security in a 'world full of gods' is lost with the gods themselves; when the world is dedivinized, communication with the world-transcendent God is reduced to the tenuous bond of faith, in the sense of Heb. 11:1, as the substance of things hoped for and the proof of things unseen," Voegelin says. "Ontologically, the substance of things hoped for is nowhere to be found but in faith itself; and, epistemologically, there is no proof for things unseen but again this very faith."<sup>39</sup> The tenuousness of this bond, as opposed to the sensual concreteness of the world-immanent gods for man living in the compactness of the cosmological myth, can cause man to desire something more certain and either to attempt to revert to the experience of consubstantiality with the intracosmic gods, as happened in the case of Israel, or to attempt to gain actual union with God through mystical experience, as with the ancient

Gnostics, or by redivinizing the political world and giving it an ultimacy of meaning reserved in the classical-Christian experience for the transcendent only, as Voegelin has claimed modernity has attempted to do. It might be pointed out here that this problem is by no means limited to existence under conditions of differentiated consciousness. The experience of a stirring of uncertainty or of the tenuousness in this case of mundane existence, would appear to lie at the basis of the symbolism that Voegelin refers to as historiogenesis, that is, a construction of a unilinear series of historical events leading to the present circumstances of political order, so that "no independent lines . . . [will] . . . be left dangling that conceivably could lead into somebody else's present and future."<sup>40</sup> This symbol can be observed as early as the Sumerian King List and has become one of the most important elements in the modern crisis, according to Voegelin, as it has passed from the cosmological civilizations to Judeo-Christianity and thence into modernity in combination with the eschatological expectations of Christianity to become a fundamental feature of the modern gnosis.<sup>41</sup> It will be discussed in more detail shortly.

The fifth problem already has been partly introduced, and it is closely related to several of the problems already described. The leap in being not only

differentiates the world-transcendent God from the cosmos, but it also reveals a reality that is "a recognizably structured process that is recognizably moving beyond its structure." That is, the theophanic events "point toward an ultimate transfiguration of reality."<sup>42</sup> (And indeed, this has generally been perceived as the origin of a linear conception of time, despite the presence of the historiogenetic symbolism before the differentiating theophanies.) Here Voegelin parts emphatically with orthodox Christianity and places a considerable part of the blame for modernity on what he understands as a misconception on the part of St. Paul. Reality will be transfigured, Voegelin argues; it did not begin to be transfigured with Christ. The idea that the transfiguration of reality has begun with Christ has been a prime factor in producing the eschatological consciousness of the various millenarian movements that have arisen in the Christian era, including the modern Gnostic movements.<sup>43</sup> Again a discussion of this point is outside the general area of inquiry of this thesis, but it will be referred to when necessary. In any case, what cannot be disputed is that the intense eschatological consciousness of early Christianity has made a formidable impact on Western history, although it has perhaps not been as important in the case of Hobbes and liberal modernity as Voegelin might imply.

The final problem spawned by the leaps in being, and one that is of great importance for this work, concerns the problem of actually symbolizing the differentiation of consciousness involved. How does one symbolize one's experience of a transcendent God, of the Ground of Being that is wholly other from this world? To make oneself intelligible, one must use the language developed to describe the immanent world of sense experience. And in so doing, one creates a situation where symbols of transcendence can be interpreted literally, as world-immanent propositions. An obvious example of this situation would be the current creation-evolution debate. But one does not have to be an obtuse fundamentalist, whether religious or scientific, to commit this error. Voegelin argues that even the great philosophers, among them Aristotle, have fallen into this trap on occasion. The result of this occurrence will, of course, be that the symbols in question will usually become nonsense, and the knowledge of the order of being conveyed by the symbols will be lost or distorted, since those who have misunderstood the symbols will be unable, indeed will most likely not even attempt, to penetrate to the experiences underlying the symbols.<sup>44</sup> Since this matter seems to me to be of fundamental importance in a discussion of liberal modernity, I will examine it in more detail in the next chapter. For the moment, the general outline of the

problem and its place in modernity should be sufficiently clear.

The various strands of the analysis so far can now be gathered together to explicate Voegelin's interpretation of modernity. The problem of the compromise to be made between the transcendent soteriological truth of Christianity and the necessary self-interpretation of the late Roman Empire once Christianity had become the official religion of the Empire was given a (temporarily) viable solution by St. Augustine's philosophy of history which de-divinized the political sphere by dividing history into sacred, the drama of Israel and Christianity, and profane, the essentially meaningless rise and fall of empires and nations. The state now became secular and of secondary importance to the Church. Although this approach was able to contribute to discrediting the various chiliastic movements in existence at the time, which linked the end of the world to the imminent end of the Empire, by separating eschatological fulfillment from worldly political events, it also had the effect of leaving no civil theology for the new national states that began to emerge in the aftermath of the barbarian invasions.

The "vacuum" created by this situation was not felt during the first half millenium after the fall of the Empire, because the Church itself was the major undertaker

of most civil functions while the political situation in what had been the Western Empire remained unstable. But, by the high Middle Ages, the various nascent national states were starting to become powers in their own right and were soon in search of a civil theology to fill their self-interpretive needs, since the contemporary Christian philosophy of history, with its conception of secular activities as a mere "waiting for the end," was not suitable. What eventually became the new civil theology of the national realms that were finally consolidated in the fifteenth century was the Gnosticism that had been a not insignificant force during the late Roman Empire, but "had been reduced to a thin trickle of sectarian movements during the early Middle Ages" and was now again becoming a prominent phenomenon. In so doing, this gnosis provided the certainty that was desired by those who found the uncertainty of Christianity too much to bear; more explicitly, the elements of a linear conception of time and a transfiguration of reality that had already begun, while a source of further uncertainty under the Augustinian conception of history, could be most fruitfully incorporated into Gnosticism.<sup>45</sup> An excellent example is furnished by the fundamental symbols of modern Gnosticism, which according to Voegelin "govern the self-interpretation of modern political society to this day" and were created by the twelfth century monk Joachim of Flora in the course of

his speculation on an expected divine irruption which would complete the transfiguration of reality begun with Christ.

The first of these symbols is that of a third and final realm of history when perfection will be achieved. Joachim divided history into three periods: the Age of the Father, which began with Abraham; the age of the Son, beginning with Christ; and, finally, the Age of the Spirit, which Joachim thought would begin in 1260 A.D. "The three ages were characterized as intelligible increases of spiritual fulfilment," explains Voegelin. "The first age unfolded the life of the layman; the second age brought the active contemplative life of the priest; the third age would bring the perfect spiritual life of the monk."<sup>46</sup> This symbol can be recognized in the periodization of history into ancient, medieval, and modern eras; into theological, metaphysical, and positivistic understandings of the world; the three stages of Hegel's dialectic; the Nazi Third Reich, and so forth.

The second symbol is that of the leader of the age. Joachim recognized Abraham and Christ as the first two of these and expected the third to be the Dux e Babylone whom he expected to appear before the new age. Modern examples of this would be Machiavelli's Prince, Nietzsche's Overman, the various messianic leaders of the mass political movements, and so on.

The third symbol is the prophet of the new realm. Joachim is the first of these, followed by various mystics and, later, secular intellectuals who proclaim the coming of the new age. This symbol, like the others, pervades modern political and social discourse and can be seen even in such places as discussion of the future of academic disciplines, as with the prophets of the "behavioral revolution" in political science. This symbol also sometimes blends with the second; the modern "activist intellectual" would be a good example.

The fourth symbol is the community of autonomous individuals. Joachim thought that in the Age of the Spirit men would be perfect and would not need the sacramental mediation of the Church. One can see this symbol in varying degrees in Protestantism, in liberal democracy, and, most obviously, in Marx's withering away of the state, to cite some prominent cases.<sup>47</sup>

It should be emphasized at this point that these symbols are not "political ideas" with a life of their own, somehow propelling themselves from one thinker's mind to another, or from elites to masses; the experiential basis of such phenomena, Voegelin insists, must always be kept in view. (Indeed, the "history of political ideas" approach to understanding the roots of political phenomena is itself probably a symbol worthy of some investigation.) The reason why these symbols could be appropriated, albeit

often in modified form and usually more or less unconsciously, is because the thinkers and movements who appropriated them had experiences similar to that of Joachim and the chiliastic movements of the high Middle Ages: a dissatisfaction with the uncertainty of orthodox Christian doctrine and the will to believe that one has attained the knowledge necessary for certainty about one's individual and man's collective destiny. This account of the experience underlying modern Gnosticism is of course highly schematic and would need to be modified to suit particular cases, but the basic idea should be clear.

As is implied in the discussion of the symbols above, the earlier (that is, late medieval and early modern) Gnostic movements were still mainly spiritually oriented and thought in terms of a divine irruption to transfigure reality. More recently Gnosticism has become immanentized to take the form of civilizational action to bring about the perfect final realm, either through progress or revolution. (Some present-day liberals seem to advocate both: revolution abroad, where the ruling class is deemed expendable, but progress at home, where the ruling class now includes the liberals themselves.) This shift has been gradual and has been aided by the literalist deformation of Christian symbols. It can be seen in the difference between the Reformation, which Voegelin sees as the beginning of modernity, and the later

modern revolutions. Voegelin sees the Reformation as the beginning of modernity because it was the first "successful invasion of Western institutions by Gnostic movements. . . . [during which] . . . the movements which had hitherto existed in a socially marginal position--tolerated, suppressed, or underground--erupted . . . with unexpected strength on a broad front, with the result of splitting the universal church and embarking on their gradual conquest of the political institutions in the national states."<sup>48</sup>

The pattern of the Gnostic conquest of the national states' political institutions just mentioned should be discussed briefly, as it clarifies the analysis and also raises some questions pertinent to the present investigation. The first wave of Gnostic revolution had its most important effect in England and indirectly in America. It resulted in a settlement that left the state of existential representation in those countries as one of a fairly strong classical-Christian foundation, although with an admixture of Gnostic elements.<sup>49</sup> The result has been stable democracies with what amount to semi-secularized Protestant civil theologies. It should be added that the foundation of traditional Western experience, symbols, and institutions has been slowly eroded by the Gnostic elements in those countries' existential makeup. In particular, the confusion of the

symbols of the above mentioned civil theologies for analytical concepts in political science has made effective theoretical analysis of politics all but impossible.<sup>50</sup> Additionally, the creation by liberal ideology of a Gnostic "dream world," where dangers to the Western democracies' existence "will not be met by appropriate actions in the world of reality. . . .[but] . . . by magic operations in the dream world, such as disapproval, moral condemnation, declarations of intention, branding of enemies as aggressors, outlawing of war, propaganda for world peace and world government, etc." has greatly aided the societies ruled by more radical Gnostic movements.<sup>51</sup> This process has accelerated at an alarming pace, although in somewhat different directions, since Voegelin first discussed the situation in The New Science of Politics.

The Gnostic movement that culminated in the French Revolution was much more radical than that of the Puritan Revolution in England and has left France in a state of more or less unrelieved instability. The twentieth century Gnostic revolutions, based on the complete abolition of reality accomplished by the nineteenth century ideologies, have exceeded in fanaticism and horror anything previously observed in history and have created nightmare worlds where they have been most effective, in Germany and Russia, where traditional Western experience and institutions had most completely decayed; the effects of

twentieth century Gnosticism in southern Europe have been mitigated somewhat by the presence of relatively viable traditional institutions.<sup>52</sup>

It can be seen that this analysis confirms and partly explains the observation often made in comparative studies of political institutions that the nations which are the most stable and effective democracies (that is, the Anglo-American ones) actually have the most archaic political systems.

It should also be noted here that the Gnostic elements present in the Anglo-American societies are, according to Voegelin, those of liberal progressivism. But it may be useful to distinguish between early liberalism and later liberalism, after its fusion with other ideologies. In particular, the semi-secularized Protestant civil theologies, which as will be seen in the next section of this chapter, are a legacy of Hobbes's thought, have recently been under relentless attack from liberalism itself. This could indicate fundamentally different experiential origins for these phenomena. The discussion of Hobbes will attempt to clarify this matter.

Modern Gnosticism can, according to Voegelin, take three forms, each based on Christian symbolisms of perfection. The axiological, or utopian, form focuses on the state of perfection; it generally describes what the perfect world will look like but does not specify how to get

there. The teleological, or progressivist, form focuses on the movement toward perfection without describing the goal very clearly; this type of Gnosticism can actually become reactionary if the chosen vehicle of progress becomes outmoded through historical change, as in the case of present-day conservatives who insist that only a "free-market" form of capitalism is suitable as the "mainspring of human progress," long after it has become clear to more perceptive minds that the "free market" (or capitalism generally) will never bring about the millenium. The third, revolutionary, form of Gnostic thought characteristic of modernity combines both teleological and axiological symbols, explicating both the goal and the means of attaining it; Voegelin refers to it as "activist mysticism." A classic example is Marx's proletarian revolution leading to a classless society.<sup>53</sup>

It will be observed that the fundamental element in these various forms of speculation will be knowledge of what amounts to a meaning of history, whether in the form of the final goal, the method of attaining it, or both. The most important result of this has been the immanentization of the search for a solution to the mystery of human nature. In the classical-Christian conception of man, a complete explication of human nature would require complete knowledge of the transcendent Ground of Being, which, of course, will always remain unfathomable for man

in history. In modern Gnosticism, this knowledge is attainable, and, given the immanentization process, it will be looked for in this world. This has resulted in the considerable body of knowledge compiled by the physical, biological, social, and historical sciences, but it has also resulted in the reductionist views of human nature--man as determined by economics, psychology, or biology--that have informed modern ideological thought and pervade academic and popular discussion of politics.<sup>54</sup> A rather grotesque accompaniment to this phenomenon has been what Voegelin calls the "egophanic revolt," where Gnostics who claim to have knowledge of human nature and the meaning of history essentially declare themselves to be the new God and pronounce the old God dead. Here again the Gnostic nature of the symbols should be obvious.<sup>55</sup>

Voegelin's interpretation of the nature of modernity should be now be clear. It is essentially an immanentized form of Gnosticism in that it seeks this-worldly salvation through knowledge. The specifically Christian element is the eschatological consciousness (common to all millenarian movements), with its implication of an end to, or meaning of, history that can be discovered through some form of gnosis. This would be missing from an Eastern or pre-Christian Gnosticism. The specifically modern element is the immanentization. Voegelin would lay the blame for this not on the

Augustinian de-divinization of the political sphere, which he would regard as entirely appropriate and necessary, but, as observed already, on the Christian idea that the transfiguration of reality began with Christ. Combined with a linear conception of time, this idea is certain to result in periodically intense eschatological expectations.

Further, the Christian claim to have final revelation (or more correctly, final public and direct revelation) with the writings canonized in the New Testament is perceived by Voegelin as a crucial factor in the development of the modern Gnostic consciousness. For, as already observed, it left no purpose for the existence of the national realms which emerged after the fall of the Roman Empire.

The master stroke of ecclesiastical statesmanship, St. Paul's identification of the three community forces of his time (the Pagan, the Hebrew, and the Christian) with the three laws (natural law, Hebrew external law, Christian law of the heart), has not been duplicated in our time. The Pauline translation of the triad of forces into progressively higher levels of spirituality made the historical situation for his contemporaries meaningful and intelligible. If we formulate the deepest sentiment that causes the spiritual tensions of the West since the middle Ages somewhat drastically, we might say: that the bearers of Western civilization do not want to be a senseless appendix to the history of antiquity; they want to understand their civilizational existence as meaningful. If the Church is not able to see the hand of God in the history of mankind, men will not remain satisfied but will go out in search of gods who take some interest in their civilizational efforts. The Church has abandoned its spiritual leadership insofar as it has left postmedieval man without guidance in his endeavors to find meaning in a complex civilization which differs profoundly in its horizons of

reason, nature and history from the ancient that was absorbed and penetrated by the early Church. In the face of this abandonment of the magisterium it is futile when Christian thinkers accuse the superbia of modern man who will not submit to the authority of the Church. There is always enough superbia in man to bolster the accusation plausibly, but the complaint dodges the real issue: that man in search of authority cannot find it in the Church, through no fault of his own.<sup>56</sup>

This passage should explain why, as has been implied earlier in the chapter with the elucidation of what should have seemed a rather minimal interpretation of Christianity on Voegelin's part, Voegelin has opted for a process theology where meaning can be given to man's earthly existence by the fact that there are more revelations to come, so to speak.<sup>57</sup> Voegelin is essentially saying that the notion that Christianity contains final revelation is itself a Gnostic idea that became embedded in early Christianity and has as a result created a hole in medieval and modern civilizational self-interpretation that ultimately ends up being filled with symbols of the same nature.

Obviously, this is a point of decisive importance in Voegelin's philosophy. It is also a point that would be affected greatly if it could be shown that liberal modernity, unlike millenarian modernity, does not have the idea of immanentizing the eschaton at its core, since one could then say that the decay of Christianity might have sources other than, or at least additional to, the ones

discussed above. The whole problem is obviously once again beyond the scope of this thesis, but certain elements in it can be fruitfully examined in the context of Hobbes's thought, and will be placed in that framework for analysis in the next chapter.

With regard to the point made above that modernity may have other fundamental aspects to it than the growth of Gnostic consciousness, it should be pointed out that Voegelin himself has indicated that modernity is informed by symbols other than Gnostic ones. But he still generally views Gnosticism as the most useful characterization of modernity.<sup>58</sup>

Up to this point, Voegelin's interpretation of modernity has been painted with rather broad strokes. It is time to examine more closely what he has to say about Hobbes. This analysis will form the springboard for the major arguments in the present work.

### Thomas Hobbes and the Everlasting Constitution

The most useful way to discuss Voegelin's analysis of Hobbes would be to begin with what Voegelin sees as the fundamental insights in Hobbes's political philosophy, and then proceed from there to the experiences influencing Hobbes's analysis and the symbols these experiences caused him to use to explain his insights.

In The New Science of Politics, Voegelin dismisses

the careless and superficial characterizations of Hobbes as a "fascist" or an "absolutist" and avoids the endless and torturous discussions of the logic of his contract theory; instead he cuts right to the heart of Hobbes's brilliant analysis. What Hobbes has been able to see, argues Voegelin, is that every political society must have a civil theology that is beyond dispute.<sup>59</sup> Voegelin's analysis of the origins of the modern Western crisis, then, has much in common, at least in this fundamental aspect, with Hobbes's analysis of the crisis of the English Civil War. I will quote Voegelin at length, since he has summarized the main points in Hobbes's theory well:

The Hobbesian theory of representation cuts straight to the core of the predicament. On the one hand, there is a political society that wants to maintain its established order in historical existence; on the other hand, there are private individuals within the society who want to change the public order, if necessary by force, in the name of a new truth. Hobbes solved the conflict by deciding that there was no public truth except the law of peace and concord in a society; any opinion or doctrine conducive to discord was thereby proved untrue. In order to support his decision, Hobbes used the following argument:

(1) There is conscious to man a dictate of reason which disposes him to peace and obedience under a civil order. Reason makes him, first, understand that he can live out his natural life in pursuit of his worldly happiness only under the condition that he lives in peace with his fellow-men; and it makes him, second, understand that he can live in peace, without distrust of the other man's intentions, only under the condition that every man's passions are curbed to mutual forbearance by the overwhelming force of a civil government.

(2) This dictate of reason, however, would be no more than a theorem without obligatory force unless it were understood as the hearing of the word of God, as His command promulgated in the soul of man; only in so far as the dictate of reason is believed to be

a divine command is it a law of nature.

(3) This law of nature, finally, is not a law actually governing human existence before the men, in whom it lives as a disposition toward peace, have followed its precept by combining in a civil society under a public representative, the sovereign. Only when they have covenanted to submit to a common sovereign, has the law of nature actually become the law of a society in historical existence. "The law of nature, and the civil law, therefore, contain each other, and are of equal extent."

Existential and transcendental representation, thus, meet in the articulation of a society into ordered existence. By combining into political society under a representative, the covenanting members actualize the divine order of being in the human sphere.<sup>60</sup>

Voegelin goes on to point out that Hobbes planned to make Christianity the civil theology of the Leviathan state, as can be seen in Part Three of Leviathan. For Voegelin, this means that Hobbes has become insensitive to the truth of the soul as revealed in Christianity and classical philosophy; that is, he "denied the existence of a tension between the truth of the soul and the truth of society."<sup>61</sup> In other words, man's civilizational activities were what was most important for man; other-worldly salvation (if there were such a thing), was of decidedly secondary importance. This is a crucial point in Hobbes, and it is what is probably mainly responsible (or at least as responsible as his materialistic discussion of human psychology) for the common understanding of him as a sceptic or an atheist. This point will therefore be discussed at considerable length in Chapter Three.

Voegelin is also more perceptive than most commentators when it comes to the matter of the actual nature of Hobbes's Leviathan state and its attendant civil theology. The state is not based on fear alone, or even predominantly: "Hobbes did not rely on governmental force for suppressing religious movements; he knew that public order was genuine only if the people accepted it freely and that free acceptance was possible only if the people understood obedience to the public representative as their duty under eternal law," he observes. "He, therefore, declared it the duty of the sovereign to repair the ignorance of the people by appropriate information."<sup>62</sup> Education is thus an important element in the maintenance of the Leviathan. To be sure, this education is not exactly designed to produce what present-day liberals like to call "open and inquiring minds"; the dogmas of the civil theology are established by the sovereign and are not to be questioned or discussed by the people, although considerable latitude is left for individual belief in matters Hobbes deems inessential. Of course, for ordinary legitimate mundane activities there will be no undue restrictions on the people's freedom.<sup>63</sup> In this regard, the separation of the public realm, where the wills of all are fused into one, and the private realm, where the society remains a collection of more or less autonomous individuals, is clearly a definitive symbol of the liberal state. It can also be seen here that the

Anglo-American civil theologies that have developed since the seventeenth century are quite similar to Hobbes's symbol. The citizenry is socialized into the basic minimum dogmas; within the framework of the civil theology extensive freedom of speech and action is allowed; heretics (who have been few in number anyway, because of the effectiveness of the educational program), rather than being subjected to political persecution, as Hobbes had envisioned, are simply rendered irrelevant by social pressure, or more correctly, social indifference--perhaps the one very notable difference between the general outline of Hobbes's Christian Commonwealth and the aforementioned semi-secularized Protestant church-states of the Anglo-American democracies.

On the other hand, for those who insist on tearing down the state in the name of their private "consciences," Hobbes is ruthless. Here indeed the Leviathan "would sit as a king over the proud; . . . [since] . . . the Puritan conscience would have to be broken by the fear of physical death."<sup>64</sup> Voegelin isolates here one of the most trenchant parts of Hobbes's analysis. A man is not entitled to freedom of conscience if his conscience is wrong; Hobbes is most emphatically not a relativist on this point. Voegelin points out that Hobbes's conception of what made a man's conscience wrong--if it induced him to act in a manner dangerous to the government of the commonwealth--

was itself incorrect, but his treatment of conscience was certainly able to get to the core of the problem of the motivations of modern revolutionaries. Specifically, Hobbes was able to see that the Puritans attempting to overthrow the monarchy were not guided by the spirit of Christ but rather by the libido dominandi, or "passionate self-assertion." "The diagnosis tears the problem of moral conscience wide open" says Voegelin, "beyond conscience lies the spiritual personality of the man who has it. A conscience may be good in the moral sense and nevertheless thoroughly evil in the spiritual sense."<sup>65</sup> Hobbes has thus uncovered the Gnostic (that is, in this context, self-deifying) consciousness underlying the conscience of the revolutionary. (It might be noted that what amounts to the loss of the ability to make this distinction is one thing that differentiates early liberalism from later liberalism; this is another matter that will be touched on later.)

Unfortunately, says Voegelin, Hobbes's great achievement is marred by the fact that he falls into the trap of a fallacious Gnostic construction himself. This has already been hinted at; the basic problem can be clearly seen in his psychological analysis of the Puritans. Hobbes recognizes the amor sui which underlies the actions of the Puritan revolutionaries; but he fails to recognize the contrasting amor Dei which

could make a conscientious objection to the existing civil order valid because it resulted from a true spiritual orientation. Hobbes has instead interpreted intense religiosity as the "extreme of existential passion." This view has become a commonplace, as one can observe with people who assume that only those who fight wars over religion take it seriously. With this "radical immanence of existence," leading to the substitution of the summum malum, or fear of violent death, for the summum bonum as man's chief motivator, Hobbes has attempted to abolish the tension of existence which every true symbolization of reality will accept.<sup>66</sup> This abolition of the tension between the divine and the mundane (in this case between Christianity and civil society) can also be seen in Hobbes's attempt to make Christianity, appropriately interpreted, the civil theology of the Leviathan state.<sup>67</sup> In fact Hobbes gives his ultimately Gnostic intentions away even more clearly when he opines that application of his principles might create an everlasting constitution, one that will escape the usual fate of eventual internal breakdown--another final realm of history symbolism.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, the symbolism of the truth of the Leviathan state in opposition to the untruth of the Kingdom of Darkness is another Gnostic symbol, this time of a dualist nature.<sup>69</sup> "The experience of the cosmos as a struggle between the

forces of good and evil reappears not only in the varieties of ancient Gnosis, but also in Western political movements since the high Middle Ages," says Voegelin.

"And in contemporary politics the symbolism of Truth and Lie has become generally predominant, with the result that the major political creed movements interpret themselves as the representative of Truth and one another as the representatives of Lie."<sup>70</sup>

What experiences have engendered these symbols?

It has already been seen that, according to Voegelin, the Gnostic desire for certainty has affected Hobbes's analysis. But that is certainly not all. The passion-motivated man of Hobbes's state of nature is the result of the "appearance of the self-reliant individual on the social scene;" what happened was that "the new type and its striving for social success beyond its status . . . because of its empirical frequency . . . [became] . . . understood as the 'normal' type."<sup>71</sup> In a sense, then, Hobbes was only describing what he saw, although he was doing so with, on the one hand, the benefit of particularly acute powers of observation, but with on the other hand, a lack of spiritual sensitivity of his own. Hobbes here has actually created a new symbol, the "new" or "modern" psychology: "A specifically 'modern' psychology developed as the empirical psychology of 'modern' man, that is, of the man who was intellectually and

spiritually disoriented and hence motivated primarily by his passions."<sup>72</sup> Indeed, by interpreting this type of man as "normal," he has created another symbol, "a philosophical anthropology in which the disease [of disoriented passion-motivated existence] was interpreted as the 'nature of man.'"<sup>73</sup> This symbol, according to Voegelin, explicates the experience common to Hobbes in the seventeenth century and to twentieth-century existentialism.<sup>74</sup>

Finally, observes Voegelin, Hobbes's contract theory is another important symbol, although certainly not one of Hobbes's creation. In his discussion of the Republic, Voegelin observes that "if we follow Plato, the 'contract theory' . . . is a type of Doxa that is apt to appear and to reappear without continuity with earlier appearances whenever the doxic state of the soul appears in history--as for instance in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries A.D."<sup>75</sup> By "doxic state of the soul" Voegelin essentially means the state of a person who is not formed by spiritual truth but by mere opinion; a type that is likely to be empirically prominent during times when a society's ordering symbols are no longer performing their task. In other words, the "contract theory" is a symbol of the experience of social disintegration. The use of the symbol by Hobbes and other thinkers of the time indicates that they experienced the breakdown of a society into individuals increasingly incapable of communicating

with each other. This will be confirmed and its implications discussed in detail later.

It may be wondered what part, if any, the previously elucidated fundamental modern symbols created by Joachim of Flora play in Hobbes's analysis. Voegelin does not discuss this matter, but it should be evident that three of the symbols--the leader, the prophet, and the community of autonomous individuals--can be somewhat dimly seen in the form of the Sovereign, Hobbes and his profferment of a permanent solution to the fundamental political problem, and the "private" sphere of life under Leviathan. But these symbols are not well focused, indicating that there are probably other symbols and experiences involved. This is confirmed when it is seen that Leviathan also contains a third stage of history construction (usually ignored by the commentators), but one that is of an entirely different nature than the third stage constructions common to the millenarian movements. It will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

Up to this point Voegelin's political philosophy has been presented with a minimum of interpretation and criticism. But there are clearly a large number of points that are open to question or clarification, as will be the case with any comprehensive philosophy. In the next chapter I will raise several problems that arise from Voegelin's interpretation of modernity in general and

Hobbes in particular. The discussion of these matters will establish the framework for their at least partial resolution in the third chapter's analysis of Hobbes.

## CHAPTER II

### SOME PROBLEMS IN VOEGELIN'S PHILOSOPHY

This chapter will provide a framework for the discussion of Hobbes by examining some problems in Voegelin's philosophy. Three basic questions will be discussed. The first section will attempt to clarify the concept of Gnosticism, or at least differentiate it from similar phenomena; the second will discuss briefly the nature of symbol equivalence and generation; and the third will look at the problem of the relationship among man, symbols, and reality, including the phenomenon of the modern self-conscious subject and the matter of symbol deformation. The results of the discussion will be applied in the interpretation of Hobbes in Chapter Three.

#### Gnostic and Apocalyptic Consciousness

The discussion of Voegelin's philosophy in the previous chapter necessarily left a number of problems only rather cursorily discussed. One problem that cannot be ignored is what precisely Voegelin means by Gnosticism and whether all the phenomena of modern political thought

adumbrated earlier can actually be subsumed under this heading. The discussion of the previous chapter has indicated that Voegelin has used the term to describe a fairly wide variety of experiences. It will be remembered that the key elements in the phenomenon are the desire to abolish the tension of existence that is man's condition and the belief that the knowledge necessary to do so is possessed. Generally speaking, the phenomena that Voegelin has referred to as Gnostic are also recognizably millenarian in that they take their fundamental symbols from Christian eschatology. This indicates that the experiences motivating the formation of these symbols are, at least in part, similar to the experiences motivating the generation of the original Christian eschatological symbolisms. What is different is the belief that the knowledge of when the eschaton will come about, or even how to bring it about, is possessed by those creating the symbols; this is the Gnostic element in the experience and its symbolization. The belief that the tension of existence will ultimately be abolished in a final transfiguration of reality is not itself Gnostic; indeed it is, for Voegelin, an indication of a more fully differentiated experience of the order of being, in that the theophanic experience which makes articulate the experience of tension also makes known the movement of reality toward an ultimate transfiguration. What would be Gnostic, according to Voegelin, would be the

belief that one has knowledge of when or how this transfiguration will take place.

It can clearly be seen that Christian symbolisms of the eschaton lend themselves rather readily to appropriation and manipulation (consciously or unconsciously) by those possessing a Gnostic state of mind. And it can certainly be seen that many millenarian movements should be at least partly Gnostic, since they have in common the notion that they possess knowledge of when the eschaton will come about or perhaps how to bring it about. But is it possible to be a Gnostic without being millenarian? Voegelin points out that Gnosticism must evidently have been in existence in some form for a considerable time before Christianity,<sup>76</sup> and there are certainly what amount to Eastern forms of Gnosticism that clearly are uninfluenced by Christianity. But what of a Gnosticism that occurs in a Christian culture, but does not partake of Christian eschatological symbols or, in other words, is not millenarian?

Voegelin has discussed this and related matters briefly in a relatively obscure article,<sup>77</sup> and the discussion sheds considerable light on what can be made of various Gnostic and millenarian symbols. After describing the experience of existence in tension and its symbolization, Voegelin goes on to say that "what is so magnificently expressed here by St. Augustine will

ordinarily be objectified by most people. . . ." with the divine pole of the tension "objectified by various imageries into a kingdom of God, depicted in very definite colors and incidents."<sup>78</sup> Objectification can take on a large number of forms, but there are two fundamental possibilities, says Voegelin.

One is to project the kingdom of God into the future, that is, to assume that somehow the structure of history, in which we are living and in which we experience this tension toward God, will actually be replaced, in history, by a perfected kingdom of God. This is the escape by objectification, which is usually called apocalyptic, as in the Apocalypse of Daniel, telling of that which is to come with the fifth monarchy, or as in the Apocalypse of St. John, telling of a millenium, or as in the modern apocalyptic visions of the perfect realm of reason, the perfect realm of positivist science in the Comtian sense, or the perfect realm of Marxian communism. Here we have types of apocalyptic visions by which one pole of the tension, the love of God, is projected into an event in history, in which the structure of history or society is changed into perfection. This is the apocalyptic escape.<sup>79</sup>

The other type of objectifying escape, explains Voegelin "is not into a future time, but rather into the beyond, into perfection in a spiritually understood history beyond this world. This escape into the beyond . . . is what was called in antiquity gnosis." Here, observes Voegelin, there "is not a future in history, but the end of all history, the escape from history into spiritual perfection, into the pleroma beyond history."<sup>80</sup> Voegelin points out that these are of course, broad distinctions, as one can, for example, distinguish between apocalypses brought

about by God and those brought about by man; nevertheless, these remain the fundamental distinctions one can make.<sup>81</sup>

Voegelin finally discusses the Christian solution to the dilemma in a paragraph that is worth quoting:

Of course there is one genuine solution which, in the wake of the apocalyptic beginnings, is that adopted by Christianity: the acceptance, one might say, of the apocalyptic imagery of something that happens in the future. Christ himself, for example, in Mark 13, has a perfectly classical apocalypse in the Jewish sense. And immediately after pronouncement of the apocalypse follows the story of the passion, the beginning of the apocalyptic events in time. The transfiguration of these apocalyptic beginnings into an eschatology, in which that they are projected now into a future out of time, is a very curious intermediate conception. It depends upon neither the gnostic eternity here-and-now, nor upon the apocalyptic future, but rather upon something that will happen in time, but that, when it happens, will be beyond time. It is a very curious mixed form, a compromise between the two extremes. And, so long as one adheres to this view closely, he avoids the danger of falling into the extremes, either apocalyptic or gnostic. Of course there is always a considerable number of Christian side movements, sectarian movements, and, today, secularist movements, which do not observe the wisdom of the view, and which thus fall back into the classic type of apocalypse and hence recede from rationality.<sup>82</sup>

Now a considerable clarification can be made in the classification of the phenomena discussed in Chapter One. It can be seen that there can be both a pure gnosis and a pure apocalyptic consciousness (or at least approximations to these, as no intellectual, spiritual, or political movement is likely to be a "pure" form). It can also be seen that there can be a combination of these two, and this category would probably take in most of the

modern millenarian movements discussed so far. Mention of the modern forms of Gnosis and apocalyptic is a reminder that one would also want to make a distinction between "spiritualist" and "immanentist" versions of these types of objectification of the tension of existence, with the modern movements, of course, being increasingly immanentist.

To be more specific, it would seem that the pure apocalyptic form of consciousness, while envisaging a state of perfection in the future, and usually outlining what it would look like as well as perhaps giving some clues as to when it will come about, will not be able to say how it will come about--this knowledge or gnosis will be missing. This would be the case with the ancient apocalypses, which allowed divine action, ultimately a mystery, to bring about the metastasis, or in modern immanentist belief of a utopian variety. Here man will bring about the perfect world by himself but how he will do so is not clear. (Notice that here we have differentiated a possible type of millenarian movement that is in fact not Gnostic.)

Modern revolutionary symbolisms would appear to be combinations, in immanentist form, of Gnostic and apocalyptic consciousness, perhaps leaning in the apocalyptic direction. In this case the elements of knowledge and of a future transfiguration of reality are present.

Progressive symbolisms apparently are examples of a combination that leans toward the Gnostic side, since the notion of a clearly defined future transfiguration of reality is missing. The metastasis is already taking place, here and now. It might be conjectured, incidentally, that with regard to the third stage of history symbol that appears in progressive and revolutionary speculation, a progressivist construction would see each of the last two stages as an advance over the previous stage, and a revolutionary construct might well interpret the second stage as recessive with regard to the first, implying that the third stage will be a drastic break with the existing situation.

In any case, in a purely Gnostic state of consciousness, the idea of a future transfiguration of reality, whether achieved by means unknown, or through immanent action, will be missing; the here and now continuing metastasis of the progressivist symbols is compressed into an immediate transfiguration, with the emphasis on the method or gnosis required to bring this about. The symbols involved here, it would be suspected, would tend toward a timeless quality, different from the historically-oriented symbols of the apocalyptic influenced modes of thought.

The important distinction that I am trying to make here is that a pure apocalyptic form of consciousness will

focus on a future transfiguration of reality and will be very historically oriented, while a pure Gnostic consciousness will focus on the method of leaping immediately into a timeless state of existence and will not concern itself with history. One is concerned with transfiguring the presently existing reality, while the other simply wants to leave this reality behind and enter a second, ahistorical reality.

The above discussion is not intended to be exhaustive. What I have attempted to do is briefly point out some elaborations that might be made on some of Voegelin's ideas in the hope that certain other of his ideas can be clarified or modified. Specifically, I will try to show in the next chapter that certain key symbols in Hobbes's work do contain the properties mentioned above as likely to be found in a purely Gnostic type of consciousness. This will be used as evidence that there do indeed exist several substantially different types of modern consciousness. A detailed examination of the various types of modern symbols would clearly change the basic purpose of this work. But the more cursory investigation adumbrated above will indeed prove useful in the discussion of Hobbes and his relationship to Voegelin's interpretation of modernity.

#### Symbol Equivalence and Generation

In the first chapter it was pointed out that one

of the most fundamental elements in Voegelin's philosophy is the idea that experiences that are equivalent (though perhaps more or less differentiated) will produce symbols that are recognizably equivalent; this is the basis for interpreting and ordering those symbols into a recognizable pattern in history that can shed light on the political problems of the present and their solution. An example would be the final realm of history symbolism that occurs in medieval millenarian and modern revolutionary or progressivist speculation and which indicates an experiential similarity among the movements. How can this be verified? Voegelin does not discuss the matter at length. "The problem of equivalence cannot be resolved on the level of symbols," he says, and then continues:

In the practice of our work, it is true, we can frequently be satisfied with a feeling of instant recognition. We can feel sure, for instance, that a design of four quarters inscribed in a circle, devised by a Stone Age symbolist, expresses an experience of the cosmos equivalent to the experience which motivates the Assyrian royal style of a ruler over the four quarters of the land. But equivalence as an immediate experience is to be found only at the point where the symbolisms confront each other in the presence of the process [of the Ground].<sup>83</sup>

It seems to me that one can find an insight into the nature of symbol equivalence in Michael Polanyi's concept of focal and subsidiary awareness. Polanyi essentially argues that when one is solving a problem of some sort, one will concentrate on, that is, one's focal awareness will be of, the problem, but one will continue to

use, without really being fully aware of it, a variable set of concepts, beliefs, language symbols, and so forth, to solve the problem. These make up one's subsidiary awareness. Because one is less aware, indeed, usually only subconsciously aware, of these elements, they will tend to remain unexamined. Indeed, if one attempts to examine the elements of one's subsidiary awareness, one will have changed one's focal awareness and will lose sight of the original problem.<sup>84</sup> An example of this would be Marx, say, speculating on history. His focal awareness is directed at the matter of economic change in history and its effects on politics; one of the key elements of his subsidiary awareness, however, would be the general form of the third stage of history constructions common to modern Gnostic and apocalyptic thought. Hence, when Marx finally formulates his construction of the course of history, he will, probably without examining closely the form he has used, place it in the general outline of a third stage of history construction, as in primitive communism, the realm of necessity, and final communism. The reason, of course, that the third stage of history construction was a part of Marx's subsidiary awareness would be that he had seen it before in the context of a symbol representing an experience, in this case, Gnostic/apocalyptic speculation on history, which he had had, in varying degrees of articulateness, himself.

It can be seen that as one develops intellectually, one will tend to develop a "repertoire" of symbols, accumulated from encounters with symbols expressing one's own experiences, that one will use more or less unconsciously in ordering reality. These symbols will reappear in one's own work, in different contexts, and with different contents, as one pursues the solution of new problems, but the experiences underlying one's investigations and explanations can be seen.

It should also be noted that "equivalence" should not be confused with "continuity." Voegelin would argue that there will be equivalences of experience and symbolization in history, but not necessarily any continuity except at a very fundamental level (that of the experience of tension toward the Ground). Polanyi's work would indicate that there may tend to be a continuity of symbolization, but not necessarily any continuity of experience. There might be, but again there might not be. That is, for Polanyi, one might use symbols that others in the recent past have used, but they might be expressive of either continuous or discontinuous experience. One could imagine a third stage of history construction where the third realm is characterized by complete catastrophe rather than perfection. There would be a continuity of symbols, but not one of experience. The decisive point here is that, at the level of experience, equivalence does

not necessarily imply continuity but continuity must imply equivalence. Yet, at the level of interaction between symbols and experience, continuity of symbols only necessarily implies continuity and equivalence of symbols. It does not imply continuity and equivalence of the experiences being primarily symbolized. Since experience is more fundamental than symbols, political thought can get sidetracked when it concentrates on symbols rather than experience.

One can see here the roots of two problems endemic to contemporary political theory when historical symbols are abstracted from the experiences engendering them and take to take on a life of their own. One is that a rough continuity of symbols is understood as a continuity of experience: "influences" on a given thinker's "ideas" can be found almost everywhere one looks for them; a direct "line of thought" can be traced from Plato to John Stuart Mill. Such confusion of symbols and experience results in a futile "history of ideas" approach that is incapable of uncovering the roots of present political problems because those roots seem to be everywhere. The other problem is to assume that, if symbols are discontinuous, experience is not only discontinuous but actually nonequivalent, leading to the conclusion that there are sharp "breaks" in history, after which all previous political discourse simply becomes unintelligible. Since both continuities

and discontinuities can be found, depending on one's emphasis, both of these problems will appear if the discussion fails to penetrate to the experiences engendering the symbols.

This brief explanation is hardly meant as a full solution to this problem. I have mentioned it here because I will make use of it when discussing Hobbes. Keeping the focal/subsidiary awareness dichotomy and its implications for the problem of experience and symbolization in mind will lessen the likelihood of the discussion losing itself at the level of symbols. The use of this concept should also facilitate a clearer explication of the experiences engendering Hobbes's symbols. One more problem remains to be examined before those experiences and their symbolization can be investigated.

### Man, Symbols, and Reality

In this section I want to examine some problems that arise in Voegelin's treatment of the matter of symbol deformation. By "deformation" is meant the process whereby a symbol loses its original meaning; that is, is misinterpreted so that the experience originally represented is no longer conveyed to those who see the symbol. This matter has been mentioned in Chapter One. The fundamental reason for the occurrence is certainly no mystery: it results from a change in experience so that

the original symbol will be interpreted in light of the new, different, experience and will not be perceived as representing the older experience it was designed to represent. An obvious example is the modern literal interpretation of ancient cosmological myths, which might be rather loosely described as theological statements, as propositions concerning the physics of the universe, both by "defenders" and "attackers" of the sources of those myths, as in the previously mentioned creation-evolution debate. The situation may be metaphorically described as one where a new language is being used but the users of the new language are not aware of this and think they can understand the old language when they really cannot.

(Note that I am using this description only in a metaphorical manner; it would be contended by some theorists that this is a literal description of what happens, but a discussion of this issue is obviously beyond the scope of this thesis. I am assuming that there is an equivalence of experience and symbolization that is, on the whole, more fundamental than changes that occur. This has been alluded to in the discussion of Voegelin's first principles, and has been given the outline of a possible partial solution in the brief reference to Polanyi.) Or, to describe it another way: if I say that one football team "slaughtered" another, no one in this culture will inquire as to when the funerals will be, where the graves

will be dug, and so forth (except, perhaps, also metaphorically); but someone from another culture might.

This example has hinted at the manifestation of the problem that Voegelin has generally stressed: symbols expressing experiences of transcendence are taken "literally" as "world-immanent propositions" and reduced to nonsense. Voegelin points to two major historical periods when this problem was prevalent: the era of the Sophists in Greece and the modern Western Enlightenment. He also points to the doctrinal metaphysics of Stoicism and Scholasticism as less thoroughgoing manifestations of this problem and, as mentioned earlier, observes that even Aristotle ran into this difficulty to some extent.<sup>85</sup> I want to examine what Voegelin has to say on this matter because it will have important application in the treatment of Hobbes. The specific question here, to begin with, is, just what is the relationship among man, symbols, and reality?

It can be seen that there would appear to be five possible answers to the question. One would be that man understands himself as experiencing reality directly, rather than through various symbols. In a second, man would realize that reality is "intermediated" through symbols, but would think that the symbols were sort of "handed" to him by reality. The most differentiated understanding of the phenomenon would seem to indicate

that man and reality somehow interact to create symbols through which man interprets reality. One could "recede," in a sense, from this most differentiated understanding, to say that man creates the symbols through which he interprets reality. In the extreme, the fifth possibility would be that man actually creates his own reality. The symbol Voegelin uses to represent man's relationship to symbols and reality is that of "participation" in being, as mentioned earlier. This symbol seems to indicate an understanding of the third, most differentiated, type listed above. But in actual application, Voegelin has not seemed to hold consistently to this formulation. When it comes to symbolizations of experiences of transcendence, Voegelin seems to say that man and reality do indeed interact to form symbols. In his discussion of Plato's Timaeus, which he interprets as Plato's noetic exegesis of the formation of the myth expressing the experience of transcendence, Voegelin says, "We receive the myth from the unconscious, that is, from the cosmic depth of the soul that reverberates into the field of consciousness and intelligible communication." Thus, "the symbols of the myth, in which the reverberations are expressed, can be defined as the refraction of the unconscious in the medium of objectifying consciousness."<sup>86</sup> The subject-object dichotomy, which implies a more or less passive reality to describe which man actively creates

symbols, does not apply here. Literalist deformation of symbols comes about when they are interpreted through "an epistemology which has been developed for the case of our knowledge of the external world."<sup>87</sup> In other words, when they are made into objects. This is a crucial point in Voegelin's philosophy. It might seem that he, like other twentieth century philosophers (Heidegger, for example), would be interested in doing away with the subject-object distinction generally. But he never really discusses the matter at length, and when he does briefly mention it, although he always points out the danger of using it to interpret symbols of transcendence, he seems to regard the subject-object dichotomy as a more or less adequate symbolization of one's relationship with the "external" world.<sup>88</sup>

This implication has caused considerable consternation among Voegelin's commentators. Arnold Brecht, in discussing The New Science of Politics, after observing that he agrees with Voegelin that metaphysical speculation deserves a more prominent place than currently accorded it in political science, then demurs by saying

if he wants to imply that the truth of any particular metaphysical speculation can be established, like empiricological truth, by some sort of intersubjective demonstration, then we are faced with an entirely different challenge. Unfortunately he treats this crucial problem, which is at the very base of the modern dichotomy between philosophy and science, rather cavalierly. It does not seem to interest him.<sup>89</sup>

It would seem that if Voegelin wanted to do anything here, he would want to eliminate notions such as

"intersubjective demonstration" that are a result of the subject-object distinction, but in fact he does, as Brecht says, seem to leave the problem dangling.

This apparent dualism in Voegelin's philosophy, where the subject-object dichotomy is rejected as a model for the operations of consciousness when discussing experiences of transcendence, but, if not completely accepted, is at least not explicitly rejected as an epistemological model for the observation of the immanent "external world," can be perhaps resolved if one examines his ontology. This has been hinted at, but not explicitly stated, in the earlier description of his process theology. Essentially Voegelin sees all of being as one substance, manifesting itself at different levels--inorganic, organic, vegetative, animalic, human consciousness, and the non-existent Ground of Being, or presence of the process that man apprehends in the experience of tension.<sup>90</sup> It can readily be seen that consciousness could be a "subject," or something approximating it, for levels of being below that of consciousness, that is, for the "external world," and at the same time not a subject for experiences of contact with the Ground. Or more accurately, within the range of experience symbolized by the idea of "participation," symbol creation might tend toward a more passive role for man in experiences of transcendence, but might tend toward a more active role for encounters with

"external reality."

Another way to put this is that Voegelin's idea of experience as participation can indicate tendencies of experience to resemble the second and fourth understandings of man's relation to reality described above, even though his ideas are fundamentally a case of the third, interactive, model set forth. Also, one could find Voegelin's symbolization of the nature of experience acceptable even if one does not wish to view all of reality as fundamentally one substance. Thus one could say that there are various different levels of reality that are the same fundamental substance, but are held together by a fundamentally different substance. Here one could say that consciousness participates in a relatively active manner with lower levels of being, but participates relatively passively with the different type of being that holds the various levels of immanent being together. That is, one does not have to accept entirely Voegelin's ontology to see that this dichotomy could have considerable validity if not pushed too far.

In any case, it can certainly be seen that if it has become customary to discuss the external world in terms of subject and object, the application of the distinction to symbols of transcendence, with resulting deformation, will become more prevalent. Yet, on the other hand, the success of modern science has shown that

the dichotomy has some truth and cannot be dismissed out of hand. Man can gain considerable understanding of and mastery over the external world, which, unlike the unfathomable mystery of the Ground, does have at least some resemblance to a passive reality that can be objectified by man's consciousness. Obviously, a discussion of the historical development of this symbol is well beyond the scope of this work, but a few remarks can be made that will perhaps make the situation as it relates to Hobbes clearer.

As has been mentioned, the subject-object dichotomy is a symbol. What experience does it symbolize? This has been partially explained already. In its extreme form, it would clearly be an attempt at self-divinization, as when the all-knowing res cogitans transcends the inert res extensa, especially when the latter consists of some sort of human mass.<sup>91</sup> Less drastically, of course, the subject-object distinction will be a symbol of active, rather than passive, experience. Specifically, it could be a symbol of a slightly different interpretation of the "relatively active" experience described above--perhaps attributing more responsibility to man in the symbol creation process than is actually the case. It might tend to arise in a situation, as perhaps the early modern, where man becomes more aware of his role in the creation of symbols. That is, whereas man had previously seen himself in a relatively passive role with regard to external reality as well

as transcendent reality, early modern man "over-corrected" the symbolization of symbol creation to make external reality the passive object of the subject-object dichotomy.<sup>92</sup>

Clearly, an important form of active experience is creating propositions about the "external world," or perhaps the abstract world of mathematics. This would appear to be a subclass of symbols within the general class of subject-object symbols; or it might be more accurate to say that this type of symbol, which has presumably existed since the dawn of human consciousness, has been transformed into a subject-object type of symbol with the emphasis on the subject who creates propositions. If this type of experience, that is, what might be termed the self-conscious creation of propositions, has become widespread, as it would with the growth of the sciences of the external world, it will be very likely that other kinds of symbolisms will be interpreted as being also of that kind. This is when symbol deformation can occur. Thus the early modern period, when science was becoming a decisive preoccupation, would certainly be a time when this situation would be most probable. The restriction of legitimate experience to the physical world, often seen as an arbitrary or egoistic rejection of the possibility of experiences of transcendence, would follow fairly

innocently from the confusion and nonsense generated by applying the activist epistemology to symbols generated by a relatively passive experience--although there would need to be at least a trace of egoism and self-divinization involved in immediately rejecting the transcendent instead of questioning the prevailing conception of experience.

At any rate, the purpose of these reflections has been to sketch some rough outlines of a problem that Voegelin appears not to have considered in great detail and to show one way that symbol deformation could occur. If it can be shown that Hobbes (among other early moderns) did in fact follow the path outlined above, a significant insight could be gained into the nature of liberal modernity. Propositional deformation of symbols is so pervasive a feature of liberalism that it might almost be taken as its essence. What actually could be a fundamental component of liberalism would be the type of thinking, and the complex of symbols representing that type of thinking, that makes propositional symbol deformation more likely. And that type of thinking might well be a manifestation of Gnosticism. In fact, I intend to show in the next chapter that one of the most fundamental symbols in Hobbes--one undergirding virtually the entire structure of his political thought and one itself a product of a Gnostic consciousness--is that of man as creator of symbols and that this symbol is closely tied to the

understanding of truth as a series of propositions. The relationship of this symbol to the key aspects of Hobbes's thought already mentioned--scepticism, individualism, and Gnostic consciousness--will be discussed at length in the next chapter.

### Summary

As several rather distantly related topics have been discussed briefly in this chapter, a few summarizing remarks may help to clarify the conclusions reached and set the stage for the discussion of Hobbes in the next chapter.

The first section pointed out that Voegelin's use of the term "Gnosticism" was perhaps a bit vague and showed that one could make a distinction between Gnostic and apocalyptic experiences and their symbolization, as well as symbolisms indicating both types of experience. It also hinted that non-liberal modernity may be a case of apocalyptic experience or a combination of apocalyptic and Gnostic experience, while Hobbes and liberal modernity may be more "pure Gnosticism." In Chapter Three I will examine this matter and its implications for Hobbes's conception of truth and, paradoxical though it may seem, at first glance, his scepticism.

The second section briefly explained Michael Polanyi's concept of focal and subsidiary awareness and

showed how it might be applied to the problem of symbol generation. The conclusions of this analysis will be applied in the analysis of Hobbes in the next chapter.

Finally, the last section discussed in a rough manner Voegelin's conception of the relationships among man, symbols, and reality, and showed that propositional deformation of symbols may come about as a result of misunderstandings of this relationship. This matter will be of importance in discussing the problems of Gnosticism, individualism, and scepticism, and their relationship, and in examining the most important symbols these experiences have produced in Hobbes's political theory.

### CHAPTER III

#### THOMAS HOBBS: CREATING THE SYMBOLS OF ORDER

The analysis so far has concentrated on an explanation and discussion of Eric Voegelin's political philosophy. Voegelin's first principles and interpretation of modernity have been described and the implications of his understanding of modernity for the resymbolization of the truth of existence have been explained. It has also been shown that these implications would be affected if it could be demonstrated that modernity has a somewhat different nature than Voegelin thinks. Specifically, many new questions about the origins of modernity and the task of philosophical retheoretization of truth would be raised if it could be shown that liberalism is of a somewhat different nature than the more radical modern ideologies which seem to be well characterized as attempts to immanentize the Christian eschaton through progress or revolution, making use of some or other gnosis which their adherents believe has unlocked the ultimate mysteries of human existence. This chapter will attempt to show that such a claim could be made, based on an analysis of the

fundamental symbols in the political philosophy of Thomas Hobbes, the father of liberalism.

I will briefly describe the basic line of argument that will be followed. An examination of Hobbes's civil theology and eschatology will show that he did indeed tend toward a relatively mild form of Gnostic consciousness (using the term "Gnostic" with the somewhat revised meaning developed in Chapter Two). Before looking at the specific form this gnosis takes, another feature of his general outlook will be elucidated from an examination of various features of his civil theology: I will describe what amounts to an incipient scepticism in religious matters. These two types of consciousness--Gnosticism, or possession of Truth, and scepticism--are not, as it might at first appear, contradictory. If it is realized, as will be shown, that Hobbes thinks of truth as a set of propositions, it can be seen that one can think that one has the correct set of propositions, or something quite close, and thus be sceptical of various types, or systems, of propositions that are closely related in certain aspects. The important question here is: How does one obtain The Correct Set of Propositions? Or, in other words, what is Hobbes's gnosis? The answer is that one must create the right symbols at the beginning of the thought process. If one succeeds, one can establish the everlasting constitution; if one fails, one gets chaos in the form of the

State of Nature or the Kingdom of Darkness. Man as the creator of symbols is the fundamental symbol that binds together the other symbols in Hobbes's political philosophy.

The Kingdom of God by Nature and the Second Realm of History

The most fruitful starting point for a discussion of the fundamental symbols in Hobbes's thought and the experiences underlying them can be introduced by looking at a portion of Voegelin's discussion of the struggle for existential and transcendent representation in the late Roman Empire. The following description of St. Augustine's reaction to Varro should ring a bell with the modern reader of Hobbes:

The elusive point was reported by St. Augustine himself with great care; it obviously disconcerted him. Varro, in his Antiquities, had treated first of 'human things' and then only of the 'divine things' of Rome. First, the city must exist; then it can proceed to institute its cults. . . . This Varronic conception that the gods were instituted by political society aroused the incomprehending irritation of St. Augustine. On the contrary, he insisted, 'true religion is not instituted by some terrestrial city,' but the true God, the inspirator of true religion, 'has instituted the celestial city.'<sup>93</sup>

The connection with Hobbes is obvious. Why, when he claims to be a Christian, and lives in a time and place that certainly understood itself as Christian, does he derive his political principles from what seem to be purely naturalistic considerations and only then discuss

matters of religion, showing that there is, in his view, no incompatibility between his commonwealth constructed using natural reason and Christianity, properly interpreted?

The obvious answer, perhaps too hastily arrived at, both by many of Hobbes's contemporaries and by present-day commentators, is that for Hobbes religion is actually irrelevant; the last two parts of Leviathan amount to a superfluous appendage, tacked on only to avoid blatantly offending the sensibilities of less enlightened souls, especially since the "proper interpretation" of Scripture seems to leave Christianity eviscerated.<sup>94</sup> But this argument contains within itself its own counter-argument: if Hobbes really was an atheist, or even only a deist, why would he so carelessly expose himself to criticism and even persecution with the unorthodox doctrines set forth in his discussion of religion, especially given his self-confessed "timorous constitution?"<sup>95</sup> It has been argued that Hobbes's professed beliefs in fact correspond to those of Socinianism, an obscure sect that was a vague forerunner of Unitarianism.<sup>96</sup> But a more convincing argument has been made that his views are better understood as formed by an eclectic kind of rationalism that simply modified basic Christian dogmas and are very similar to those of a number of other thinkers of the time.<sup>97</sup> More important than Hobbes's

interpretation of specific dogmas, for the purposes of this work, is that an answer to the apparent riddle of Hobbes's peculiar method of proceeding is contained in his eschatology, set forth in Part Three of Leviathan, with unfortunately is often ignored because of its presumed irrelevance, as mentioned above.

Hobbes argues that history can be divided into three stages.

From this that hath been said of the kingdom of God, and of salvation, it is not hard to interpret what is meant by the WORLD TO COME. There are three worlds mentioned in Scripture, the old world, the present world, and the world to come. Of the first, St. Peter speaks, (2 Pet. ii. 5) If God spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing the flood upon the world of the ungodly, &c. So the first world, was from Adam to the general flood. Of the present world, our Saviour speaks (John xviii. 36) My kingdom is not of this world. For he came only to teach men the way of salvation, and to renew the kingdom of his Father, by his doctrine. Of the world to come, St. Peter speaks (2 Pet. iii. 13) Nevertheless we according to his promise look for new heavens, and a new earth. This is that WORLD, wherein Christ coming down from heaven in the clouds, with great power, and glory, shall send his angels, and shall gather together his elect, from the four winds, and from the uttermost parts of the earth, and thenceforth reign over them, under his Father, everlastingly.<sup>98</sup>

What is the nature of the world to come? Here Hobbes perhaps sounds similar to the sectarians he was opposing, as he expects the next world to be located on this earth and claims that "the kingdom of God is a civil kingdom."<sup>99</sup> But unlike various millenarian movements of the time, or later secular ideologies, Hobbes is not claiming to

present a blueprint for the political arrangements of the world to come. Rather, he indicates that the kingdom of God itself can be divided into two types of kingdom:

But God declareth his laws three ways; by the dictates of natural reason, by revelation, and by the voice of some man, to whom by the operations of miracles, he procureth credit with the rest. From hence there ariseth a triple world of God, rational sensible, and prophetic: to which correspondeth a triple hearing; right reason, sense supernatural, and faith. As for sense supernatural, which consisteth in revelation or inspiration, there have not been any universal laws so given, because God speaketh not in that manner but to particular persons, and to divers men divers things.

From the difference between the other two kinds of God's word, rational and prophetic, there may be attributed to God, a twofold kingdom, natural and prophetic: natural wherein he governeth as many of mankind as acknowledge his providence, by the natural dictates of right reason; and, prophetic, wherein having chosen out one peculiar nation, the Jews, for his subjects, he governed them, and none but them, not only by natural reason, but by positive laws, which he gave them by the mouths of his holy prophets.<sup>100</sup>

Now the eschatological basis of Hobbes's political theory begins to become clear; it can be seen why he has concerned himself initially with an apparently naturalistic approach to political order. The historical relationship between the two kingdoms, which has already been hinted at, is stated clearly when Hobbes says that the civil kingdom of God

consisted, first, in the obligation of the people of Israel to those laws, which Moses should bring unto them from Mount Sinai; and which afterwards the high-priest for the time being, should deliver to them from before the cherubims in the sanctum sanctorum; and which kingdom having been cast off in the election of Saul, the prophets foretold, should be restored by Christ; . . . and the proclaiming whereof, was the preaching of the apostles; . . . when Christ

shall come in majesty to judge the world, and actually to govern his own people.<sup>101</sup>

In other words, God ruled his Chosen People, the Jews, by prophecy in the past, and will once again rule the Chosen, or Elect, directly, by prophecy, in this case that of Christ, in the future, but at present rules the world at best indirectly, through reason. Essentially what Hobbes has constructed here is a system of two political worlds: the historical kingdom of God, ruled by prophecy, where specific actions of God in time determine the nature of the polity; and a timeless, ahistorical, natural kingdom of God, where the unchanging conclusions of right reason establish the form of the relevant political institutions. Here we can see Hobbes's Gnostic intentions: he is essentially claiming to have leaped out of an "unreal" political world of flux, where the principles of right reason have not been used as they should to establish order, into the "real," timeless, eternal world of political institutions established by unchanging right reason. This, of course, is precisely what was described in the previous chapter as a "pure" Gnostic symbol, as opposed to those forms of gnosis that also make use of apocalyptic symbols, indicating an expectation of a future transfiguration of reality that man can bring about himself. Of course, Hobbes also expects a future transfiguration of reality of sorts, but he certainly does not

expect man to bring it about, and in fact directs much criticism at (among others) those who believe they can bring it about. Generally speaking, he does not seem to have a great deal of interest in the future transfiguration--peace and quite here and now is a more compelling matter.<sup>102</sup>

This lack of interest in the future is a very important manifestation of what was earlier termed "Gnostic time dilation." Having entered the timeless natural kingdom through gnosis, Hobbes will tend to regard future events in the real world as so distant that they are virtually irrelevant. One can see a manifestation of this mode of consciousness in many people today--those who "believe in God" but are engrossed in short term activities and never consider questions of salvation because the matter even of the end of one's life (much less the end of the world) seems incomprehensively far away--and contrast it with the burning eschatological consciousness of apocalyptic of either the spiritual or immanentist variety, whose vision is fixated on the future.

It can additionally be seen here how Hobbes's notion of felicity is one of continuous and more or less aimless motion. His background of traditional Western thought and symbols has probably left a strong notion of movement in history toward a goal in his subsidiary awareness, but now no permanent goal is possible once he has

entered the timeless natural kingdom. Thus people tend to move restlessly from one temporary goal to another instead of achieving eternal rest once they have escaped historical movement.

It should be emphasized here that Hobbes's Gnosticism is of a less radical form than that of both the sectarians against whom he was writing and the later modern ideologies. He does not make any claims to "historical inevitability," nor does he claim that life in his commonwealth will be perfect--he does, for example, make provision for punishment of criminals. Indeed, at the end of the chapter on "Punishments and Rewards" he makes a statement that might be quoted as evidence that he is fully attuned to the historical realities of politics:

But because he [Leviathan] is mortal, and subject to decay, as all other earthly creatures are; and because there is that in heaven, though not on earth, that he should stand in fear of, and whose laws he ought to obey; I shall in the next following chapters speak of his diseases, and the causes of his mortality; and of what laws of nature he is bound to obey.<sup>103</sup>

On the very next page, however, Hobbes reveals his Gnostic intentions: "Though nothing can be immortal, which mortals make; yet if men had the use of reason they pretend to, their commonwealths might be secured, at least from perishing by internal diseases." He then proceeds to discuss the "things that weaken, or tend to the dissolution of a commonwealth," and suggests appropriate remedies.<sup>104</sup> Again, this is not an extreme form of Gnosticism, but it

fails to maintain the balance required to recognize the fundamental nature of man's condition, as Plato does when he admits that even the best polis of the Republic will, if it survives external threats long enough, disintegrate from internal causes.

Before investigating in detail the exact method, or gnosis, Hobbes has in mind for establishing the everlasting constitution, the matter of his scepticism should be looked into, as it will help to illuminate Hobbes's construction of the Leviathan state. A cursory reading of Hobbes might seem to indicate that he certainly does not take the idea of Christian salvation very seriously. For he reduces the requirements for salvation to the simple formula that one must believe internally that "Jesus is the Christ."<sup>105</sup> Even nominal external signs of faith seem to be optional: "And for their faith, it is internal and invisible; they have the license that Naaman had [of bowing to idols], and need not put themselves into danger for it."<sup>106</sup> In fact, the most important duty of a Christian, for Hobbes, is obedience to the sovereign, even in matters of faith: "And in case a subject be forbidden by the civil sovereign to profess some of those his opinions, upon what just ground can he disobey?"<sup>107</sup>

All of this may seem astounding from the standpoint of orthodox Christianity, but it follows very

logically from Hobbes's earlier discussed separation of God's natural and prophetic kingdoms. In the natural kingdom, God's laws are those deduced using natural reason, and the most important of those is obedience to the sovereign. It is with this distinction, based on his eschatology, as a fundamental feature of his political theory, that Hobbes is able to say: "There can therefore be no contradiction between the laws of God, and the laws of a Christian commonwealth."<sup>108</sup> In other words, there can be no conflict between the external works produced by one's internal faith and the laws of the society in which one lives.

The idea of salvation is by no means superfluous in Hobbes's overall scheme of things. Every man should desire to be saved. But since for all intents and purposes he takes it as a given, it has no effect on his political theory of the natural kingdom. There is what amounts to a drastic separation of spiritual and temporal. What does seem a little strained is the interpretation of Scripture Hobbes comes up with to support the distinction between prophetic and natural kingdoms, that is that a prophetic kingdom consists of God directly, through the commands of prophets, ruling a people who have covenanted with him, and that this situation has existed only from the time of Moses to the election of Saul, which constituted a rejection of God's covenant, and will only exist

again at Christ's second coming. What Hobbes essentially has to do is to reject the idea that the transfiguration of reality began with Christ; that is, to put it in the language of covenants, that the faithful are not now in the process of entering into the kingdom of God through the covenant they have made with him but rather will do so "all at once" at Christ's Second Coming. His arguments seem rather inconclusive: Hobbes seems to understand "kingdom of God" as meaning a kingdom in the literal sense, applied anachronistically to Israel under Moses and the Judges (the prophetic kingdom). He rejects the possibility that the meaning of the word "kingdom" might have changed with Christ.

And in the New Testament, the angel Gabriel saith of our Saviour (Luke i. 32,33) He shall be great, and be called the Son of the most High, and the Lord shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. This is also a kingdom upon earth; for the claim whereof, as an enemy to Caesar, he was put to death; the title of his cross, was Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews; he was crowned in scorn with a crown of thorns; and for the proclaiming of him, it is said of the disciples (Acts xvii. 7) That they did all of them contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying there was another king, one Jesus. The kingdom therefore of God is a real, not a metaphorical kingdom; and so taken, not only in the Old Testament, but in the New; when we say, For thine is the kingdom, the power, and glory, it is to be understood of God's kingdom, by force of our covenant, not by the right of God's power; for such a kingdom God always hath; so that it were superfluous to say in our prayer, Thy kingdom come, unless it be meant of the restoration of that kingdom of God by Christ, which by the revolt of the Israelites had been interrupted in the election of Saul. Nor had it been proper to say, Thy kingdom of heaven is at hand; or to pray, Thy kingdom come, if it had still continued.109

Clearly, there are a number of debatable points in Hobbes's interpretation here, as well as in the following crucial passage:

For as much therefore, as he that redeemeth hath no title to the thing redeemed, before the redemption, and ransom paid; and this ransom was the death of the Redeemer; it is manifest, that our Saviour, as man, was not king of those that he redeemed, before he suffered death; that is, during that time he conversed bodily on the earth. I say, he was not then king in present, by virtue of the pact, which the faithful make with him in baptism. Nevertheless, by the renewing of their pact with God in baptism, they were obliged to obey him for king, under his Father, whensoever he should be pleased to take the kingdom upon him. According whereunto, our Saviour himself expressly saith (John xviii. 36) My kingdom is not of this world. Now seeing the Scripture maketh mention but of two worlds; this that is now, and shall remain unto the day of judgment, which is therefore also called the last day; and that which shall be after the day of judgment, when there shall be a new heaven, and a new earth: the kingdom of Christ [that is, the prophetic kingdom of God] is not to begin till the general resurrection.<sup>110</sup>

The point here is that a most fundamental part of Hobbes's theology, upon which rests the justification for the naturalistic form of his political theory, is based on some very dubious interpretations of Scripture. This does not necessarily mean that Hobbes was acting in bad faith; rather it means perhaps that he was simply less careful in handling questions that he perhaps subconsciously deemed of minor importance. That is, for reasons discussed earlier in the chapter, I do not think Hobbes's scepticism was full-blown; he probably really did believe in God and the idea of Christian salvation, but

this-worldly peace was so important to him that he would tend simply to block out of his mind any elements of orthodox Christian doctrine that would have any tendency to disturb civil peace.

His idea that Christianity could not really contain any ideas destructive to civil peace reflects a fundamental conviction, Gnostic in nature, that the peace and eternity of heaven, or at least an approximation thereto, could in fact be established on earth through the appropriate civil theology. One can see the same general way of thinking among civil religionists today. We can say that when Hobbes focused on questions of Christian theology, the Gnostic civil theology that formed a fundamental part of his subsidiary awareness tended to make him oblivious to inconsistencies in his positions and to simple disregard for various doctrinal distinctions, as again can be seen with present-day civil religionists who will dismiss fundamental and often irreconcilable differences between denominations as inconsequential as long as the parties in question "believe in God." It can also be seen that this state of mind would also explain Hobbes's reduction of the requirements for salvation to his simple formula, without any elaboration of what the formula really means in terms of related beliefs or external actions. With Hobbes we have an incipient scepticism that does not reject the various religious dogmas

struggling for political power, but simply reduces them to a least common denominator so that they may be controlled by the political sovereign whose fundamental dogma is that "truth means political peace."

This section initially considered the problem of why Hobbes first builds a naturalistic theory of politics and only then considers matters of God and religion. The answer was that Hobbes considers the world to be in an intermediate stage of history, between eras when God rules directly, and that at present God rules only indirectly, through natural reason. Thus the construction of a naturalistic political theory is precisely how one would allow God to rule at this stage in history. It was pointed out that Hobbes is here attempting a Gnostic leap into eternity by claiming to have found universally valid principles of politics which may enable a civil society to endure indefinitely. It was also shown that the questionable interpretations of Scripture that Hobbes uses to make his distinction between natural and prophetic kingdoms are indicative of a incipient scepticism--one that would leave him honestly blinded to inconsistencies in his positions. As has been noted, it might be wondered how one could be a Gnostic and a sceptic at the same time. The solution to this problem has been hinted at and will now be made explicit.

### Man as the Creator of Symbols

The last section has shown that the fundamental orientation of Hobbes's philosophy suggests a moderately "pure" Gnostic consciousness, of the type elucidated in Chapter Two. An examination of what amounts to Hobbes's theological justification for his political theory, on the other hand, has shown that his least common denominator interpretation of Christianity shows a definite tendency toward scepticism. How can these two inferences be reconciled? Voegelin has provided an excellent starting point in a discussion of experience and symbolization equivalence:

Let us assume the philosopher to have deformed himself by adopting the belief that the truth of existence is a set of propositions concerning the right order of man in society and history, the propositions to be demonstrably true and therefore acceptable to everybody. If, holding this belief, he enters the field of symbols, he will be disappointed and bewildered. In vain will he look for the one set of true propositions that he may well expect to have emerged from the labors of mankind over a period of five thousand years. The historical field will present itself rather as a selva oscura of such sets, differing from one another, each claiming to be the only true one, but none of them commanding the universal acceptance it demands in the name of truth. Far from discovering the permanent values of existence, he will find himself lost in the noisy struggle among the possessors of dogmatic truth--theological, or metaphysical, or ideological. If in this confrontation with the dogmatomachy of the field he does not lose his head and join the battle, but holds firmly to his belief that existential truth, if it can be found at all, must be an ultimate catalog of propositions, rules or values, he will tend toward certain conclusions. Intellectually, he will perhaps suspect a search that has been going on for millennia without producing the desired result, of being a pursuit of the unknowable that had better be abandoned; if then he contemplates the unedifying spectacle of dogmatomachy--with its frustration, anxiety, alienation, ferocious vituperation, and violence--, he will

perhaps deem it also morally preferable not to engage further in the search. And we shall hardly blame him, if in the end he decides that scepticism is the better part of wisdom and becomes an honest relativist and historicist.

The questionable phase in the philosopher's process of thought is not the sceptical conclusion but the initial belief by which he forces upon the field of symbols the appearance of a perpetual dogmatomachy. Against this charge, however, he can plead that he is unjustly accused of doing violence to the field--the belief is not his invention--he has found it as a phenomenon in the surrounding field, massively imposing itself on him,--and he is doing no more than drawing sensible conclusions from his observations.<sup>111</sup>

This description must certainly evoke images of the typical present-day liberal relativist. It might be suspected that the description would perhaps roughly fit Hobbes as well. The important point would be Hobbes's attitude toward the form truth must take. In this regard he says:

By this we may understand, there be two kinds of knowledge, whereof the one is nothing else but sense, or knowledge original, . . . and remembrance of the same; the other is called science or the knowledge of the truth of propositions, and how things are called, and is derived from understanding. . . . In every proposition, be it affirmative or negative, the latter appellation either comprehendeth the former, as in this proposition, charity is a virtue, the name of virtue comprehendeth the name of charity, and many other virtues beside; and then is the proposition said to be true, or truth; for truth, and a true proposition, is all one.<sup>112</sup>

It is evident, then, that Hobbes thinks of truth as that which can be grasped through the appropriate set of propositions. (It should perhaps be noted here, to prevent any confusion from arising, that the broad sense in

which I have generally used the word "truth" corresponds most closely to Hobbes's "knowledge;" for Hobbes, knowledge consists of true [in a narrow sense] propositions.) And, further, at the time he lived, there was indeed a massive and bloody struggle going on among the various self-perceived possessors of propositional truth. It is not surprising, then, that his reaction would tend in the direction of the scepticism described above.

Aside from the manifestations of this incipient scepticism already noted, it is well known that Hobbes was not terribly impressed with the propositional systems of various other intellectuals of the time, and most notably those of the Scholastics. What exactly was wrong with these propositional systems? What does Hobbes have that the Schoolmen are missing? Probably most important is his ability to avoid "insignificant speech":

There is yet another fault in the discourses of some men; which may also be numbered amongst the sorts of madness; namely, that abuse of words, whereof I have spoken before in the fifth chapter, by the name of absurdity. And that is, when men speak such words, as put together, have in them no signification at all; but are fallen upon by some, through misunderstanding of the words they have received, and repeat by rote; by others from intention to deceive by obscurity. And this is incident to none but those, that converse in questions of matters incomprehensible, as the School-men; or in questions of abstruse philosophy. The common sort of men seldom speak insignificantly, and are, therefore, by those other egregious persons counted idiots. But to be assured their words are without any thing correspondent to them in the mind, there would need some examples; which if any man require, let him take a School-man in his hands and see if he can translate

any one chapter concerning any difficult point, as the Trinity; the Deity; the nature of Christ; transubstantiation; free-will, &c. into any of the modern tongues, so as to make the same intelligible; or into any tolerable Latin, such as they were acquainted withal, that lived when the Latin tongue was vulgar. What is the meaning of these words, The first cause does not necessarily inflow any thing into the second, by force of the essential subordination of the second causes, by which it may help it to work? They are the translation of the title of the sixth chapter of Suarez' first book, Of the concourse, motion, and help of God. When men write whole volumes of such stuff, are they not mad, or intend to make others so?<sup>113</sup>

Hobbes thus is claiming that he does not abuse language. But how does one avoid the abuse of language, or to put it positively, how does one use language correctly? The place to begin here would be with Hobbes's understanding of reason.

Reason, he states, "is nothing but reckoning, that is adding and subtracting, of the consequences of general names agreed upon for the marking and signifying of our thoughts."<sup>114</sup> The process will be short-circuited, it appears, when one does not name things correctly, or to put it another way, if one does not create the proper symbols to represent one's experiences. Hobbes states this explicitly: "there is not one of them [philosophers talking nonsense] that begins his ratiocination from the definitions, or explications of the names they are to use; which is a method that hath been used only in geometry; whose conclusions have thereby been made indisputable."<sup>115</sup> Creating the wrong symbols will derail the thought process

from the beginning. It would seem, then, that if one creates the correct symbols one can reason to correct propositions and be in possession of truth, as is done in geometry.

Up to this point, I have used the term "creating symbols" rather loosely. I certainly have not necessarily implied that the references to it with regard to Hobbes are meant in the sense developed in the previous chapter. But if we look at Hobbes's discussion of perception, it can be seen that he does seem to have in mind precisely the notion of knowledge that the symbol "creating symbols" represents in the previous chapter. At the very beginning of Leviathan, he says:

The cause of sense, is the external body, or object, which presseth the organ proper to each sense . . . which pressure . . . continued inwards to the brain and heart, causeth there a resistance, or counter pressure, or endeavour of the heart to deliver itself, which endeavour, because outward, seemeth to be some matter without. And this seeming, or fancy, is that which men call sense. . . . All which qualities called sensible, are in the object, that causeth them, but so many motions of the matter, by which it presseth our organs diversely. . . . And as pressing, rubbing, or striking the eye, makes us fancy a light . . . so do the bodies also we see . . . produce the same by their strong, though unobserved action. For if those colors and sounds were in the bodies, or objects that cause them, they could not be severed from them, as by glasses . . . where we know the thing we see is in one place, the appearance in another. And though at some certain distance, the real and very object seems invested with the fancy it begets in us; yet still the object is one thing, the image or fancy is another.<sup>116</sup>

He then distinguishes this from the kind of notion prevalent in Scholastic philosophy:

But the philosophy-schools, through all the universities of Christendom, grounded upon certain texts of Aristotle, teach another doctrine, and say, for the cause of vision, that the thing seen, sendeth forth on every side a visible species . . . the receiving whereof into the eye, is seeing.<sup>117</sup>

As I understand it, there is something more important going on here than can be expressed by simply calling Hobbes a nominalist. He seems to have a much more active conception of human perceptual experience than Aristotle and the medieval world did. Man does not passively receive sense experiences; he (his senses, his brain) creates them. It should be made clear that Hobbes is not saying that man creates reality; there really is something "out there" that man perceives. But the properties we associate with the objects of our perception seem to be the results of processes in our minds (to be sure, caused initially by those objects) rather than anything "innate" in the objects. That is, they are symbols we have created to describe the perceptual experience--but they are the wrong symbols if they attribute our experience of "heat, cold, hardness, softness" to something "in" the objects, because we have failed to realize that we have created those symbols ourselves. Again, what is important is not Hobbes's epistemology per se, but his implication that man is an active creator of symbols. And, further, one should not look for "logical conclusions" following from this premise to appear eventually in his political theory. A

vast body of literature has shown that there are considerable logical inconsistencies in the development of Hobbes's philosophy, as well as many places where he violates his own rules of thought, such as his prohibition on metaphors.<sup>118</sup>

What should be sought, from a Voegelinian standpoint, is a reappearance of this symbol, man as creator of symbols--which has been seen in two different forms so far in Hobbes's discussion of reason and perception--as a fundamental underlying feature in Hobbes's political theory. If the experience of an active form of participation in reality is really an important part of Hobbes's consciousness, the symbolization of it just discussed will form an important part of his subsidiary awareness, and should play a very significant role in moulding his conceptions of political life.

Specifically, we should find some or other form of the symbol "man as the creator of symbols" enveloping the fundamental symbols that appear in his political theory. To this end the three decisive symbols in Hobbes's politics--the Leviathan state, the state of nature, and the Kingdom of Darkness--will be investigated.

### Symbol Creation and Politics

The three symbols to be discussed in this section contain many symbols and meanings within them, as well as within their relationships. It has already been pointed

out in Chapter One that, for example, the opposition of the Leviathan state to the Kingdom of Darkness is itself a Gnostic dualism, that one can discern at least vaguely the community of autonomous individuals within the general framework of the Leviathan, and so forth. As has been explained previously, I will examine the manifestation that the symbol man as creator of symbols takes in each of these and explicate the relation among the symbols with regard to this symbol. It will be seen that the peace of the Leviathan state results from correct creation of symbols and again displays Gnostic intentions; the unsatisfactory condition of the Kingdom of Darkness is caused by incorrect symbol creation and shows, as discussed earlier, the roots of Hobbes's tendency to scepticism; and the chaos of the state of nature results from too many symbol creators--here the source of Hobbes's individualism and its political result, the necessity of undivided sovereignty, come into view. Let us examine the state of nature first.

Hobbes's state of nature has provided a source of constant fascination for political theorists. It is accorded such a prominent place in secondary works and interpretations that the student is perhaps surprised to find how little space Hobbes actually devotes to an explicit description of that state itself. It is considered of such importance, of course, because it is perceived as the

logical culmination of his understanding of human nature and knowledge and because the institutions of the Leviathan are understood as logically necessary outcomes of it. While these rigorous connections may not necessarily be the case,<sup>119</sup> there certainly does exist a connection between the key symbols involved, as will be shown. The state of nature itself has been given numerous interpretations. These have included various versions of an emerging bourgeois ethic, a secularized form of the Calvinistic conception of human nature (Voegelin's own interpretation is probably closest to this one), the random, inertial motion of Galilean physics applied to the social world, and others.<sup>120</sup> Good arguments can be made for all of these interpretations because, at the level of symbols, Hobbes's work is not a monolith. Hobbes would have felt, in varying degrees and at various times, all of the experiences implied in the above interpretations and would use assorted symbolizations of these experiences at various places in his discussion. And, of course, the symbol man as creator of symbols is there as well, and plays a fundamental role.

A few commentators have touched on this matter, but have not approached the problem in such a manner that they could discern this specific symbol in the overall context of the state of nature symbol. Howard Warrender points out that, contrary to what is often understood, in

the matter of individual moral action, Hobbes is not really a relativist; or to put it another way, might does not equal right except in the sense that the moral law is simply a result of God's all-powerful will. But men in the state of nature are only obligated to follow the law in foro interno, not in foro externo: to put it a bit crudely, one is obligated to feel guilty about making other people's lives nasty, brutish, and short, but one can indeed continue to do so. One is obliged to follow the law in one's external actions when the sovereign has eliminated, or at least transferred to himself, the fear of others that dispenses the external obligation in the state of nature.<sup>121</sup>

Now, why does a person fear other persons in the state of nature? Sheldon Wolin comes very close to uncovering the fundamental symbol when he observes that, for Hobbes, "one of the most important factors in establishing and maintaining the identity of a political society was a common language."<sup>122</sup> There must be an authority who will create a language with which people can communicate with each other. And this is why fear pervades the state of nature: men cannot communicate with each other. And they cannot communicate with each other, they lack a common language, because each man creates his own symbols. Of course, in his actual description of the state of nature, Hobbes emphasizes man's lust for gain, glory, and so

forth, but these prove destructive only because nothing, such as a system of rules, is available to keep the conflict within the bounds of the precepts of the moral law.<sup>123</sup>

Hobbes seems to be stating the problem of a lack of a common language resulting from each man generating his own symbols when he says "From . . . ignorance of the signification of words . . . it proceedeth, that men give different names, to one and the same thing, from the difference of their own passions."<sup>124</sup> Or, again, he describes a situation of conflict as resulting from communication problems, when

as in arithmetic, unpractised men must, and professors themselves may often, err, and cast up false; so also in any other subject of reasoning, the ablest, most attentive, and most practised men may deceive themselves, and infer false conclusions. . . . Therefore, as when there is a controversy in an account, the parties must by their own accord, set up, for right reason, the reason of some arbitrator, or judge, to whose sentence they will both stand, or their controversy must either come to blows or be undecided, for want of a right reason constituted by nature.<sup>125</sup>

Hobbes then again explains what is necessary for right reason:

For there can be no certainty of the last conclusion, without a certainty of all those affirmations and negations, on which it was grounded and inferred. . . . He that takes up conclusions on the trust of authors, and doth not fetch them from the first items in every reckoning, which are the significations of names settled by definitions, loses his labor.<sup>126</sup>

Confusion is caused by many symbols when there should be one.

The problem of different people creating different symbols for the same thing can, of course, also be seen in Hobbes's discussion of perception. It can be seen that from the Aristotelian-Scholastic conception of perception there would not be a great deal of concern over problems of differences between the perceptions of different individuals. Since man more or less passively receives the perceptual symbols from the object being perceived, one would assume that all people will perceive the same object more or less the same. With Hobbes's epistemology, a vexing question arises: How does one know if the motions in the brain of one person produce the same symbol as those in another person's brain? One can see here the beginnings, or, more correctly, one of the beginnings (along with the questions raised by Descartes and others) of the modern epistemological morass. I suspect that ultimately the individualistic nature of modern liberal epistemology is actually a type of symbol of the experience of social disintegration, but this matter would be beyond the scope of this thesis.

The mention of symbols of social disintegration recalls the contract symbol discussed in the section on Voegelin's interpretation of Hobbes. The symbol man as creator of symbols symbolizes, it might be said, Hobbes's intuitive understanding of the reason for social breakdown. But the state created by the contracting process symbolizes

Hobbes's intuitive solution to the problem. And again creation of symbols turns out to be a fundamental political experience.

From what has been said already, it should be relatively clear how the symbol of man the symbol creator provides the underpinning for the Leviathan state. The sovereign must create the symbols that will enable the citizens to realize that they are all obligated by a universal moral law; in the state of nature each person could not be sure that others were aware of their obligation. Hobbes summarizes this well in his discussion of the rights and duties of the sovereign:

The procuration of the safety of the people . . . should be done, not by care applied to individuals . . . but by a general providence, contained in public instruction, both of doctrine, and example. . . . It is against his duty, to let the people be ignorant, or misinformed of the grounds, and reasons of those his essential rights; because thereby men are easy to be seduced, and drawn to resist him, when the commonwealth shall require their use and exercise.

And the grounds of these rights, have the rather need to be diligently, and truly taught; because they cannot be maintained by any civil law, or terror of legal punishment. For a civil law, that shall forbid rebellion, (and such is all resistance to the essential rights of the sovereignty), is not, as a civil law, any obligation, but by virtue only of the law of nature, that forbiddeth the violation of faith; which natural obligation, if men know not, they cannot know the right of any law the sovereign maketh.<sup>127</sup>

"Within this context," says Wolin, "the act of covenanting, whereby each man surrendered his natural right to the sovereign, represented more than a method for

establishing peace. It was the agency for creating a political universe of unequivocal meaning."<sup>128</sup>

What is of greatest interest in the symbol of the Leviathan state is the way the creator symbolism reveals its Gnostic nature. It is well known that Hobbes considered geometry and civil philosophy to be the only two sciences that were entirely "demonstrable." The problem with other sciences, by which Hobbes means what today would generally be called the natural sciences, is that one must reason "backward" from effects to probable causes. With geometry and civil philosophy, however, one can work from causes to effects, because one can know the causes exactly. This is plain enough for the case of geometry, where one creates the symbols known as definitions and axioms, and then reasons from them to demonstrably true propositions.<sup>129</sup> But just what does Hobbes mean in the case of civil philosophy?

It would seem that the causes of the Commonwealth are the people who make it up, or more precisely, the human nature that moves men to covenant and form civil society. Men, says Hobbes, "are the makers, and orderers of [commonwealths]."<sup>130</sup> This situation can be interpreted in two ways, it would seem. One is that Hobbes is evidently claiming to have complete knowledge of human nature. Clearly, this is a Gnostic symbol, since in the classical-Christian tradition, one cannot have complete

knowledge of human nature, since this would require complete knowledge of God. A more subtle interpretation is also available. Note that in geometry, the axioms and definitions, the abstract ideas, or actually the symbols of those ideas, created by the geometer, in a sense "create" the true propositions of geometry, in the sense that the conclusions always follow logically from them. The mathematician can create any symbols, any axioms and definitions, that he wants and still get the correct propositional conclusions. Now, one might say that men create commonwealths by covenanting, and this would be analogous to the axioms and definitions creating the conclusions which the geometer discovers. If one wants to use "creation" in the sense of the geometer creating symbols, one would want to say that the political theorist can create "men" who will logically "result in" a certain kind of commonwealth, just as particular types of definitions and axioms will logically result in certain kinds of theorems. Then all the theorist has to do is discover the kind of commonwealth his men would create. In other words, the theorist can, by creating a certain type of man, or actually the symbol of a certain type of man, enter into a new world, a second reality, where the everlasting constitution can be promulgated by the theorist on the basis of his complete knowledge of the new type of man he has created. This is essentially

Voegelin's interpretation of Hobbes in The New Science of Politics, although he does not develop it through the analogy with geometry that I have used.<sup>131</sup>

It can be seen that both interpretations, moreover, can be correct. On one level, Hobbes sees himself as having exact knowledge of human nature, as when he says, "whosoever looketh into himself, and considereth what he doth, when he does think, opine, reason, hope, fear, &c. and upon what grounds; he shall thereby read and know, what are the thoughts and passions of all other men upon the like occasions."<sup>132</sup> Moreover, he compares man to a machine, implying the expectation of exact knowledge rather than an abysmal mystery.<sup>133</sup> On another level, it can be seen that, with the symbols man as creator of symbols and the Gnostic leap into eternity dominating his subsidiary awareness, when Hobbes focuses on the problem of human nature, he ends up creating a new kind of man or, actually, a symbol of a new type of man, one who will allow him to establish the everlasting constitution.

Again, it should be stressed that Hobbes's Gnosticism is of a moderate sort; his new man still bears a substantial relation to reality in many respects, unlike the new man of Marx or Condorcet, for example, and he holds out only a slim hope that the everlasting constitution can actually be established. But the symbols clearly

do indicate a tendency toward a Gnostic type of experiential orientation.

Finally, the Kingdom of Darkness symbol can be treated briefly. It might first be pointed out that not only is this Kingdom the dualistic counterpart to the Leviathan, but it is in a sense another version of the state of nature, where discord arises from problems of communication. Here the problem is not the lack of a sovereign to create proper ordering symbols but competition with the sovereign by those who have mistakenly or avariciously created symbols that indicate that they should be superior to the sovereign.

Both the dualistic nature of this symbol and the man as symbol creator symbol become very clear when one examines the world of erroneous symbols that Hobbes regards the clerics of the Kingdom as having constructed through misinterpretation of Scripture, vain (Aristotelian) philosophy, the appropriation of assorted ancient pagan traditions, and so forth. The symbols created by the clerics tend to parallel those created by Hobbes to establish Leviathan. A couple of examples will suffice.

Whereas Hobbes symbolizes the kingdom of God in a manner that makes the temporal sovereign the supreme authority on earth, the clerics create a similar symbol in such a way, according to Hobbes, that they are made the supreme power on earth:

The greatest and main abuse of Scripture, and to which almost all the rest are either consequent or subservient, is the wresting of it, to prove that the kingdom of God, mentioned so often in the Scripture, is the present Church, or multitude of Christian men now living, or that being dead, are to rise again on the last day. . . .Consequent to this error, that the present Church is Christ's kingdom, there ought to be some one man, or assembly, by whose mouth our Saviour, now in heaven, speaketh, giveth law, and which representeth his person to all Christians.<sup>134</sup>

The creation of the symbol of the Church as the kingdom of God allows the Pope to usurp the powers of Hobbes's sovereign, including, most importantly, that of creating symbols, as Hobbes discusses at length in the ensuing pages of Leviathan.<sup>135</sup> Of these symbols, perhaps the most interesting is the symbol of eternal torment for those who disobey the Church, since, in keeping with the parallelism of symbols noted earlier, it bears a strong resemblance to Hobbes's sovereign's admonitions not to rebel on pain of a reversion to the horrors of the state of nature. Further, Hobbes sees the creation of this symbol as a prime factor in the dissolution of a commonwealth, and describes its effects using a metaphor that is a commonplace in the construction of the eternal torment symbol itself:

So also in the body politic, when the spiritual power, moveth the members of a commonwealth, by the terror of punishments, and hope of rewards, which are the nerves of it, otherwise than by the civil power, which is the soul of the commonwealth, they ought to be moved; and by strange, and hard words suffocates their understanding, it must needs thereby distract the people, and either overwhelm the commonwealth with oppression, or cast it into the fire of a civil war.<sup>136</sup>

Competition with the sovereign by those who create symbols

incorrectly has the same effect on a society as competition with the Church by those who teach heresies has on individuals.

It will be recalled that the chapter was to conclude with a discussion of the relationships among the fundamental symbols in Hobbes's political theory. As these relationships have been pointed out throughout the discussion, it will be sufficient to summarize them here.

As Hobbes sees it, the relationship between science and his political theory is that his political theory is built using what amounts to scientific method. That this is in fact the case is, as has been seen, doubtful, but the symbol science is most certainly related to his political theory in a more subtle manner. Specifically, it has been shown that the symbol of man as the creator of symbols, which is the fundamental notion underlying Hobbes's conception of science, appears throughout, and, indeed, is the basis of, his political symbols. The relations among the State of Nature, the Leviathan state, and the Kingdom of Darkness also, as has been discussed, hinge on this symbol. Although it is customary to see the Leviathan as the logical requirement of the description of human nature developed in the State of Nature, it has been shown that the actual connection is better understood as being the symbol man the creator of symbols. The disorder of the State of Nature is replaced by the order of the Leviathan state when many symbol

creators are replaced with one. Similarly, the dualism of the Leviathan and the Kingdom of Darkness is based on the distinction between correct and incorrect symbol creation. Disorder will replace order if the symbol creation process is not carried out properly. Finally, the State of Nature and the Kingdom of Darkness are related in that they are the respective manifestations of two problems that can arise from man's situation as a creator of symbols: too many symbol creators and incorrect symbol creation. The relations among the fundamental symbols in Hobbes's political philosophy can be summed up by saying that the symbols are not related, or connected, by linear logic, but rather by a single fundamental conception of the nature of man's relationship to reality which pervades and forms those symbols.

The analysis of this section has essentially rounded out the interpretation of Hobbes that this chapter was to undertake. It can already be seen that Voegelin's analysis of Hobbes has in part been confirmed, subject in places to the caveats of Chapter Two. But the explication of the fundamental symbols in Hobbes's philosophy and the experiences engendering them has probably raised as many questions as it has answered. Specifically, it remains to be seen what the implications for Voegelin's overall interpretation of modernity and his philosophy generally will be. This will be the task of the Conclusion.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

I will begin this conclusion with a brief summary of the results of the investigation and then proceed to discuss the implications of those results for Voegelin's philosophy.

The discussion began by explicating Voegelin's basic philosophy: that man orders his political existence through various symbols understood to represent transcendent truth, and that changes in man's experience require the periodic resymbolization of truth as the old symbols become unintelligible. The resymbolization will often provide increasingly differentiated insights into the truth of existence, so that man's conception of himself, the world, and God can become clearer, as happened with the development of Israelite-Christian Revelation and Greek Philosophy. But insights once held can also be lost, and man may also recede in terms of the clarity and truthfulness of his understanding of the order of being. Voegelin claimed this has happened in the modern world. The impressive differentiation and increased knowledge with regard to the physical world that have been the accomplishments of modern science have been accompanied

by a loss of understanding of man's nature and his relation to God, with disastrous results.

Specifically, the classical-Christian understanding of man as existing in tension toward the divine Ground of Being, of living in-between perfection and the mundane world, has been replaced by a Gnostic form of consciousness that understands man as capable of escaping his worldly condition and attaining perfection on earth, either through progress or revolution. Furthermore, Voegelin claims, Christianity bears a heavy burden of responsibility for this situation, since the modern Gnostic movements can be understood as secularizations of the various Christian millenarian movements, which have received their impetus from the fact that Christianity has claimed to possess final and complete revelation, leaving post-medieval political society with no spiritual function to perform but a "waiting for the end." The modern Gnostic movements have attempted to fill this gap in modern civilization's self-interpretation.

As a result, Voegelin has intimated that the resymbolization of the truth of existence that is the task of philosophy in this century must tend in the direction of a process theology that leaves for man an active spiritual role and that, it would appear, eliminates the idea that the final transfiguration of reality toward which reality is moving actually has begun with Christ--a very

problematic situation for Christianity and its interpretation of the Christ-event as unique.

To establish the basic purpose of the thesis, I had earlier suggested that Voegelin's interpretation of modernity could perhaps be revised, with further implications for his philosophy generally. Specifically, I stated that there might be significant differences between liberalism and the more radical ideologies; if the symbols and experiences involved could be shown to exhibit certain kinds of differences, one would want to be wary of characterizing all of modernity as a Gnostic monolith. This provided the basic framework for the discussion of Chapters Two and Three.

In the second chapter I raised two problems, that if pursued to their conclusions, could imply revisions in Voegelin's interpretation of modernity and perhaps in his philosophy as a whole, at least in respects other than his most basic first principles such as existential and transcendent representation, compactness and differentiation of experience and its symbolization, man existing in tension toward the Ground, and a few others.

Specifically, I attempted to clarify Voegelin's use of the term Gnosticism, which had been a bit vague, or more correctly I developed a clearer classification of modern phenomena based on a distinction Voegelin had made himself when discussing the problem of objectifying the

experience of tension in existence. It was suggested that one could distinguish between experience and symbolization that tended toward "pure" apocalyptic, with the expectation of a future transfiguration of reality in history but with no clear idea of how it would happen, as in modern immanentist utopianism; experience and symbolization that tended toward "pure" gnosis, emphasizing an immediate escape into eternity through some very specific form of knowledge; and experience and symbolization tending to combine these two, with elements of both knowledge to achieve the transfiguration and schemata of a future or present ongoing transfiguration of reality in time, as with modern progressivist or revolutionary movements. It was suggested that one might find in Hobbes, and thus liberalism, at least in its classical form, a tendency toward the "pure" form of Gnosticism.

The other matter discussed as a source of possible modification of Voegelin's ideas was the problem of symbol creation. It was suggested that the development of the modern subject, in which Voegelin had displayed relatively little interest, might be closely tied to the nature of liberalism via the development of modern science and might be manifested most clearly in the prevalent modern liberal propositional deformation of symbols of transcendence. Specifically, I developed very briefly the idea that the modern subject-object dichotomy might be a symbolization

of what might be termed the perceived experience for man of actively creating, rather than passively receiving, symbols to represent reality. Again it was guessed that a symbol of this sort might play a prominent role in Hobbes's thought and might therefore illuminate further the nature of liberal modernity.

The third chapter applied a Voegelinian analysis to Hobbes, focusing on the questions raised in the second chapter. It was concluded that Hobbes's construction of a timeless, ahistorical "kingdom of God by nature" where revelation has been superseded by unchanging natural principles that the philosopher can fully determine once for all is indeed a Gnostic symbol, specifically of the "pure" type adumbrated in Chapter Two. Further, it was shown that one can discern in Hobbes a sort of incipient scepticism, as manifested most noticeably in his reduction of Christianity to a least common denominator. This scepticism, it was additionally concluded, could be seen as primarily a product of his understanding of truth as a set of propositions. In Chapter Two it was mentioned that this understanding, along with the deformation of symbols it causes, is likely a product of the pervasive experience of self-conscious creation of propositions, which itself would be part of a class of experiences that would be represented using some form of the symbol "man as creator of symbols." Thus, it was shown that this symbol appears

in Hobbes's epistemology and political theory in various forms, and in particular seems to be, at one level, the very foundation of the Leviathan state.

Moreover, the symbol was shown to be Gnostic in nature, as it allows Hobbes to enter the eternal world of the kingdom of God by nature by creating the symbol of the modern passion-motivated man from which ineluctably follows the chaotic state of nature and the solution of Leviathan, at least if one assumes that communication is impossible under any other condition, since each of the competitive men in the state of nature creates his own symbols for interpreting and representing reality.

The question now is, how does all of this relate to a possible distinction between liberal and non-liberal modernity? Certainly we can see in Hobbes, as had been anticipated in the second chapter, a tentative division that could be made by saying that liberal modernity tends toward "pure" Gnosticism, while other ideologies contain a combination of Gnostic and apocalyptic symbols. Of course, this conclusion, to be fully justified, would have to be based on an examination of the symbols found in the writings of later liberals, and this enterprise would be complicated by the previously mentioned tendency of liberalism to fuse with assorted elements of progressivist or even radical ideologies by the nineteenth century. But I think I can briefly sketch out an argument that would

lend some support to this thesis.

It can be observed that revolutionary ideologies will tend to offer a comprehensive blueprint for the transformation of the world, and the various forms of progressivism, while maintaining rather vague goals, certainly hold tenaciously to the idea of constant change and improvement brought about by some kind of gnosis. Liberalism, on the other hand, particularly in classical form, with a minimum of progressive influences, shows a very strong tendency toward piecemeal reform; there is a tendency to establish one particular goal and to imply that once this goal--Hobbes's civil theology, Locke's property-protecting state, Smith's free market, Mill's liberty--is reached, further change will be unnecessary. This corresponds to the symbol of an immediate leap into eternity, or in other words a pure Gnosticism.

Voegelin has observed this symbol in liberalism himself, but he has not distinguished it from the progressive and apocalyptic elements that have entered liberalism more recently: "For in liberalism also there is an irrational element of an eschatological final state, of a society which will produce through its rational methods, without violent disturbances, a condition of everlasting peace."<sup>137</sup> I have indicated already that it would be better to distinguish between the Gnostic leap into eternity, the constitution which will produce

everlasting peace, and the apocalyptic notion of progress toward ever greater justice, prosperity, and so forth, which would tend to fuse with classical liberalism at a later date. The fusion would tend to produce policies of ad hoc piecemeal reform, rather than a unified view of how the world can be perfected. This would also explain Voegelin's observation that liberalism constantly finds itself and its reforms being "overtaken" by the more radical ideologies.<sup>138</sup> Liberalism, at least when close to its classical form, has no clear vision of progress beyond the current reform. A further application of this principle will explain why some present-day classical liberals are still working on the eighteenth century reform of establishing a market system free from government intervention. As far as they are concerned, a free market economy is all that is needed to enter a condition of everlasting felicity.

The distinction between classical liberal Gnostic consciousness and more recent progressivist liberal Gnostic/apocalyptic consciousness can also be used to clarify a phenomenon discussed in Chapter One, that of the current attack by liberalism on the civil theologies that were one of the earliest accomplishments of liberalism itself. It should first be pointed out that this attack is certainly not due to a loss of religiosity or an increase in scepticism on the part of liberals; the

religious beliefs of most liberals were already tending in the direction of deism by the time the respective civil theologies were established and it has been demonstrated in the discussion of Hobbes that the incipient scepticism of early liberalism was a primary reason for the development of those civil theologies. The answer can be found in the differences between the ways a Gnostic and an apocalyptic consciousness will focus on reality. Since classical liberalism would tend to focus strongly on one particular reform at a time, the civil theologies, once established, would tend to be accepted as a given regardless of the general religious orientation of the classical liberals. Indeed, as has already been pointed out in the first chapter, the symbols of these civil theologies would often be so much a part of a classical liberal's perceptual apparatus that he would accept and make use of them even when his own attitude to specific religious matters was one of complete scepticism. Again, this would be heavily tied to the lack of interest in a sweeping transformation of all reality. A more recent liberal apocalyptic consciousness, however, would think in terms of sweeping changes to bring about ever greater individual freedom (among other things) and would certainly make "freedom from religion," even civil religion, one of the prime goals in its program of progress. A notion of perpetual progress is more likely to display

interest in changing long-standing institutions than one of piecemeal reform.

I should stress once more that I am only describing tendencies; I have drawn the picture rather starkly to ensure that the point has been made. In terms of intensity of Gnostic consciousness, a vast gulf separates the generally down to earth early liberals and the deranged messianic speculators of the more recent radical ideologies--or even the zealots of the more unrealistic forms of recent liberal-progressivism. An example might be found in the matter of conscience, discussed in Chapter One. It was pointed out that more recent liberalism could be distinguished from earlier liberalism on the basis of recent liberalism's inability to recognize that one could follow one's conscience and still act in an evil manner. For a classical liberal, whatever conclusions rationalism might draw about the relativity of truth, simple common sense would dictate that a society that wishes to survive simply cannot allow its individuals unlimited freedom in the negative sense. But more recent liberalism, with a consciousness further removed from reality, is less likely to admit that its goal of perfect individual freedom cannot be met and hence will resist or tear down restrictions on individual freedom to the point where liberal society risks self-destruction. I do not want to delve into the complicated question of liberal attitudes to authority at

this point, but the brief and somewhat simplified analysis given here should have illuminated one of the forces bring about this change in liberal views. In any case, none of the early liberals thought that his particular reform would bring about a perfect world--although, to make clear the Gnostic tendencies of their thought, it should quickly be added that they did tend to overestimate the good results to be expected from each particular reform. In any case, it can be seen that the Gnostic vs. Gnostic/apocalyptic distinction has at least some plausibility.

As for the man as creator of symbols symbolism, one would again have to investigate the writings of later liberals and also examine the more radical ideologies for symbols of this nature. But again a few remarks can bring this problem into focus and provide another tentative conclusion. This symbol could account for the fact that liberalism has generally been the ideology that has stressed individualism the most--other modern ideologies generally contain symbols of the class of the community of autonomous individuals, but these tend to be of secondary importance, and often are almost submerged under waves of messianic collectivist symbols. And it has also been the ideology that has been most thoroughly obsessed with problems of epistemology. The connection with the man as creator of symbols symbolism should be clear: given this

orientation, the problems of how man creates symbols, and what differences there are between symbols created by different individuals, will tend to become dominant concerns. The more radical ideologies often will not have this problem because they move very strongly in the direction of understanding man as actually creating reality, not just symbols.

Another difference between liberal and millenarian modernity that this symbol could account for is one often noted by commentators, that the radical ideologies frequently seem to display a scepticism in religious or metaphysical matters that is extremely dogmatic and almost deceitful,<sup>139</sup> while liberalism exhibits, on the whole, a much more honest scepticism. The liberals are not attempting to create a dream world by dogmatically abolishing elements of reality; rather they are seriously interested in finding truth, but are sidetracked into a debilitating scepticism and relativism by a self-defeating approach.

In terms of implications for Voegelin's philosophy as a whole, I cannot say that my analysis has answered any questions. But it certainly has raised some questions. Specifically, it can be seen that if Voegelin understands the Christian linear conception of time and the presently occurring transfiguration of reality as prime culprits in the creation of modern secularized millenarianism,

liberalism, if my conclusions as to its different nature can be upheld, does not fit into this analysis. The motivation to leap directly into eternity, unlike the motivation to speed up the transfiguration of reality, does not seem to be necessarily or directly related to the experience of an indefinite stretch of future time without significant civilizational meaning. The key to unlocking the meaning of the symbol in the modern context may be found in an analysis of the symbol of man as creator of symbols, since it seems almost certainly to be tied to science.

There is one suggestion I can offer with regard to this matter. When one reads Hobbes's excoriations of the Scholastics, or, more generally, any early modern criticism of ancient and medieval thought, it is clear that Hobbes and the moderns are asking the question "how?" while the medievals want to know "why?" Why this change in the fundamental type of question should take place is an interesting and important question in itself, but what is far more fascinating, and no doubt far more important, is the question: Why do the moderns seem incapable of realizing that different questions are being asked? Here we are verging on a matter that was mentioned in passing earlier, that is the problem of continuity in experience and symbolization. Obviously any systematic discussion of this question would be extensive, but this thesis may have, in its isolation of the symbol man as creator of

symbols and its connection with the understanding of truth as propositional, provided one possible approach, an approach that should still be most useful even if one simply assumes that there is a continuity.

In any case, it can be seen that the conclusions of this thesis, while in a sense tentative, and in certain important respects supported by conjectures that would have to be examined more rigorously, are not negligible. Certain aspects of Voegelin's thought have been given substantial clarification, and some groundwork has been laid for further investigation of other important problems raised by his work. And Voegelin would be the first to say that true answers will invariably turn out simply to be new questions.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>As will be explained later in the text, this conception of political philosophy is derived from the ideas of Eric Voegelin as set forth in The New Science of Politics: An Introduction (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1952; rep. ed., Midway Reprints, 1983); Order and History, 1: Israel and Revelation; 2: The World of the Polis; 3: Plato and Aristotle; 4: The Ecumenic Age; 5: In Search of Order (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1956-); and Anamnesis, trans. and ed. Gerhart Niemeyer (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978).

<sup>2</sup>This interpretation is not uncontroversial, but it is supported by a wide variety of theorists. See, for example, Leo Strauss, "On the Spirit of Hobbes's Political Philosophy," in Hobbes Studies, ed. Keith Brown (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 13; or Sheldon Wolin, Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960), p. 268, pp. 270-271, pp. 280-282.

<sup>3</sup>This is the major thesis of New Science. See especially pp. 107-132. Also see Anamnesis, pp. 143-213.

<sup>4</sup>New Science, pp. 1-2, with detailed elaboration in Plato, pp. 1-268.

<sup>5</sup>New Science, pp. 173-178, and "Liberalism and Its History," trans. Mary and Keith Algozin, Review of Politics 36 (October 1974): pp. 504-520.

<sup>6</sup>Politics and Vision, pp. 293-294.

<sup>7</sup>Politics and Vision, pp. 286-351.

<sup>8</sup>New Science, pp. 175-176 and pp. 187-191.

<sup>9</sup>See references in note 8 and also New Science, pp. 160-161.

<sup>10</sup>New Science, pp. 112-113.

<sup>11</sup>See, for example, Thomas A. Spragens, Jr., The Irony of Liberal Reason (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981).

<sup>12</sup>Many examples could be given. See Wolin, Politics and Vision, p. 243; Strauss, "Hobbes's Philosophy," pp. 3-4; F. S. McNeilly, The Anatomy of Leviathan (London: Macmillan & Co., 1968), pp. 22-24 and pp. 211-212.

<sup>13</sup>See note 1.

<sup>14</sup>New Science, p. 37.

<sup>15</sup>Voegelin's definition of articulation is in New Science, p. 41. The discussion of existential representation generally comprises New Science, pp. 27-51.

<sup>16</sup>New Science, pp. 52-75.

<sup>17</sup>New Science, pp. 1-3, pp. 61-70. See also Israel, pp. ix-xiv.

<sup>18</sup>New Science, p. 64. The entire discussion is in New Science, pp. 61-70. See also Plato, esp. pp. 46-134.

<sup>19</sup>New Science, p. 27. Voegelin elaborates this matter in New Science, pp. 27-28.

<sup>20</sup>Voegelin's most complete development of his theory of consciousness is in Anamnesis, pp. 143-213. The basic insights given here are also sketched out in a letter to Alfred Schuetz, reprinted in Anamnesis, pp. 14-35.

<sup>21</sup>Israel, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup>Anamnesis, p. 11.

<sup>23</sup>Anamnesis, pp. 144-145.

<sup>24</sup>This fundamental concept appears throughout Voegelin's work. The summary here is drawn from "Equivalences of Experience and Symbolization in History," unpublished manuscript, p. 7-13, pp. 24-25. This article can be found in Eternita e Storia, I valori permanenti nel divenire storico (Florence: Valecchi, 1970), pp. 215-234.

<sup>25</sup>Israel, p. ix.

<sup>26</sup>Israel, p. 5.

<sup>27</sup>Israel, p. 3.

<sup>28</sup>Israel, pp. 5-6.

<sup>29</sup>Ecumenic, pp. 76-77.

<sup>30</sup>Voegelin sets forth the basic problem in Israel, p. 6. His analysis of the leaps in being occupies the first three volumes of Order and History.

<sup>31</sup>Israel, p. 11.

<sup>32</sup>Israel, p. 11.

<sup>33</sup>This is one theme in "The Gospel and Culture," in Jesus and Man's Hope, ed. Donald G. Miller and D. G. Hadidian, Pittsburgh Festival on the Gospels, 1970, 2 (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1971), pp. 59-101.

<sup>34</sup>Plato, p. 218.

<sup>35</sup>Israel, p. ix.

<sup>36</sup>Ecumenic, p. 8.

<sup>37</sup>Israel, pp. 179-183, p. 367.

<sup>38</sup>Ecumenic, p. 241.

<sup>39</sup>New Science, p. 122.

<sup>40</sup>Ecumenic, p. 3.

<sup>41</sup>Voegelin's discussion of historiogenesis is in Ecumenic, pp. 59-113.

<sup>42</sup>Ecumenic, p. 227.

<sup>43</sup>Ecumenic, pp. 239-271.

<sup>44</sup>Ecumenic, pp. 35-37.

<sup>45</sup>This summary is drawn from New Science, pp. 76-110. See also Israel, p. xi.

<sup>46</sup>New Science, p. 111.

<sup>47</sup>These symbols are discussed in New Science, pp. 110-116.

<sup>48</sup>New Science, p. 134.

<sup>49</sup>New Science, pp. 187-189.

<sup>50</sup>Eric Voegelin, "The Oxford Political Philosophers," The Philosophical Quarterly 3 (April 1953): pp. 105-112.

<sup>51</sup>New Science, p. 172.

<sup>52</sup>New Science, pp. 187-189.

<sup>53</sup>This is discussed in New Science, pp. 120-121.

<sup>54</sup>See Eric Voegelin, From Enlightenment to Revolution, ed. John Hallowell (Durham: Duke University Press, 1975), esp. pp. 35-73.

<sup>55</sup>This matter is the major theme of Science, Politics, and Gnosticism, trans. William Fitzpatrick (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1968), esp. pp. 51-73. See also Ecumenic, pp. 260-271.

<sup>56</sup>Enlightenment, pp. 22-23.

<sup>57</sup>This is stated explicitly in Anamnesis, pp. 26-27.

<sup>58</sup>See Eric Voegelin, "Response to Professor Altizer's 'A New History and a New But Ancient God?'" in Eric Voegelin's Thought: A Critical Appraisal, ed. Ellis Sandoz (Durham: Duke University Press, 1982): p. 197.

<sup>59</sup>New Science, p. 159.

<sup>60</sup>New Science, pp. 153-154.

<sup>61</sup>New Science, pp. 159-160.

<sup>62</sup>New Science, pp. 154-55.

<sup>63</sup>New Science, p. 160.

<sup>64</sup>"Oxford Philosophers," p. 106.

<sup>65</sup>"Oxford Philosophers," p. 106.

<sup>66</sup>New Science, pp. 178-182.

<sup>67</sup>New Science, pp. 154-161.

<sup>68</sup>New Science, pp. 160-161.

<sup>69</sup>"Oxford Philosophers," p. 104.

<sup>70</sup>Israel, p. 50. See also New Science, pp. 53-59.

71 New Science, pp 184-186.

72 New Science, pp. 185-186.

73 New Science, p. 186.

74 New Science, p. 186.

75 Plato, pp. 75-76.

76 Ecumenic, pp. 20-23.

77 Eric Voegelin, "Configurations of History," in The Concept of Order, ed. Paul G. Kunz (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1968): pp. 23-42.

78 "Configurations," p. 34.

79 "Configurations," pp. 34-35.

80 "Configurations," p. 35.

81 "Configurations," p. 35.

82 "Configurations," pp. 35-36.

83 "Equivalences of Experience," p. 23.

84 Thomas A. Spragens, Jr., The Politics of Motion: The World of Thomas Hobbes, with a Foreward by Anthony Flew (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1973): pp. 43-44.

85 Ecumenic, pp. 36-43 and Plato, pp. 275-279.

86 Plato, p. 198, p. 192.

87 Plato, p. 198.

88 For example, see Anamnesis, pp. 178-179.

89 Arnold Brecht, "A New Science of Politics," Social Research 20 (Summer 1953): p. 233.

90 Anamnesis, pp. 27-28.

91 See Spragens, Irony, pp. 91-128, esp. pp. 105-109.

92 On the matter of active experience, see Jeffrey Branouw, "Bacon and Hobbes: The Conception of Experience

in the Scientific Revolution," Science/Technology and the Humanities, 2 (1979): pp. 92-110.

<sup>93</sup>New Science, pp. 87-88.

<sup>94</sup>The tendency to regard Hobbes as an atheist, or something approaching it, has already been noted. For contemporary reaction, see John Bowle, Hobbes and His Critics: A Study in Seventeenth Century Constitutionalism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1952), and esp. Samuel I. Mintz, The Hunting of Leviathan: Seventeenth-Century Reactions to the Materialism and Moral Philosophy of Thomas Hobbes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962).

<sup>95</sup>Arguments along this line have been made by a number of writers; for a more detailed development, see, for example, Herbert W. Schneider, "The Piety of Hobbes," in Thomas Hobbes in His Time, ed. Ralph Ross, Herbert W. Schneider, and Theodore Waldman (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1974): p. 85; or Willis B. Glover, "God and Thomas Hobbes," in Hobbes Studies, ed. Keith Brown, pp. 146-149.

<sup>96</sup>Peter Geach, "The Religion of Thomas Hobbes," Religious Studies 17 (December 1981): pp. 549-558.

<sup>97</sup>The most convincing of several works that argue in this general direction is Paul J. Johnson, "Hobbes's Anglican Doctrine of Salvation," in Thomas Hobbes in His Time, ed. Ralph Ross, Herbert W. Schneider, and Theodore Waldman, pp. 102-128.

<sup>98</sup>Thomas Hobbes, The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, ed. Sir William Molesworth, 11 vols. (London: John Bohn, 1839-1845; rpt. ed., Germany: Scientia Verlag Aalen, 1966), 3 Leviathan: p. 456.

<sup>99</sup>Leviathan, p. 403.

<sup>100</sup>Leviathan, p. 345.

<sup>101</sup>Leviathan, p. 403.

<sup>102</sup>This discussion has drawn on the brilliant study by J. G. A. Pocock, "Time, History, and Eschatology in the Thought of Thomas Hobbes," in The Diversity of History: Essays in Honour of Sir Herbert Butterfield, ed. J. H. Elliot and H. G. Koenigsberger (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970); rpt. in J. G. A. Pocock, Politics, Language and Time:

Essays on Political Thought and History (New York: Athenum, 1971): pp. 148-201.

103 Leviathan, p. 307.

104 Leviathan, p. 308.

105 Leviathan, p. 600. The entire discussion is on pp. 584-602.

106 Leviathan, p. 601.

107 Leviathan, p. 601.

108 Leviathan, p. 601.

109 Leviathan, pp. 401-402.

110 Leviathan, pp. 477-478.

111 "Equivalences of Experience," pp. 3-4.

112 Thomas Hobbes, The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, ed. Sir William Molesworth; 4: pp. 23-24. This volume includes The Elements of Law, from which this quote is taken.

113 Leviathan, pp. 69-70.

114 Leviathan, p. 30.

115 Leviathan, p. 33.

116 Leviathan, pp. 1-3.

117 Leviathan, p. 3.

118 Of the numerous possible examples, one might cite McNeilly, The Anatomy of Leviathan; Leo Strauss, The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: Its Basis and Genesis, trans. Elsa M. Sinclair (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1936; rpt. ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952); and Howard Warrender, The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: His Theory of Obligation (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957).

119 Again, one could cite the above works, as well as David P. Gauthier, The Logic of Leviathan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

120 For the bourgeois ethic, see Strauss, The Political Philosophy of Hobbes; and C. B. MacPherson, The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to

Locke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), esp. pp. 9-106. For the secularized Calvinism, see Voegelin, New Science, p. 161, pp. 181-184; and Sanford Lakoff, Equality in Political Philosophy (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964): pp. 70-79. Inertial motion is discussed in Spragens, The Politics of Motion; Wolin, Politics and Vision, pp. 239-285; and Michael Walzer, "On the Role of Symbolism in Political Thought," Political Science Quarterly, 82 (June 1967): pp. 191-204.

<sup>121</sup>The Political Philosophy of Hobbes, pp. 30-47; pp. 52-53.

<sup>122</sup>Politics and Vision, p. 259.

<sup>123</sup>See MacPherson, Possessive Individualism, pp. 19-29.

<sup>124</sup>Leviathan, pp. 30-31.

<sup>125</sup>Leviathan, pp. 30-31.

<sup>126</sup>Leviathan, pp. 31-32.

<sup>127</sup>Leviathan, pp. 322-324,

<sup>128</sup>Politics and Vision, p. 259.

<sup>129</sup>Leviathan, p. 33.

<sup>130</sup>Leviathan, p. 308.

<sup>131</sup>See Voegelin, New Science, p. 161, pp. 181-184. This discussion is also indebted to Arthur Child, "Making and Knowing in Hobbes, Vico, and Dewey," in University of California Publications in Philosophy, 16, ed. G. P. Adams et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954): pp. 271-310, although my conclusions are rather different from his.

<sup>132</sup>Leviathan, p. xi.

<sup>133</sup>Leviathan, p. ix.

<sup>134</sup>Leviathan, pp. 605-606.

<sup>135</sup>The discussion of various incorrectly created symbols is in Leviathan, pp. 607-636, as well as more generally throughout the entire fourth part of the book.

<sup>136</sup>Leviathan, pp. 317-318.

137 "Liberalism and Its History," p. 510.

138 See the discussion in "Liberalism and Its History," pp. 506-512.

139 See Voegelin, Science, Politics, and Gnosticism, esp. pp. 28-34.

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